

**Why Should I?
“Why Should I Give?”**

Introduction: Our message today centers on the issue of Christian giving—a subdivision or segment of the issue of Christians stewardship. (Stewardship has to do with much more than money...time, energy, gifts, talents, and resources).

- ✓ I am a steward, whether I want to be or not.
- ✓ It is a fact...I have nothing of my own—everything I have has been received of God.
- ✓ God wants me to be a conscious, willing steward—to receive all from His hand thankfully, to acknowledge my complete dependence upon Him, and to return everything back to Him joyfully.
- ✓ “Not my own” is the essence of stewardship—all I have is a sacred trust from God.
- ✓ One day we will stand before God to give an account of our stewardship.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God. 1 Corinthians 4:5 NKJV

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10 NKJV

For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14:7-8 NKJV

So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 14:12 NKJV

In light of stewardship—why should I give money to God?

- To fully understand Christian serving in the New Testament, we need to understand the back story to the Corinthian correspondence regarding giving

Back Story to Paul's Teaching on Christian Giving

Teaching: 1 Corinthians 16; 2 Corinthians 8 and 9

(NOTE: Approached delicately and perhaps a certain amount of embarrassment)

- ✓ Circumstances seem far removed from us but the principles that emerge from instruction give us help with our own giving
- ✓ From the earliest days extreme poverty an issue with mother-church in Jerusalem
- ✓ Christians in Jerusalem lost jobs or at least customers when they converted from Judaism. Widows took hard hit (Acts 6)
- ✓ In AD 37 (3 years after his conversion) Paul visited Jerusalem and saw poverty first hand
- ✓ His next visit (AD 46) with Barnabas, he brought alms from Antioch to “the brethren that dwelt in Judea.” (Acts 11:27)
- ✓ At the end of 1 Corinthians (our text) Paul instructs believers in Corinth to lay aside money, according to their prosperity each week, so that he could take it to Jerusalem.
- ✓ In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 issue is taken up again at greater length. He reports the great response to this need by the churches of Macedonia (Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi) and encourages them to do the same
- ✓ From the church at Jerusalem, the Gospel could radiate to the Gentile world—bringing blessing not measured by material wealth or resources
- ✓ In these two chapters (2 Corinthians 8 and 9) a philosophy of Christian giving for every generation is articulated

SIX PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

I. Christian giving is a consistent response of intentional commitment rather than a sporadic reaction to an emotional appeal.

*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.
1 Corinthians 16:1-2 NKJV*

- A. Same instructions as given to Galatian churches—a pattern was established
- B. Consistency—first of the day of week (Sunday worship)
- C. Intentional commitment—“lay something aside”
- D. As God has prospered them (no hint of percentage or proportionality, point is that all should give in a manner that reflects how God has blessed them)
- E. Matter-of-factness—no pressure, gimmicks, or emotion
 - 1. Consistent and Purposeful
 - 2. God has blessed me—I will give

II. Christian giving is measured in terms, not of quantity, but of sacrifice.

Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. 2 Corinthians 8:1-2 NKJV

- A. To the Corinthians, he points them to the Macedonians
 - 1. Not a question of human resources—abundance of divine grace
 - 2. That was multiplied to Corinthians as well
- B. True generosity is not prerogative of those who enjoy an abundance of means—many times the greater generosity displayed by those who have less to give
- C. Not quantity, but sacrifice (Mark 12-widow with her 2 mites)—gave all she had!

(ILL) 2 Samuel 24—Census of David against advice of Joab—issue of pride

- ✓ Repentance of David

And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O Lord, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly." 2 Samuel 24:10 NKJV

- ✓ 3 choices (7 years of famine, 3 months fleeing from enemy, 3 days of plague)
- ✓ Response

And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man." 2 Samuel 24:14 NKJV

(Plague—thousands died)

- ✓ Gad to David

And Gad came that day to David and said to him, "Go up, erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." 2 Samuel 24:18 NKJV

- ✓ Offer

Now Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. So Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground. 21 Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" And David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people." 22 Now Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up whatever seems good to him. Look, here are oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood. 23 All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the Lord your God accept you. 2 Samuel 24:20-23 NKJV

- ✓ David's reply

Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. 2 Samuel 24:24 NKJV

— IMPORTANCE OF SACRIFICE

III. Christian giving is a revelation of one's personal surrender and a reflection of one's spiritual priorities.

For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. 7 But as you abound in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us — see that you abound in this grace also. 2 Corinthians 8:3-7 NKJV

A. First gave themselves

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21 NKJV

(ILL) People stingy with God. Don't round up a tithe check, bad tippers—heart not fully surrendered

- B. Corinthians abounded in many gifts (tongue, prophecy, knowledge)—abound in the grace also!

PRIORITIES!

IV. Christian giving is a generous expression of a grateful heart rather than a reluctant obligation.

Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. 2 Corinthians 9:5 NKJV

(ILL)

Then Moses called Bezalel and Aboliab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. 3 And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. 4 Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, 5 and they spoke to Moses, saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded us to do." 6 So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, "Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary." And the people were restrained from bringing, 7 for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done — indeed too much. Exodus 36:2-7 NKJV

V. Christian giving is a supernatural transaction which ensures a spiritual harvest.

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." 10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness. 2 Corinthians 9:6-10 NKJV

Five Truths

- A. To give is to sow—what is given is not lost, but like the seed sown by the farmer, contrary to all appearances, it possesses the promise of life and increase
- B. The source of giving, however is not the wallet... it is the heart!

(ILL) Again—the poor widow

(ILL) Even a cup of cold water given in the name of Jesus would not go unrewarded

And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward." Matthew 10:42 NKJV

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38 NKJV

C. True measure of gift is not magnitude of gift but instead the state of the giver's heart (cheerful)

D. Christian giving is not being forced or giving grudgingly, but cheerfully, knowing it will not return void

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8 NKJV

Supernatural power of seeds

E. He supplies the seeds and its power

VI. Christian giving is the least I can do in light of what He has done for me.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9 NKJV

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15 NKJV

Conclusion: