

“How The Rich View Giving”

2 Corinthians 9:6-14 * February 8, 2009

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.” ~ Proverbs 11:24

When we talk about wealth in this series, do we necessarily mean money?

Last week we talked about thrift. So which is it: are we supposed to save our money, or give it away?

FOUR LESSONS ABOUT GIVING

“One man gives freely...”

Lesson #1 – As a follower of Christ, I am called to _____
_____. (See 2 Cor.9:6-9)

“Gee PBC, let’s get through this recession, and then we’ll talk about giving.”

- 1. What do we know about the people in Corinth that Paul is writing to?*
- 2. When Jesus said “Give, and it will be given to you”, whom was he talking to?*
- 3. What gifts of grace does God give to you and me?*
- 4. As God’s image-bearers what must we do to be true to our nature?*
- 5. Why are we at this crisis point in our nation?*

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more...”

Lesson #2 – When I give, I come out further _____
(See 2 Cor.9:10-11)

- 1. When we’re anxious about money, we think it’s a zero-sum game, meaning what?*
- 2. But why isn’t it a zero-sum game for a Christian?*
- 3. We can’t interpret this idea legalistically. How does God usually see to it that we come out ahead when we give?*

*“One man gives freely, yet gains even more, **another withholds unduly...**”*

Lesson #3 – Be very careful of where I _____
in my giving.

- 1. Is it fine with God if we spend some on ourselves?*
- 2. What is one of the great boundary principles the Bible teaches about our giving? The _____.*
And what is this?
- 3. “But I could never live that way!” If that’s you, what might God be saying this morning?*
- 4. When we tithe, what great truths are we proclaiming?*
- 5. What else should I be giving besides money?*

*“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, **but comes to poverty.**”*

Lesson #4 – If I do not give myself away, something inside of me will _____.

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2 Corinthians 9:6-14 * February 8, 2009

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.” ~ Proverbs 11:24

When we talk about wealth in this series, do we necessarily mean money?

The “rich” as we’re using it refers to those rich in faith.

Last week we talked about thrift. So which is it: are we supposed to save our money, or give it away?

Yes! It’s not either/or, it’s both/and.

FOUR LESSONS ABOUT GIVING

“One man gives freely...”

Lesson #1 – As a follower of Christ, I am called to give freely. (See 2 Cor.9:6-9)

“Gee PBC, let’s get through this recession, and then we’ll talk about giving.”

1. *What do we know about the people in Corinth that Paul is writing to?*

They were not well-off financially.

2. *When Jesus said “Give, and it will be given to you”, whom was he talking to?*

Peasants, common laborers, poor people, etc.

3. *What gifts of grace does God give to you and me?*

Every breath we draw is a gift of grace from him. Every beat of your heart, a divine gift also. The light at which your eyes blink is a gift from him. The taste of food upon your tongue, the warmth of a hug against your skin, the feathery lightness of a belly laugh, the majesty of sweet music upon your ears. The forgiveness of all our sins when we stand in the shadow of a cross.

4. *As God’s image-bearers what must we do to be true to our nature?*

Give.

5. *Why are we at this crisis point in our nation?*

Boil it down to its simplest, rawest measure, and why are we here with our nation teetering on the razor’s edge of economic ruin? It’s because we have forgotten this truth, and become greedy instead. From political elites to financial elites all the way down to the man on the street – we surrendered ourselves to money-lust for the purpose of getting more for ourselves. Scrambling for bonuses we did not earn, taking sweet-heart deals we did not deserve, snatching up properties we could not afford, taking on debt we could not repay, taking cash from investors we had no intention of returning – and why all this energy and inertia and activity? One reason only – to make a buck and make it fast and screw everyone else.

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more...”

Lesson #2 – When I give, I come out further ahead. (See 2 Cor.9:10-11)

1. *When we’re anxious about money, we think it’s a zero-sum game, meaning what?*

That if I give a dollar away I now have one less dollar, and am one dollar closer to ruin.

2. *But why isn’t it a zero-sum game for a Christian?*

Because God is watching, and he has the ability to multiply our resources in miraculous ways (e.g. the feeding of the 5,000).

3. *We can’t interpret this idea legalistically. How does God usually see to it that we come out ahead when we give?*

Sometimes with a ‘miracle check’ but more often than not by guiding us over a long period of time, teaching us to live with more discipline and wisdom than we have before. It’s over time that we then can look back and see that God has brought us “further ahead”.

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more, *another withholds unduly...*”

Lesson #3 – Be very careful of where I draw lines in my giving.

1. *Is it fine with God if we spend some on ourselves?*

God is no kill-joy! He “owns” everything, but he doesn’t demand that we give it all away. We are invited to “eat the fruit of our labor”.

2. *What is one of the great boundary principles the Bible teaches about our giving? The tithe. And what is this? **10% of our income.***

3. *“But I could never live that way!” If that’s you, what might God be saying this morning?*

One of the reasons for that might be, if I can say something that might pinch a little, that you have been managing your life for years based on worldly values, not God’s. If you had started doing it God’s way back then, it really wouldn’t be an issue today. If you’d started tithing when you had that newspaper route as a child. When you did that babysitting. As you worked through college. When you got your first job.

So if you’re thinking to yourself right now, “I couldn’t do that”, then you probably can’t just go home and do it today. But then again, you won’t know until you try. When it comes to tithing, this is one area where God says, “I want you to test me in this, and see if I won’t open the windows for you.” But it would be more reasonable to conclude that you need to go home and you and God have to do a lot of sorting out to do together. You need to really make an attitude shift here, to align yourself with God, and then over time, start to make some changes that will honor him more fully than you have been. And maybe the windows of heaven won’t fly open today, but you will be blessed over time as you begin to honor God in this area.

4. *When we tithe, what great truths are we proclaiming?*

That He is the Owner of all – and you are a steward. That it’s not all up to you to get by – that you desperately need him. That money is not the all-powerful thing that it claims to be. Giving money away unmasks money. Shows it to be a fraud. It’s not this all-powerful god that it claims to be. Tithing sets you on the path to budgeting, and you’ll begin to be more responsible with your money. And tithing reminds me of what we’ve been saying all along – that God has made me to give.

5. *What else should I be giving besides money?*

Hopefully, as God blesses I won’t stop with the tithe. And hopefully, as God blesses, I won’t stop with mere money. Sometimes the easiest thing to do is to give money. But God would ask us to give our very selves in his service.

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”

Lesson #4 – If I do not give myself away, something inside of me will wither and die.