

Biblical Discipleship

10



GIVING

LESSON 10: GIVING

"What is the Meaning of Giving, and What Are My Responsibilities in this Area?"

Giving is an extremely controversial subject in Christianity today largely due to the severe pressures exerted on God's people to give to so many worthy causes. This is perhaps one of the most misunderstood subjects in Christianity.

Before you can properly understand the nature of New Testament giving, you must understand one fact clearly: God does not need your money. He owns everything.

This lesson will deal with the Christian's responsibility in stewardship of his life as well as his resources.

- I. Before any giving can be truly proper, you must be willing to give of yourself first.
 - A. God bought you with a price, His blood, and you belong to him.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- B. God commands you to present your body as a living sacrifice, not just your pocketbook.

Romans 12:1

- C. A willing mind and heart with a life committed to service to God must precede financial giving in order for God to bless it.

II Corinthians 8:3-5, 12

II. What is the reason for my giving?

- A. Giving proves the sincerity of your love for Jesus Christ.

II Corinthians 8:8

- B. Giving develops an attitude of grace for other works. It takes no special talents or abilities to give, only grace.

II Corinthians 8:6-7, 9:8

- C. Giving is an investment in eternal riches and gets your eyes off of earthly riches, which will fade away.

Philippians 4:17; Matthew 6:19-21

- D. The person who benefits most from your giving is YOU.

Acts 20:35

III. Where am I to give?

- A. Your primary responsibility is to your local church. All giving in the New Testament is done within the context of a local church ministry. *1 Corinthians 16:1-3* is the definitive passage.
- B. Obviously, anyone is free to give to causes outside the local church, and God may even use and bless it. However, it is the local church which is central in God's plan. Any giving outside of it should never be done at the expense of what God would have you do in your church. This is equally true of time and service, as well as money.

IV. What does my money go for?

- A. The support of the leaders of the church.

*1 Corinthians 9:13-14; Galatians 6:6;
1 Timothy 5:17-18*

- B. Other works of God supported through your church.

Philippians 4:15-16

- C. Support of those within the church body who are INABLE to support themselves, and who have proven themselves FAITHFUL under the New Testament guidelines.

Acts 6:1; I Timothy 5:16, 9-10

- D. To meet general needs as determined by the leadership of your church.

II Corinthians 8:4; Acts 11:27-30

V. What am I supposed to give?

You are supposed to give your life. Your giving is to be out of a willing heart and because you love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us examine amounts of giving from the Bible.

- A. The "tithe" — In the Old Testament, the Jews were required by their religious law to give a certain percentage of their income. This "tithe" was one-tenth of a person's income. In addition, the Jews gave freewill offerings for various other works of God, bringing their total giving well over ten percent.

II Chronicles 31:11-12, Deuteronomy 12:5-7

- B. The church is not bound by the letter of the Old Testament law. However, the principles of the Old Testament establish patterns for our relationship with God.

I Corinthians 10:11, Romans 15:4

10. Explain what true New Testament giving is.
11. Who benefits the most from giving: God, the church, the pastor, or the giver?
12. Briefly explain the primary purpose of this lesson.

Key memory verses:

II Corinthians 9:7; Matthew 6:21; II Corinthians 8:9

NOTE: From many pulpits, and on most radio and television shows, you will hear the following teachings regarding giving:

1. The Christian's primary responsibility in giving is his money.
2. Christians are obligated to give to any good cause.
3. If you don't give, the work of God will suffer.

From the Bible principles taught in this lesson, you should understand that these teachings are false, and why.

Write any questions you may have concerning the subjects in this lesson.

VI. The New Testament principles of giving are applied in three areas:

- A. Structure — A young Christian should establish discipline in his life in all areas. In giving, the principle of ten percent can help provide that structure.
- B. Cheerful Giving — As an individual grows in the Lord, he will develop an attitude to go beyond structures. The grace of cheerful giving then becomes a reality in his life.

The New Testament principles of giving are summarized in *II Corinthians 9:7*:

1. "As a man purposeth in his heart." Your giving is between you and God.
2. "Not grudgingly." If your giving is done with the wrong attitude, you will not experience God's grace.
3. "Or of necessity." You are not bound by the tithe or any other law.
4. "FOR GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER."
- C. Sacrificial Giving — Christian maturity will result in sacrificial giving. When a person gives beyond his power to give, it costs him something. At this point, the grace of giving is maximized in his life.

II Corinthians 8:3, II Samuel 24:24

VII. Other principles of giving.

- A. Give as God has prospered you. Don't concern yourself with the giving of others, just give according to the amount God has blessed you with.

I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 8:12

- B. Remember at all times the law of sowing and reaping.

II Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 6:7-9

- * C. True New Testament giving goes much further than a simple "tithe." It is turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ. If God has control of your life, he will have control of your resources. All of the above principles of giving can be applied to your time and service as well as your money.

1. God's plan is that we be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:29

2. God's essential nature is giving, manifest in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:16, I John 4:10, II Corinthians 8:9

3. When you give according to Bible principles, you will manifest the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ in your life, resulting in God being glorified through you.

7. Briefly detail the three levels of giving.

A.

B.

C.

8. "Tithing" is not a set law for the Christian. Instead of the "tithe", what are four attitudes on giving found in *II Corinthians 9:7*?

A.

B.

C.

D.

9. If God has control of your _____, He will have control of your _____.

4. The Christian should give of his time, service and resources first to the local church. Briefly explain why this is true.

II Corinthians 9:8-15, I Chronicles 29:8-13

5. List four areas in which money is to be used by the local church. Give a verse that best defines each point.

A.

B.

C.

D.

6. The Christians giving is to be from a _____ Why is this?

VI. Basic questions.

- A. How can I be sure I am giving to the right things and that my money (and time) is being used as God would have it?
1. Build your giving (time, service and money) around the local church. It is God's ordained institution for this age.
 2. In most churches, a group of men are entrusted with the responsibility of handling the financial matters of the body. If you have prayerfully sought God's leadership in choosing a local church, and you have followed the principles in His word in doing so, then you ought to trust the leaders of the church to handle this matter properly. If you have good reason to believe that the church's resources are not being used scripturally, then speak to the individuals with that responsibility. If the matter is not answered to your satisfaction, then perhaps you should consider praying about seeking another church.

II Corinthians 8:20-21