

## *Giving*

“He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will reap bountifully, so let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). From this, we understand that Christians must give of their means to the Lord’s work and service. “Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by in store as God has prospered him” (1 Corinthians 16:2). From this Scripture, we understand that our giving is to be done upon the first day of the week when regular worship (that is study, singing, praying, fellowship and the Lord’s Supper) occurs. We should be thankful that the Lord has specified this time as the time to make our offering because it is so convenient for the giver.

Many lessons have been preached and Bible class lessons taught on the subject of giving. There are some differences of opinion about the matter, but for me, God is specific enough about “giving” that I don’t see how anyone could question it. One of the best lessons I ever heard on this subject was a sermon on the *Gospel of Christ* television program. Brother Ben Bailey taught the lesson on “Motivations for Giving,” and I want to share some of his thoughts with you, and I quote:

What is our motivation for giving? What should cause us to want to give to the cause of Christ? I want us to look at three motivations for giving. First, we need to consider the giving nature of God. All good giving begins by our coming to an understanding of how giving God is. John 3:16 expresses God’s giving attitude: “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” God motivates us to be good givers because He gave the very best He had to give—His precious Son. God offered up Jesus for humankind’s salvation. Jesus was laughed at, mocked and beaten. Then, He was crucified on a cross. God knew all that was going to happen, but He still gave His best for us. God’s giving nature and the fact that He did give His very best should motivate us to be good givers. If we are going to give like God, then, we have to give our best to God first. Then, we can think about other things we need to do in life.

Another motivation for our giving should be the sacrificial nature of Jesus. When we think of what Jesus gave up to come to earth to suffer and to die for mankind, we should be reminded of what giving is all about. In 1 Peter 2:24, we read, “Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness.” That is giving! Jesus died on the cross bearing the sins of the world, and that includes my sins and your sins, and He did it freely! Jesus left Heaven and gave it up to come to earth to live without even having a place to call His own. He sacrificed His life for us. That should be our motivation for giving.

Another motivation for giving should be the care that God exhibits in providing for us. The care that God continually gives His people should constantly challenge us to give. We are told in Matthew 6:33, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.” God was saying, “If you will put Me first, you won’t have to worry about the physical necessities of life.” We are told in Philippians 4:19, “My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” ...God has promised to take care of His people, and He not only provides us with the spiritual blessings we need, but also with the physical necessities we have in this life.

Look at the giving nature of God, the sacrificial nature of Jesus and God’s constant care for us. That is the motivation we need for our own giving!

Do you need to examine your giving?

*By Royce Pendergrass*