

GIVING

- I. The divine character of giving.
 - A. God is love - I Jn. 4:8,16
 - B. God is a giving God - John 3:16; Rom. 8:32; James 1:17
 - C. God is righteous - Ps. 116:5
 - D. God comes to dwell in us by the presence of the Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, and desires to function in accord with His character through us.
 - 1. Loveless giving is not Christian giving - I Cor. 13:3
 - 2. Christian giving expresses God's righteousness - II Cor. 9:9,10
- II. The grace of God in Christian giving.
 - A. Grace is God's activity through Jesus Christ which expresses His character
 - B. Christian giving is God's activity of grace - II Cor. 8:1
 - 1. We are but trustees and stewards of God's possessions
 - 2. Giving is not a "work" that is meritorious before God.
 - 3. Giving does not "buy" indulgence before God.
 - 4. Christian giving is not just altruistic benevolence.
- III. The will of God in Christian giving.
 - A. The will of God is the life of Jesus Christ lived out in His people.
 - B. Christian giving is part of the will of God - II Cor. 8:5
 - 1. We are to "listen under" God in prayerful obedience in order to determine how, what, when, how much and to whom God desires to give through us.
 - 2. Christian giving is not guilt-motivated giving.
 - 3. Christian giving is not need-motivated giving.
- IV. The means of Christian giving.
 - A. We give of the "means" of what God has entrusted to us.
 - 1. "as God has prospered us" - I Cor. 16:2
 - 2. "according to what a man has" - II Cor. 8:11,12
 - B. Christian giving is not giving "beyond our means."
 - 1. Presuming on God's grace.
 - 2. Pledges of future assets - James 4:13-15
 - 3. Giving sacrificially
- V. The overflow of Christian giving.
 - A. We give as the overflow of God's abundance.
 - 1. "riches of His grace in Christ Jesus" - Eph. 2:7; 3:8
 - 2. "all blessings in heavenly places" - Eph. 1:3
 - 3. "all things belong to you" - I Cor. 3:21-23
 - 4. "abundance of joy" - II Cor. 8:2
 - 5. "abound in everything" - II Cor. 8:7
 - B. Christian giving is not just giving from overflow of physical assets
 - 1. Our natural covetousness cannot recognize "enough" or "too much"
- VI. The pre-requisite of Christian giving.
 - A. The first giving is the giving of ourselves to the Lord - II Cor. 8:5
 - B. God is not interested in your gifts until He has you.
- VII. The choice of Christian giving.
 - A. Christians are choosing creatures with freedom of choice.
 - B. Christian giving is a choice.
 - 1. "gave of their own accord" - II Cor. 8:3
 - 2. "purposed in their heart" - II Cor. 9:7
 - C. Christian giving is not manipulated giving.
 - 1. Organizational fund-raising
 - 2. Psychological manipulation
 - 3. Social approval - Matt. 6:2-4
 - 4. Legalistic coercion
 - a. "not under compulsion" - II Cor. 9:7
 - 5. Mandated percentages
 - a. ten percent tithe
 - 6. Repay God

- VII. The follow-through of Christian giving.
 - A. God is faithful to complete what He has begun - Heb. 10:23
 - B. We must follow-through when we have been prompted by God
 - 1. "finish doing it" - II Cor. 8:10,11
 - 2. "not able to finish" - Lk. 14:27-33
 - 3. procrastination of covetousness and greed
 - 4. when prompted by emotional impulse, emotions are fickle
- VII. The attitude of Christian giving.
 - A. We were created as vessels for the expression of God's character.
 - B. We are satisfied and fulfilled when we allow such to take place.
 - 1. "a cheerful giver" - II Cor. 9:7
 - 2. Greek word *hilaros* = satisfied
 - C. Satisfaction not in amount given - Mk. 12:41-44
- VIII. The privilege of Christian giving.
 - A. Christian giving is privilege of being vessels of God's grace
 - 1. "begging for the favor" - II Cor. 8:4
 - B. Christian giving is not just for a tax write-off with the I.R.S.
- IX. The ministry of Christian giving.
 - A. In Christian giving we are used of God to minister unto others
 - 1. "ministry to the saints" - II Cor. 8:4; 9:1
 - 2. ministry of all believers - Eph. 4:12
 - B. Beware of so-called "ministries" begging for your money.
- X. The equalizing-factor in Christian giving.
 - A. Christian giving is part of the process of God's provision for everyone.
 - B. God's provision to some can flow toward the needs of others
 - 1. "that there may be equality" - II Cor. 8:13,14
- XI. The return of Christian giving.
 - A. Christian giving involves a spiritual "return"
 - 1. "Father will repay you" - Matt. 6:4
 - 2. "Give, and it will be given to you" - Lk. 6:38
 - 3. "he who sows bountifully, will reap bountifully" - II Cor. 9:6
 - 4. The "return" on Christian giving is the greater appreciation of the fullness of blessing we have in Jesus Christ, and the joy of being vessels through whom God is working and fulfilling His intent.
 - B. The idea of "return" is often perverted
 - 1. Give in order to get.
 - 2. "Seed-faith" giving
 - 3. Prosperity doctrine; health and wealth
 - 4. Deceitfulness of riches - Mk. 14:8; I Tim. 6:9-11
- X. The supply of Christian giving.
 - A. God supplies all for Christian giving. - II Cor. 9:8,10
 - B. The amount of the gift is not the issue.
- XI. The purpose of Christian giving.
 - A. God's glory is the purpose for Christian giving.
 - 1. "do all for the glory of God" - I Cor. 10:31
 - 2. "for the glory of the Lord" - II Cor. 9:13
 - 3. God is glorified only when His all-glorious character is being expressed within His creation.
 - B. Christian giving is not for the glory of man.
 - 1. Bronze memorial plaques
 - 2. Recognition, prestige, leadership positions
- XII. The integrity of Christian giving.
 - A. Those handling Christian gifts are to exhibit character of God
 - 1. "honorable in sight of Lord and in sight of men" - II Cor. 8:20,21
 - 2. Avoid any suspicion of misuse or misappropriation
 - B. There has been much fraudulent mishandling of religious funds.