

Giving

How Am I Supposed To Give To God?

Giving is not a controversial subject according to the Bible, but today some Christians try to make it such. Unfortunately many believers see giving as an obligation rather than a privilege. Although this lesson covers financial giving, God does not need your money; He owns everything. God's will for your life is to develop you into a giving person in order to reflect His nature. This lesson will reveal the blessings associated with giving, and deal with your responsibilities in stewardship of your life as well as your resources.

I Giving is a reflection of the nature of God.

- A God's will is that you would be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.
Romans 8:29-30
- B God's essential nature is giving, which is manifest in Jesus Christ.
John 3:16, I John 4:10, II Corinthians 8:8-9
- C As a saved person, you are a "partaker of the divine nature" of God.
A list of the qualities of his nature concludes with charity.
II Peter 1:3-8

II Biblical giving begins by giving your life to God.

- A God bought you with a price, his blood, and you belong to him.
I Corinthians 6:19-20
- B God commands you to present your body as a living sacrifice, not just your money.
Romans 12:1

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON:

Biblical giving begins with your life.

*True New Testament giving goes much further than money. It concerns turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ, who gave his life for you. If God has control of your life, he will have control of your resources. Principles of giving in this lesson can be applied to your time and service as well as your money.
II Corinthians 8:3-5, Luke 16:10-11*

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.
Romans 8:29-30

III Biblical giving benefits you personally.

- A God has the ability to bless both the gift and the giver.
 - 1 Money given with the wrong attitude can still be used for God's purposes.
 - 2 Money given with the right attitude results in a blessing for the giver also.
II Corinthians 8:3-5, 12
- B Giving proves the sincerity of your love for Jesus Christ.
II Corinthians 8:8
- C Giving develops an attitude of grace. It takes no special talents or abilities to give, only grace and a willing heart.
II Corinthians 8:6-7, 9:8
- D Giving helps you set Biblical priorities.
 - 1 Giving is an investment that keeps you focused on eternal matters.
Matthew 6:19-21, II Corinthians 4:17-18, Colossians 3:2
 - 2 Giving increases your faith because it establishes a dependency on God. When you give, it requires you to trust God for your future provisions.
Hebrews 11:1, Luke 6:38

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

IV Biblical giving benefits the life of your church.

- A Biblical giving is built around the local church first and foremost. There are many worthy causes you can give to, but the church is God's structure through which he accomplishes his mission in the world.
I Corinthians 16:1-2
- B Biblical giving supports the leaders of the church, so they are free from secular work to devote their lives to ministering to you.
I Corinthians 9:1-14, I Timothy 5:17-18, Galatians 6:6
- C Biblical giving supports the missions work of the local church.
Philippians 4:15-17, Acts 13:1-3
- D Biblical giving helps others in your church who may have special needs and are unable to take care of them on their own (benevolence). Those who receive such help should have proven themselves faithful under New Testament guidelines. These needs should be confirmed by the leadership of the church, and handled in confidence.
I Timothy 5:3, 9-10, 16, Acts 6:1

E Biblical giving supports other special projects as determined by the leaders of the church, as well as the general expenses of the church.
Acts 11:27-30, II Corinthians 8:4, II Kings 12:4-14

V Biblical giving should be consistent, and grow as you grow spiritually.
The amount of your financial giving is governed by Biblical principles.

A The tithe.

- 1 A "tithe" is one-tenth of a person's income. It was established as a law for the Nation of Israel in the Old Testament, but was practiced even before the law. Tithing is first seen in the Bible when Abraham tithed to Melchizedec.
Genesis 14:20, 28:20-22
- 2 Although the tithe is not specifically discussed in the New Testament, the principles of the Old Testament establish patterns for your life.
I Corinthians 10:11, Romans 15:4
- 3 A tithe is the starting point for your financial giving to your local church. The tithe establishes the lordship of Jesus Christ in your life in the area of finances. It should be taken "off the top" as an indication of the priority of God in your life. Every believer should commit to a consistent and lifelong tithe to his local church to fund God's mission in the world.
Nehemiah 10:32-39, Proverbs 3:9
- 4 Even though it appears not to "make sense", the record and testimony of God's people has proven that it is easier to live on 90% of your income than 100%. God promises to take care of faithful givers.
Proverbs 3:10, Malachi 3:8-12

And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.
Genesis 14:20

B Offerings.

In addition to the tithe, voluntary offerings were given in the Bible by God's people to fund special needs. If your life is given to the service of Jesus Christ, then your resources will be available to fund your ministry.
Exodus 25:1-2

C Sacrificial giving.

- 1 As your spiritual growth continues, you should reach the point where you give not just out of your abundance, but to the point it will cost you in sacrifice. Jesus gave ALL for you, and he is your example.
Ephesians 5:1-2, II Corinthians 8:9

2 Bible examples of sacrificial giving are abundant:

The churches of Macedonia - II Corinthians 8:1-4

The widow's mite - Luke 21:1-4

David - II Samuel 24:24

For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not.

2 Corinthians 8:12

D Your giving is governed by other Biblical principles.

1 Give as God has prospered you. Don't compare yourself to others.

I Corinthians 16:2, II Corinthians 8:12, 10:12

2 Give cheerfully. God wants giving people more than he wants gifts.

II Corinthians 9:7

3 Remember the law of sowing and reaping. God blesses faithful givers. You should never give with the motive of receiving personal gain in return. However, if you prove yourself faithful with what God has given you, God may entrust you with even with more resources.

II Corinthians 9:6, Galatians 6:7-8

Basic questions you may be asking:

How can I be sure I am giving to the right things, and that my money and time is being used as God would have it?

Build your giving (time, service, and money) around the local church. It is God's institution to accomplish his mission in the world. The leaders of your local church are accountable to the people of the church as well as to God. As a member of the church, you can see personally how the money is being used. If you have followed the principles of the word of God in joining a local church, then you should be able to trust the leaders of that church to handle the resources in wisdom.

Acts 4:34-37, II Corinthians 8:20-21, 6:3, Romans 12:11, 17

Do you have any other questions about this subject?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION:

There are many popular beliefs which are contrary to the truths of the word of God. A discussion of these issues in light of the principles you just learned should give you a proper understanding of this lesson and correct some of these misconceptions:

- 1.) How does our giving benefit our own personal life?
- 2.) Why do Christians usually feel that giving is an obligation rather than a privilege?
- 3.) How does Biblical giving benefit the church and others in our lives?
- 4.) How does giving establish the lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives??

Memory Verses:

II Corinthians 8:9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

II Corinthians 9:7: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Matthew 6:21: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."