

23/06/2020

UNDERSTANDING GIVING (PART 1)

2 Corinthians 8:7 (KJV)

Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

The grace the Apostle is talking about in the above scripture is the grace of giving. The Corinthians church was good in everything else, like faith, utterance and knowledge but lacked so much in the grace of giving and the apostles dedicated the whole of ***2 Corinthians Chapters 8 & 9*** to help them understand giving.

This is the most controversial topic in today's church and has often been abused by both ministers of the gospel and their congregation. We are going to take this subject in series with God giving us grace.

Our God has two outstanding attributes which should also manifest in us. These two qualities of God are manifested in this one scripture ***John 3:16 (KJV)*** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

These two qualities are LOVE & GIVING. God LOVED the world and he GAVE. When God loves, He gives. We should also follow his example. We should give because we love. Any giving not motivated by love is not from God. Politicians can give people food hampers not because they love them but they love their votes. Such giving is not at all godly. God loved the world and he gave his only son such that if we have the God kind of love, we should have the God kind of giving.

It is possible to give without love but it is impossible to love without giving. Anyone who loves you will automatically give you. There is no love without giving. Giving is the proof or evidence of love. If you love God you would give him. People who love God have no problems at all with giving him for his work. If you love your family, you will give them. If you love your pastor you will give into their lives. Just like people who are in love, there is an exchange of gifts all the time. We are in love with God, he has given us His son, what shall we render unto him? We must also put in something.

Do not be fooled, if a person says he/she loves you and doesn't give you then you have to seriously suspect that love.

A person who loves you shouldn't feel burdened by giving you. Never have a lover who doesn't give you. Such love will be flat and vulnerable. I don't mean giving huge things, it can be very little presents, even an extra piece of meat from his/her plate or even giving you time and attention.... all this is giving. If your pastor loves you, he will give you his time and attention. If you love your pastor you would give him/her gifts...don't claim to love without giving. No one can trust the love of anyone who doesn't give to him.... I also don't trust love that comes from those who do not give.... Please note: it is not about giving big things. Look at the minimum prescribed giving level by Jesus **Matthew 10:42(KJV)** And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. It's true giving as little as a glass of water, you will not lose your reward. A bundle of vegetables is enough to show love to someone. You see.

God measures your level of love for him but how much you give Him your time and your money. The bible teaches that **Matthew 6:21 (KJV)** for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Your money and your time constitute your treasure and the scripture says where your treasure is that's where your heart is. You can't therefore lie to God and say you love him when you can't put your treasure in him. Your treasure follows your heart. Where your heart is your treasure will just follow. If you want to see where you heart is just check where your money and your time (treasure) goes to. You will be shocked to see the things you love the most. The bible teaches again about treasure in **Matthew 6:19-20** go read this scripture.

We continue tomorrow. God bless you

Pastor C & S

+27742184982

24/06/2020

UNDERSTANDING GIVING (PART 2)

2 Corinthians 9:7 (KJV)

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Every giving should be done with a cheerful heart not because of coercion or force. Any forced giving is not giving but robbery. No one should be forced to give. Its true people should be persuaded to give as did Paul in **Chapters 8 & 9** of the book of **2 Corinthians**. He was persuading the church to give towards a need. A person may be persuaded to give but never coerced to give. Coercion is tantamount to robbery.

When a person is giving, he should know the purpose of which he/she is giving which means it must be explained to him/her. After understanding the purpose, he/she will purpose in his/her heart what she must give, that is the correct way of giving. It should be noted that giving has many spiritual, financial, and physical benefits that it gives back to the giver but it is best to teach the people that they should not always look for benefits when they give to God. They must give as a responsibility to God's work. Some people always give for gain but blessed are those who give as a responsibility (will discuss this in depth in the coming episodes).

No, since God loves a cheerful giver, your gift should make you happy before it pleases God. If your gift can't make you happy, it can't make God happy. God said this to Cain when he was angry with his brother Abel because he had out given him...

Genesis 4:6-7 (KJV) And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen?

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. Cain got very angry because he knew he didn't give well. If you don't give well, you will not be happy especially if you under give. Most people thought giving joyfully is to give little such that you will be happy with what you are left with, no... Sometimes you give so little when so much is expected of you and the immediate response is sadness of your soul just like what Cain did. If you give too little when more is expected of you, you become sad, your gift will not give you joy. You can't cheat the Holy Spirit; he knows what you can do and what you can't.

When you are holding your gift/seed/offering before you give it away, check within you if it makes you happy. God loves a cheerful giver. Are you happy that with your gift you are making a difference? Always remember this, your gift represents you, so whoever you think you are to someone or to something is well explained by your gift not by your words. Abel didn't pray or fast but he just gave and God accepted his gift and rejected his brother Cain's. You may experience some pain after giving, the pain of loss, it's normal, you may even cry but deep inside there will be an affirmation that you have done well, follow that.

Lastly, God said in *Malachi 1:8 (KJV)*" And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the_ LORD of hosts." If your governor cannot accept your gift then, it can't be dumped to God. Most believers have a very bad tendency. They dump to church what they cannot give elsewhere. Churches are full of a lot of rubbish dumped by people who couldn't use those things elsewhere. You see in this scripture people were bringing in sick, blind and lame animals to God. People still do that, they put torn money in offering to God (stop this) ...they don't care. Everything that has lost value in their yard is what they want to give to God. It is because of this that they aren't happy in their lives and they live under a curse every day. Never give to God anything that you don't need...that will not be giving but dumping. God or his church is not your dump site. Before you give check whether the gift has value to you. You can give a million dollars and someone gives five dollars and God will accept the one who gave five dollars because it's a big percentage of what he/she has. God looks at value not volume.....

We continue tomorrow.....

Pastor C & S [+27742184982]

25/06/2020

UNDERSTANDING GIVING (PART 3)

2 Corinthians 9:7 (KJV) Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a CHEERFUL GIVER.

God loves people who give cheerfully. He values them because to God giving isn't supposed to be a burden. He never meant it that way. He thought people should love to give and would do so cheerfully because loves those who give cheerfully. Will explain the mind of God about giving again today...

Firstly, givers do not give to be blessed, they give because they are already blessed. A giver is not seeking a blessing, he already is blessed. You cannot give if you are not blessed. Giving on its own is a sign of overflow which shows blessedness. Please understand something here, this has nothing to do with how rich or how much the person has. If he is not blessed, he cannot give. There might be a person who earns very little money but you find out that he/she gives to his/her family, he/she gives to the church and he/she still finds enough to eat and survive and send children to school. How is that possible? That's the power of the blessing. We call it flourishing. Such people never run dry.

Now you can see that blessedness is not seen in having much, it's seen in what you can do with the little you have. Being blessed has nothing to do with abundance of your resources but it is the condition of one's heart. There is no blessed person who is stingy. Stinginess is a sign of a curse while generosity is a sign of being blessed. Do you now see from the previous paragraph that for you to be a blessing you don't need more money than you have or more resources than you have? If you can see needs around you, and feel the burden in you that such needs should be met by you then you are blessed. A cursed person will never feel any burden about the needs in his family or maybe in the church. He thinks it is the responsibility of someone else. If anything, a cursed person seeks to make profit from those whom he should be helping. He takes advantage of the orphan and the widow and robs them to make profit such person isn't blessed, even if he is rich, he is still cursed.

When cursed people give, they give to make profit out of the giving that's why now in churches they have pastors who are not from God, who twist scriptures to capture the money of people who are stingy by promising them miracles if they do give but unfortunately, they can only trick the giver and not the Blessor (God). God can't be part of such games. However, it is true that God favors givers, he protects them and increases them but this should never be misconstrued to promoting gambling in church. Never eat on the table of a cursed person because when you leave, he/she will talk about it and count his costs. **Proverbs 23:7** says of such people "for he is the kind of men who is always thinking about the cost." Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you.

People should give because they are blessed. They feel the burden of responsibility and God will increase them not because of the gift they give but because of the attitude and the motive of their giving. Blessed people don't run away from responsibility, they trust God who will help them to meet every need around them. Paul says about them in **2 Corinthians 9:8 KJV**" And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:" So givers will always have sufficient enough to give. God makes sure of that.

Blessed people naturally loves giving. They give to meet a need. The reason for giving is more important to them than the return that comes to them. Blessed people are able to even give to the rich. Do you know most people think that if anyone is rich or has more money you can't also receive from them? You can buy them something not because you have much but out of your blessedness.

Finally, to you my daughters, there is nothing wrong in taking care of that bill in front of your boyfriend. Give him homework, he should not look down upon you, you are a blessed woman, you are not like any other woman he has ever met who is impressed by him flaunting money.... pay that bill if you can, if you can't pay something towards it or give a good tip to the waiter.... do this and thank me later. **See you tomorrow....**

Pastor C & S [+27742184982]

27/06/2020

UNDERSTANDING GIVING (PART 4)

Acts 20:35 (KJV) I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to GIVE than to RECEIVE.

Today let us concentrate on the last part of this portion of scripture which says "it is more blessed to give than to receive". The word translated blessed here means happy, so the scripture should be simplified to "it's more happy to give than to receive" Or you are happier when you give than when you receive.

What does this mean? It means givers are happier than receivers/takers. If you are always receiving, your happiness is never complete. When you want to be happy be the giver. There is a certain joy that fills your heart each time you bless someone with a gift. Trust me I know this; I have given away the best things I had in life but I remain happy until now. Look at this paradox...When someone is giving, it seems like he is losing and when someone is receiving, he seems to be gaining yet it's not like that. The giver is the one gaining over the receiver. The giver is more blessed (happier) than the receiver. The giver has power over the receiver, you have to know that today. Never be just a receiver in life, also give. It doesn't matter how poor you are, you can still find something small and significant to give even your labor. Science has even proved that there is a connection between happiness and giving.

Let us examine this widow in Mark 12:42 (KJV) and there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. This woman here was not only poor, she was widowed. In normal cases she should be one of those who should rightfully wait for the rich in church to help her but she was a very different poor person. She was poor but a strong giver in the house of God. As the rich were going to give, instead of hiding her small coins, she also joined them, she was part of the pledge list...she had mastered the secret behind giving. She put in her two coins and Jesus noticed it. She had two disadvantages, she was a widow and she was poor. In most cases we rush to want to exempt such people from giving but Jesus wouldn't. He allowed her to give because Jesus knows that the benefits, she will get from giving all that she had outweighed benefits of keeping it. Do not stop poor people from giving you or the church. Do not stop widows from giving, the eye of Jesus is right on them. Pastors, do not say no to the gift of the poor, receive that

gift, you don't know what God has said to her, if she wants to serve you a meal, eat it and pray for her, do not feel pity for them. Remember Elijah and the widow of Zarephath ***1Kings 17:7-16*** Please look closely, Jesus always notices the giving of the poor. He knows how difficult it is to give out of your poverty. Jesus knew she had given everything. Jesus said in ***verse 43-44***, the poor widow has given more than everyone else in church that day. Do not give an excuse that I am poor, student or what, you can give something, it may not be that big but Jesus will always notice. Poor people must be encouraged to give. Of all the things poverty can stop you from doing, at least it will not stop you from giving.

The biggest mistake many people will always make is of thinking that since there are a lot of people in this church, very rich and popular people, so my contribution doesn't matter....We attended a church function which had almost 5000 people and when the giving started, in my heart I just said, there is no need for me to give here, this church is rich already, there are many people signing off cheques and many rich guys here, so I think I can keep my offering for my church because here it can't change anything, it's an inconvenience to call the usher to walk all the way to me for me to put just R20....so I convinced myself. When I left the place, the Holy Spirit started to rebuke me heavily for acting wickedly.... He was so loud and clear that of all the givers in that 5000-seater church, the eye of Jesus was looking right on me. It was my turn. Jesus had nothing to do with all the rich guys that day, His concern was on my R20.I will never forget it, I was in trouble for days with the Holy Spirit, I didn't have my peace in me just for not giving. Ok let us not be long....will continue in next episode. We will look again at the giving of the poor.... case studying the Macedonian church.

Pastor C & S

+27742184982

29/06/2020

UNDERSTANDING GIVING (PART 5)

2 Corinthians 8:1-2 (KJV)

Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

We promised to look at the Macedonian church as our case study for today & tomorrow. From the scriptures we learn that the church in Macedonia was in great trial of affliction and was also in great poverty. But despite those conditions, they were very generous.

If you will read from the next verses of the same chapter ***2 Corinthians 8:4 (KJV)*** Praying us with much in treaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

You will see that the Apostle Paul was even reluctant to have them give. They weren't sure whether it was ok to receive an offering from people who are in such anguish of sorrow, poverty stricken and in great affliction. It's common and natural to feel that way. You feel like it's abusing the poor to ask them to give. But it is the elders of the Macedonian church who went to the Apostles to 'beg' them to allow them to give. They refused to be a charity case, they refused to have their current condition dictate to them how they should serve God.

They understood that giving is not losing, giving is worshipping. Never allow anyone to exempt you from giving, such a person will be stealing from you. From the little things you have, you can use that to be a blessing to someone. Many people are in challenges right now across the country, the little you have can also help a family out there. I want you to have this mentality in you that you have something to give at any given time. If you think you have nothing to give, then give a cup of water to drink, that's enough to God.

The Macedonian church refused to have people feel pity for them and exempt them from partaking in giving, they had to push for an opportunity to give and according to scripture, and they gave generously, despite their affliction and poverty. Whenever ever you are in a season of lack and affliction, it is not the time for you to gather, it's the time for you to give. Gifts that are given during the time of lack and affliction are a testimony of your faith and very sweet before God. It

is easy to give from your abundance but not so easy to give from your poverty. Poor people think they should keep, yet God expects them to give.

What is wrong is taking the things of the poor through crookery. Many poor people have been plundered in the name of giving and were left worse, that is wrong and punishable before the Lord. Never take advantage of your poor brother but allow him also to make his contribution from whatever you are doing. Always leave space for poor people in the communities and churches to also participate in giving.

Pastor C & S

+27742184982