

The Heart of Giving – Luke 6.38, Deut.15, 2 Cor.9.6-10

Testimony of Giving

Different Ways to Give: Cash, Check, Bank debit, website

Understanding the Heart of Luke 6.38

- ❖ The most common mistake – the verse is only about money. Consider immediate context – 6.36f.
- ❖ He is revealing a principle that deals with every area of life. Whatever you give is going to be given back to you. The measure you give of love, patience, mercy, etc it will be returned to you pressed down, shaken together and running over.
 - These are both positive and negative characteristics that you give to others.
 - The idea behind this pressed down...comes from the poor gleaning the fields of others. Field workers didn't care how much they could carry, b/c they were paid daily; the poor had to heap the grain on b/c it was life and death.
 - God is telling them that they aren't just getting some in return but much in return.
- ❖ The principle: You always get much more in return. The one apple seed produces an apple tree that produces dozens of apples with thousands of seeds inside.
- ❖ BUT, this can't be our motivation for giving. Multiplication and plenty is our reward for giving but not our motivation. We preachers emphasize the reward and then it becomes the motivation. In other words, "Give some to get more."
 - Do you think God ever says, "Boy, if only my people could catch the vision of having a lot more stuff?"
 - **God doesn't want us to catch the vision of getting; He wants us to catch the vision of giving.**
- ❖ There is the law of reciprocity, but it must be held in balance. This law states that whatever you plant you will harvest and the harvest will be greater than what you planted. It's the heart or motivation of giving that must be in the right place.
 - For instance, when we give love, forgiveness, mercy to others it normally comes from the right heart. We don't give those things with a twisted belief that we will get anything in return. We are doing these things from the overflow of God's love for us.
 - But when we give and sometimes when we pray the heart is not in right place – James 4.3. Our heart must be in the right place when we give.
- ❖ The big picture reveals the true motivation – Luke 6.27-35. Paraphrase: Give in reckless abandon like your Heavenly Father does. Give love, forgiveness, finances, food, clothing, assistance, mercy and whatever else is needed in abundance and then you are truly reflecting your Heavenly Father's heart. And by the way, God will repay you generously for your generous spirit.

- This promise is not given to motivate us to give, but to free us from fear and to show us the reward of giving. You can give freely and not worry about the return. You know there is a net under the tightrope.
- Close friend who has been rejected by his mother and daughter, yet he is so demonstrative in his love and appreciation for others. He lavishes it on others. In his church, he has three other ladies who have become his mother and he is enveloped by the love of his congregation. He has given love and forgiveness generously and it has been lavished on him.

Heartfelt giving towards others – Deu t.15.4-15

- ❖ Have someone give me \$100 bill.
- ❖ God's heart for blessing others should be our heart for giving. We bless the heart of God when we give from a generous heart.
 - Examples: Are you blessed when your children are selfish and won't give to others? When they withhold and you have to threaten or bribe them? No, just the opposite. What about when they give generously without any prompting and their heart is moved to do something for another.
 - What is true of us as earthly parents is also true of our Heavenly Father. He loves to see His children reflect His generous heart to others.

❖ We must deal with the selfish & grudging (grieving) thoughts – 15.7

- Selfishness whispers that we won't have enough or God will not meet our needs. Grudging asks us why did we give that much. Selfishness attacks before the gift and grudging or grievous thoughts attack after the gift (buyer's remorse).
- God addresses these thoughts by reminding them that He, not they, is the source of their prosperity. He led them to the PL, He gave them this Land, He will give them success. He is the source they are the managers. Nothing belongs to them other than what God gave them.
 - Illust - \$100. He gave it easily and quickly. Why? It wasn't his; it was mine. He was returning it to me. **It's easy to give something away when you don't own it.** It is the same way in giving. I can make the tithe payment with a smile on my face b/c it all belongs to Him. I am simply returning that which belongs to him.
 - Understanding stewardship is what can deal a death blow to a selfish and grudging heart. These two attributes are quenched when you realize you don't own anything.

❖ We must become liberals in our giving – 15.13ff

- It is good to be a liberal...giver!
- One of the deepest places which liberal giving springs from is a grateful heart. You are so grateful for what God has done in your life that you cheerfully and generously share with others.
 - Thought of the Day – Happiness. The top two things you can do to become happy – demonstrate gratitude and show appreciation.
- Appl – Think of where you would be today without Jesus. Think of what Jesus has done and how he has taken care of your needs.

- Jimmy Burris and his generosity. He would always tell me how grateful he was to God and thankful for God's goodness. He loved to praise the Lord and he gave so generously. One of the few people to consistently bring food for the Food Basket.

Having a Cheerful Heart – 2 Cor.9.6-12

- ❖ Context of this passage.
- ❖ When you give are you cheerful? Does it bring a smile to your face and joy in your heart to give?
- ❖ Cheerfulness of heart isn't determined by size (small gifts are easy but large ones are hard) but rather feeling no pressure or obligation.
- ❖ It's also related to stewardship, in that, you see yourself as a conduit of God's blessings rather than a receiver of wealth.
 - Earth bound view of wealth, work and giving. "Matt.11.28-30"
 - Kingdom view of wealth and giving.
 - Begin sowing where you are and work towards the tithe. God wants me to be fruitful and I must take him at His Word. Mark 4.3-20 – The bountiful harvest is for those who are fully persuaded in God's Word.
- ❖ Illust – Robert Morris story on p.164-5 in The Blessed Life.
- ❖ Having a cheerful heart has its foundation in 9.8. You know, that you know, that you know, God will amply supply all of your needs, so that you have enough to share with others.
- ❖ This assurance comes through the battlefield of doubt, misplaced expectations and hard times. You go through thin times and bountiful times and you learn that through them all God always supplies. Your heart no longer is selfish or grieves but is calm, hopeful and joyful.

Conclusion:

- ❖ Give bountifully and it will be bountifully poured into your lives.
- ❖ Give freely for God is the source of all wealth.
- ❖ Give cheerfully and God will generously provide all your needs.
- ❖ How is your heart? Greedy, guarded, grudging or generous