

# The Christian's Attitude of Giving!



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### ► Introduction:

- I. I hope that you have had a wonderful Holiday this last week!
  - A. I know that many of you have spent time with your family, you still are with family, or possibly your family is still planning on being together!
  - B. Over the years, our family experience has changed.
    1. Our family once traveled to Martin, TN to visit with the Benderman part of the family, then to Jackson, TN to be with the Newbill part of the family, and ultimately to Waverly, TN with the Bush family.
      - a. The kids, when they were small, were always excited about what they would get at each location.
      - b. We look back at those trips and are so appreciative of all the memories that were created and simply being with loved ones who are no longer here today.
    2. Through the years, lives changed and those trips to parents and grand-parents changed to family traveling and coming to Evansville.
    3. New memories are being created with new family members!
  - C. I encourage you to enjoy being with your family and enjoy the time you spend together!
    1. For those that have lost loved ones this year, many of us understand that the holidays are bitter sweet.
    2. There have been many prayers uttered for you in the last couple of weeks.
- II. After the holiday season, the question that is normally asked is: "What did you **Get**?"
  - A. We all **like** getting stuff!

1. This summer my weed-eater died! And I got a new weed-eater, the first thing I wanted to do was go outside and trim the grass around the sidewalk and driveway.
2. I also got a fit-bit! It is a watch that is supposed to tell me how good of a job I am doing staying fit and healthy.
  - a. It records my heart beat, how much sleep I get, how many steps I take, and if I am getting enough exercise.
  - b. So far, it is telling me how I need to get out and trim the grass around the sidewalk and driveway with my new weed-eater!
- B. Many of us look at the holidays as a time to “get!” You might hear a statement like: “I hope you **got** everything you wanted!”



- C. I really wonder if we have gotten things all twisted and turned around!
  1. Paul not knowing if he would have the opportunity again took time to encourage the elders of the church in Ephesus while traveling to Jerusalem. (Acts 20:17-38)
  2. He related to them something that we find no record in the Gospels however we know it was true because Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit.  
  
Acts 20:35  
“I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”
  3. As Christians, followers of Christ, we ought to be more concerned about **giving** rather than **getting**!
  4. So, why do we not ask others, **what did you give?** What did you give throughout the holiday season?



- III. In our lesson, after getting all those amazing presents, let us remind ourselves that as followers of Christ we are supposed to be givers.

“The Christian’s Attitude of Giving!”


Discussion:



- I. As Christian we must develop the desire to give!
  - A. Paul relates that the churches in Macedonia had a “willing” heart to be givers.

II Corinthians 8:1-5

“Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:  
that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.  
For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,  
imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.  
And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.”

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1. Notice that Paul relates that they “in great trial... and deep poverty” still gave to others.
    - a. The churches in Macedonia were under great persecution however when they heard of the famine that occurred in Palestine and they overlooked their own difficulties to reach out to others.
    - b. It is extremely easy to get caught up in our own problems, our own difficulties, that we do not see outside of ourselves.
    - c. This is not what took place with the good Christians in Macedonia. Even when they were in need, they had an attitude to give to others.
  
  2. But notice the extent of their desire!
    - a. They had a desire to give even more above what they were able.
    - b. Why would someone do such? Why would someone give more than what they were able to do? This could possibly put themselves in greater jeopardy.
    - c. I believe that verse five answers that question. Why did they give and even give more than they were able? It was because they had already given themselves completely over to the Lord.
    - d. Their motive for giving was based from their the fact that they had given themselves to God. To do such then they must have a great faith and trust in the Lord.
  
  3. Being a follower of Christ means we have already made the commitment to give your **all** to Him.
    - a. The Christian in Macedonia were willing to give because in their hearts they had already given, they had already given everything they had to the Lord.

- b. We need to learn this attitude as Christians. Our stuff, our houses, our vehicles, our possessions, our money, our everything should already be committed to God.
- c. Paul related that to be a follower of God's then we must be willing to sacrifice everything that relates to us, even our "bodies."

Romans 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

- d. Paul teaches the Christians in Galatia that we must "crucify" ourselves, die to ourselves, so that Christ has complete control of our lives.

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."



- B. So, no matter how much or how little we might have, we ought to have given it all to Deity.

- 1. Do you remember the scene where Jesus was with His disciples at the Temple and individuals were giving their offerings?

- a. Jesus witnessed the rich placing large amounts of money into the treasury.
- b. Yet, when this "one poor widow" came, she placed two mites into the collection. Scholars suggest that a mite was a copper coin that was worth a fraction of our penny today. Blue Letter Bible relates that the two mites together were not worthy even half of a cent.
- c. Yet, when Jesus saw this lady give her two mites, He related to His disciples that she had given much more than anyone else.

Mark 12:43-44

"So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

- 2. This is the attitude of the Christians in Macedonia and it ought to be the same attitude that we have today! Let us commit our whole life and therefore livelihood to God!



II. So, let us ask ourselves some a difficult question! Is there anything that I am not willing to give to the Lord?

A. Jesus tells the story of the rich farmer. (Luke 12:16-21)

1. This parable relates of a man that was blessed with greater and greater harvests yet he kept it all for himself. He kept building bigger and better barns to store everything that he had.
2. His desire was not to give and assist others with what he had, his desire was to have an easier life, to have everything he wanted, and to sit back and be merry.
3. Jesus stated that this farmer was laying “up treasure for himself” however he was “not rich toward God.”



B. Yet, an even more pointed lesson from Jesus’ life had to do with the rich young ruler. (Matthew 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; and Luke 18:18-23)

1. This young man approaches Jesus asking Him what he should do to inherit eternal life.
  - a. He lived under the Old Testament Law so Christ related the Old Law directives, and this man answered Jesus saying that he had obeyed such.
  - b. Jesus then stated that he lacked “one thing.” He told this rich man to go sell everything he had and distribute to those that were poor. (Luke 18:22)
  - c. However, instead of giving up everything for Christ, the young man became sorrowful and left Jesus.
2. He was unwilling to give everything for Christ!



C. Now, with these two Bible stories fresh in our minds, we need to ask ourselves that question: “Is there anything in my possession that I would not be willing to give up for Christ?”

1. Christ tells the young ruler to sell everything and then follow Him and I do not believe that Christ has any different thoughts concerning our possessions.
2. Would you be willing to give up “everything” for the Lord?
3. For years, I have taken young people into many of your homes for devotionals and periods of fellowship.
  - a. Many of you have some very nice and wonderful houses. You have nice furnishings in those houses.

- b. Yet, you were willing to give the use of your home for the young people here at church!
- c. I will be honest, over the years I have seen some items in your homes damaged or broken. And I have seen your reaction: "That's not a problem, we are glad they are here!"
- d. I want our young people to respect other people's property, yet I see your desire to give is more important than your possessions and your homes.



4. This is the heart that God wants!

- a. So, would you give your home, the possessions in your home?
  - 1) I know that some of you when you purchased your house do so with the intention of using it for the Lord.
  - 2) You have had Bible studies your home; you have been **hospitable** inviting guests to come over; and possibly, you have even had others come into your home because they had no other place to go.
  - 3) This is giving your home in service to the Lord.
- b. Would you give your car/truck?
  - 1) Again I know some of you that already have!
  - 2) Many of you have taken others to doctor's appointments, home from work, to worship services, and much more.
- c. We could go on with so many of other material possessions but let us look in another direction.



D. Would you be willing to give your family to the Lord?

- 1. Last week; Randa, Michael, and I sat in an adult Bible Class at the Main Street Church of Christ in Springfield, TN. The Bible class teacher's lesson dealt with the faith of Abraham.
  - a. In that study, we got to the time where God tested Abraham's faith by requesting him to sacrifice his son, Isaac. (Genesis 22)
  - b. And Abraham demonstrated his faith by being willing to do exactly what God asked. He was going to sacrifice Isaac yet right at the moment that

he was about to strike his son with the knife, God sent an angel that stopped Abraham's hand from harming Isaac.

- c. Abraham had such faith in God that he was willing give his son to God.

Genesis 22:15-16

"Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,  
and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and **have not withheld your son**, your only son—"

- 2. Are we willing to give our family members to the Lord?

- a. God will not ask us to kill our children or any other family member however; there are times in which we have to give our loved one the Lord.

- 1) There are many here today, some just recently, that have given someone they loved to the Lord through death.
- 2) They have had to place their conviction and faith in the Lord and say good-bye for now to their very special loved one.
- 3) Trusting in God means that I am willing to trust Him even through death. That is not easy!
- 4) I will give my loved over to God, looking forward that eternal and heavenly reunion!

- b. There is another way in which we must give our family over to God. Many times we get wrapped up in life and the enjoyment of life that we do not recognize the need to give our kids to the Lord.

- 1) I can remember when William turned 9 years old that Stephen Rogers talked to me about how that half of William's life with Randa and me was over. That was one of those shocking moments yet it also helped me realize that the day was quickly approaching in which I would be giving up not just William but all our children.
- 2) Many of you remember our dear brother George Jones. George used to tell me that a parent's job in life was to train their kids to get out! Maybe a better way of saying such is that there will come a day in which we must give up our kids!
- 3) When the Lord instituted marriage, he gave the command that a child must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. (Genesis 2:24)

- 4) There will come a time when we give our children away. The question I have for every parent this morning is this: "Are you going to be giving them to the world, or to God!"
- 5) I hope you desire to give your kids to God by training them now!
- 6) Such training will make all the difference in their eternal future  
So let us make the decisions:

Will they participate in the ballgame or being in services directed to God?

Will they stay home to studying for that school class or will I insure that they are in Bible class?

Will I truly train them to "seek first the kingdom of God" or will there be other activities to which I will give them over?

- c. Ask yourself: "Are you truly giving our children, our family members, to the Lord?"



- E. To truly have the desire to be a giver then we must first give ourselves totally to the Lord!

1. This is what the Macedonian Christian did and the example that we ought to follow
2. Jesus stated that there is no in-between when it comes to giving ourselves to Him. We must give ourselves to Him completely!

Matthew 6:24

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

3. Jesus gave Himself to us as an example concerning how we give ourselves to God.

Galatians 5:1-2

"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.  
And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma."

- a. We are to imitate the complete giving attitude that Christ had for us!
- b. Jesus gave up Heaven to come to this earth for the purpose of giving Himself as the needed sacrifice **for us**.



- c. Jesus also gave up Heaven to declare His Message so we can learn to give ourselves to Him.

► Conclusion:

- I. This time of the year is a time when many are giving and have been giving!
  - A. Sometimes it difficult however as Christians, the example that the Lord has given to us is that we ought to be individuals that are givers!
  - B. And we have been addressing much more than just giving of money or presents, but the giving of ourselves completely to others but especially to God
- II. Look at your life! Have you completely given yourself to the Lord?
  - A. To truly accomplish such an act of giving we must read and study God's message to learn how!
    - 1. So as we study and learn from God's Message, and we begin to develop godly faith that trusts God in everything He directs us to do.
    - 2. This is the type of faith and trust that Abraham had so that He was willing to do whatever God's commanded, even if it mean sacrificing Isaac.
  - B. Are you willing to trust the Lord to the point of obeying His directives?
    - 1. God directs us through His Word to Repent of our sins!  
  
Acts 3:19  
"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,"
    - 2. God said that we must give our complete allegiance to God through confessing Christ as our Lord.  
  
Romans 10:10  
"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
    - 3. God commands that we be baptized which is when we give our lives totally over to Christ and He gives us forgiveness through His blood that washes our sins away.  
  
Romans 6:3

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?”

I Peter 3:21

“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,”

6. And God commands us that from this point until the end of our physical lives, we are to continue to give our lives completely to Him each and every day.

I John 1:7

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

▶ II. I would like to give to you today, the Lord’s Invitation:

- A. If you need to give your life to Christ through your faith, obedience, and continual commitment then we are ready to assist you.
- B. Or as a Christian, possibly you have done wrong and need to repent, re-dedicating your life to our Lord, then we are here to assist you as well.
- C. Give your life to the Lord, right now, as we stand and as we sing!