

The Power of Giving

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Introduction: The blessings of God come in ways that the world will never understand.

- A. The essence of worldliness is “Me! Mine! Give Me!”
 - 1. Jesus warned against the vanity of this approach. **(Lk 12:15)**
 - 2. Jesus also promised that His way is where true abundance is found. **(Jn 10:10)**
- B. Jesus relationship with us is based upon his love of giving! **(Jn 15:12-15)**
- C. Jesus has made it possible for us to become like him! **(2 Cor 4:7-11, 16-18)**
 - 1. We are molded into His image. **(Rom 8:29)**
 - 2. I often think of my “legacy” in terms of the memories of my children.

I. Examples of some who found the abundant life

- A. The example of the Macedonians **(2 Cor 8:1-7)**
 - 1. When God's people understand the grace of God they will bear much fruit. **(8:1)**
 - a. What did the grace of God bestow upon these churches?
 - b. God's grace will push us to suffer for the glory of God. **(Phil 1:29)**
 - c. These principles will apply to all forms of giving.
 - 2. Consider the "impossible" conditions these brethren were experiencing.
 - a. Some of us might say to them: "You do not have to give!"
 - b. Are you a liberal? These brethren were poor yet rich! **(2 Cor 6:10)**
 - c. These brethren begged Paul to let them give. Why? Because they wanted to have fellowship in the work of God. **(Phil 4:15-17)**
 - 3. What is the key to abounding in any work we do? **(2 Cor 8:5; 1 Cor 6:19-20)**
 - a. Far too many have never died to the world! They are their own master!
 - b. How have you planned your day tomorrow?
 - 4. We need to abound in our work to its completion! **(2 Cor 8:6-7; 10-11)**
 - a. When we are half hearted there is much damage done to us and to others by example. **(Heb 6:11-12)**
 - b. Let us not be satisfied in just doing something, let us abound in it!
- B. The example of a widow in Jesus' day. **(Mk 12:41-44)**
 - 1. There was a collection of boxes in the Court of Women where they could contribute to the treasury. **(2 Kgs 12:9; Mt 27:6; Jn 8:20)**
 - 2. This may have been the place where Jesus described the actions of some. **(Mt 6:2)**
 - 3. Imagine the view of Jesus as He watched the giving.
 - a. He could not only see the outward but also the inward. **(1 Sam 16:7)**
 - b. What had God seen in our hearts today?

II. Giving should be a reflection of an abundant life

- A. How much has God's grace worked in your life? **(2 Cor 8:8-9)**
 - 1. Stingy, self-centered people have not been touched by God's grace.
 - 2. Giving is not for God but it is for us.
 - a. God does not need it! **(Psa 50:10-15)**
 - b. Giving is a test for us. **(2 Cor 8:8)**
- B. There is a connection between our income and how much money we give.

1. How much should we give on the first day of the week? **(1 Cor 16:1-2)**
 2. What is the difference between this and the Jewish laws on giving?
- C. We give because He has given to us! **(1 Jn 4:19)**
1. God is glorified when He supplies our needs. **(Phil 4:19-20)**
 2. Do you often give Him praise for what He has personally done in your life?

III. The hard life of a worldly Christian

- A. He has a troubled heart that will fight for what is “his.” **(Jas 4:1-3)**
1. When something is given without attention it hurts. **(2 Cor 9:6-7)**
 2. Many try to find the minimum and just do that. A few seek to do all they can.
 3. This is the difference between a Christian who is cheerful and full of joy verses one who is miserable. Those who are miserable often must be propped up by carnal means
- B. He will recruit others to his misery.
1. He will use God’s word to his purposes. **(2 Cor 4:1-2)**
 - a. He may have good knowledge of God’s word and an ability to teach.
 - b. What is his goal? You can tell by what motivates him.
 2. He is very much involved with **unrighteous judgment**. **(Mt 7:1-4)**
 - a. His goal is to be the best. Competitors must be destroyed.
 - b. Those who seek to build a party will praise or attack you on the basis of your submitting to their will, not God’s.
 - c. He may gather material to be used against another in the future.
 - d. He also has an abundance in his life. **(Lk 6:45)**
 3. He cannot see what God has done for him. **(1 Cor 4:6-7)**
- C. He will judge men by their worldly success. **(Jas 2:1-4)**
1. There are some who will use that power in the church! (Ex. “We can not lose him. Look at how much he gives!”)
 2. Speakers are put to these standards as well. **(2 Cor 10:10)**
 3. Giving in the treasury must be between God and the giver.
 4. God will look at the complete picture and not just a specific kind of giving. **(Rom 12:2; 2 Cor 8:5)**

IV. Giving is the key to abundance

- A. God’s grace will multiply our blessings. **(2 Cor 9:8-10)**
1. When we yield to the crucified life of God's grace, we will find we have everything we need. **(9:8)**
 2. In the fleshly life you will never have enough! Anxiety will haunt you.
- B. God will make us abound in His work if we will yield! **(1 Cor 15:58)**
1. God has so designed this life that when we give we in fact will receive far more!
 2. Jesus taught His apostles this. **(Mk 10:29-30)**
 3. This is also true in the results of our efforts. On the surface it seems that little will be accomplished. What does God say? **(Isa 55:10-11; Hosea 10:12)**
 3. Will you trust God's ability to multiply? If we receive more than we give, then who is limiting our blessings in the Lord? We often are our own worst enemy!

Conclusion: Will you let go so that God can bless you?