

Generous Giving

Introduction:

Giving: Taboo Topic

- A. Preachers Don't Teach On It
 - 1. Some don't feel qualified ... some feel hypocritical.
 - 2. Some do not want to be labeled as greedy.
 - 3. Some do not want to "rock the boat" with the church.
- B. Members Don't Want To Hear It
 - 1. The preacher or elders do not know my circumstances.
 - 2. The preacher or elders cannot tell me what to do with my money.
 - 3. It is between me and God.
- C. See, It's A Sensitive Issue
 - 1. Churches have divided over the subject of money.
 - 2. There is a risk of "class envy."
 - 3. There is a risk of self-righteousness by some toward others.
 - 4. Etc., etc., etc. ...

Discussion:

- I. The Facts
 - A. Barna Research Group
 - 1. Less (percentage of income) is given today than during the Great Depression.
 - 2. 2003 - "Only 3 out of 10 twenty-something's donated to a church in the past year ..."
 - 3. Stopped all giving to churches: 24% in April 2011.
 - B. 2010 "State of the Plate" Survey Statistics ("750 Christian households surveyed")
 - 1. While most people only give 1-3% of their income ... survey responders indicated their household made it a priority to be faithful and generous givers.
 - 2. 23% give under 10%.
 - 3. 18% give 10%.
 - 4. 51% give 10% to 20%.
 - 5. 8% give over 20%.
- II. The Scriptures
 - A. From Law ...
 - 1. "Tithing" was practiced well before the Law of Moses nor limited to Hebrews. Cp. **Gen. 14:17-20**
 - 2. Tithing (10%) Law of Moses:
 - a. From among crops/animals. **Lev. 27:30-33**
 - b. Additional sacrifices: sin, free-will, etc. **Lev. 1-6**
 - B. ... To Grace
 - 1. "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; **first be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and present your offering." **Matthew 5:23-24**
 - 2. "**Give** to him who asks of you, and **do not turn away** from him who wants to borrow from you." **Matthew 5:42**
 - 3. "For I was hungry, and **you gave Me something** to eat; I was thirsty, and **you gave Me something** to drink; I was a stranger, and **you invited Me** in; naked, and **you clothed Me**; I was sick, and **you visited Me**; I was in prison, and **you came to Me**. ..." **Matthew 25:35-40**
 - 4. "If you love those who love you, what credit is *that* to you? ... If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is *that* to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same *amount*. **But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return**; and your reward will be great." **Luke 6:32-35**

5. **“Sell your possessions and give to charity;** make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Luke 12:33–34**
6. “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and *that* will be your repayment. **But when you give a reception, invite *the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,*** and you will be blessed, since they do not have *the means* to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” **Luke 14:12–14**
7. “In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Acts 20:35**

III. Your Heart

A. When the Lord Comes First In Your Life

1. You will think of Him and others ... and less of self. **Phil. 2:3-4**
2. You will give generously ... no matter your economic state. **2 Cor. 8:1-5; Mk. 12:42**
3. Giving will NOT be a matter of “law” but of “grace!”

B. Applying Your Heart to Our Needs

1. Building, supplies, maintenance, etc.
2. Evangelism/Teaching.
3. Benevolence among saints in need: disaster, widows.

Conclusion:

Final Admonitions

A. Test Yourself

1. Where is your treasure? **Lk. 12:34**
2. Do you sow sparingly (if at all) or bountifully? **2 Cor. 9:5**
3. God LOVES a cheerful giver! **2 Cor. 9:6**

“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.” 2 Cor. 9:8