

Giving some thoughts

There seems to be found no greater contradiction than a mean or niggardly Christian - such a person is a "foreigner living inside a native's body"

For God so loved the world that He gave John 3 : 16
so says probably the Bible's greatest and most well known verse

Everywhere around us is the evidence of God's boundless gifts - creation in all its aspects shows the bountiful hand of a loving and thoughtful Creator God.

The Ocean teems with marine life.

The insect world - swarms of countless varieties; bird life and its flocks that can even darken the sky.

And the earth itself - mountains ablaze with endless carpets of flowers, plant-life, forests, fruit trees, vegetables - a myriad of provision surrounds us.

Plants and fruit for food, herbs for health, all needs anticipated and provided for by our Creator / God

And under the microscope, an ordinary drop of water reveals a miniature Universe of microbes and organisms essential for our existence.

Someone has estimated that there are 3 million types of living creatures on this planet, such variety, abundance, fullness, bounty

It has been said that there is no problem with the food supply on this wonderful planet - only in its distribution to hungry mouths
(Man's management is the problem here !)

Every good and perfect Gift has come down from the Father of Lights
James 1 : 17

And the Universe - as many planets and stars as there are grains of sands on all the beaches of all the world - limitless, infinite - the latest estimate of known space is

100 Billion Galaxies each with 100 Billion stars

Our God is revealed throughout all creation as a bountiful loving God of supply and provision.

And personally - ask any mature Christian about his provision and sustaining power.

But back to Christians and Giving

One Man of God said that he would never baptize anyone except their wallet went in with them !

A Christian's attitude towards Money reveals and displays their inward motivation.

GIVING is a grace that every Born-again Christian should display, constantly,
(but within their means of course)

But wisdom is needed, and there are pitfalls - otherwise man's need is a morass that will drain all you have and are, plus your very self also !

From experience some TIPS

Give according to Need - not deserts

If God didn't deal with us like this, where would each one of us be !!

All of us are basically undeserving, but with needs.

The well-known Parable of the Good Samaritan *Luke 10 : 34*

He poured in the oil

and left sufficient for his needs and also promised to meet any extra costs !

Give SIMPLY - *Give with simplicity* the Word says *Romans 12 : 8*

This basically means - without strings attached, without obligation

The "world" when it gives, usually does so for recognition, or to incur an obligation that one day will be remembered and require some repayment

But God's giving is never like that

We should never give to cause an obligation to the receiver.

If we do that, God invariably will not add His blessing to it.

Our MOTIVE for the act of giving is Vital and the Key.

We should give without expectation of response or reward.

GIVE and it shall be given unto You, good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom

Luke 6 : 38

But this cannot become our motive either

God doesn't function on the barter system !

We can't manoeuvre Him into our obligation, or get Him obliged or indebted to us.

To give in order to receive in return later, or as an investment into some sort of "spiritual bank account" is not valid with God.

He gives from Love only, and requires the same from us.

We receive everything from God by Faith we can't earn anything.

But there is a Spiritual Law that comes into operation when we give

The Law of Sowing and Reaping as real as the Law of Gravity

It is more Blessed to Give than to receive

Acts 20 : 35

Countless Christian folk through History will testify to this.

Giving not only produces a good feeling within us, but God repays us in His own way and time it attracts Blessing in our lives.

But again, our motives must be right.

Gods measure of Giving is different from ours

He judges it from what we have left after we have given, not by the size of the gift !

The widow's mite was judged greater than the gifts of the rich

Luke 21 : 1 -4

She gave all her Living and God saw it, and approved.

And this covers the interminable question - how can I give when I haven't much to start with when I have big problems of my own, and such limited resources ?

Well, I have found that it is in these very times that God seems to test us. He is the God of endless provision, and these are just times of testing to strike at our materialistic natures, and to wean us from covetousness and greed.

If we can give at such times, our giving is a sacrifice, and He delights in it.

Remember the widow's cruse of oil and barrel of meal

1 Kings 17 : 8 - 16

Giving to God's Man first unlocked God's bottomless provision for her. Sacrificial Giving is special to God and He responds in His own miraculous way - just ask any of God's choicest servants, the Missionaries who tithe, the beneficiaries who are still able to give of their means, etc

Giving from little, honours God above our circumstances.

Let us give not grudgingly, nor of necessity, for God loves a

CHEERFUL giver

2 Corinthians 9 : 6 - 11

Cheerfully ... has also been translated Hilariously

If we have trouble getting our wallets out of our pockets forget it !
God will meet his people's needs elsewhere, and we will miss the Blessing !

So give freely, willingly, joyously, blessedly

Remember

The Water of Life is Free but the pipe-work costs Money !

An observation

There are basically only 2 types of People in this old World

GIVERS and TAKERS

The Generous in Spirit and deed and the others !

This in no way is against those deservedly on benefits, but those whose attitude in life is to grab and with-hold where it is due, who only know how to Take and Receive.

This is the broad but basic distinction between true Born-Again Christians and the world, they are (or should be) the Givers, the others the Takers that's how it always has been and always will be I would guess !

Concerning WILLS and ESTATES :

Someone has said :

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Do your Giving | while you're Living |
| Then You'll be Knowing | where its Going !! |

There's probably no greater occasion for disputes and bitterness amongst families than squabbles over wills and estates - some that go on for lifetimes and cause great rifts and divisions in families.

So - I would suggest ...

to make your Will CLEAR and FAIR, and EQUAL if at all possible.

Or - it could be the cause of much trouble for the family and relatives later on

Luke 12 : 13, 14

Jesus refused to be drawn into such squabbles over Estates

Covetousness and greed are the underlying motives in such disputes

Some one has calculated that

One sixth of Jesus words were about Money

One fourth of Jesus parables were concerning Money

Our attitude to God and His people can basically be judged from our attitude towards MONEY and how we spend our discretionary funds our Giving !

And God is Watching !

Finally

" What, Giving again," I asked in dismay,

" And must I keep Giving and Giving away ?"

" Oh No !" said the angel, looking me through,

" Just Give, till the Master stops Giving to you !"