

Study on the Holy Spirit

Study 21

Giving

This week we will look at the gift of Giving.

- **Romans 12:8** *he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*
- **Romans (Living) 12:8** *If you are a preacher, see to it that your sermons are strong and helpful. If God has given you money, be generous in helping others with it. If God has given you administrative ability and put you in charge of the work of others, take the responsibility seriously. Those who offer comfort to the sorrowing should do so with Christian cheer.*
- **Romans 12:8 (NIV)** *if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*
- **Romans 12:8 (NLT)** *If your gift is to encourage others, do it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.*
- **Romans 12:8 (KJV)** *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

The definition is;

Greek Word: *metadidomi*

Usage Notes: *"to give a share of, impart".*

When you here of the gift of giving, what do you immediately think of?

Tithing or Money?

The Living and NLT both speak of the gift of giving as a money gift.

The NIV speaks of a contribution, which would tend to point us to money.

Reading these versions alone would lead us to believe that there is a gift of money and giving that money to help others.

I do not disagree with this at all. I do believe that the gift of giving does have to do with money, but I believe that there is more to it than that.

But let's first look at the gift of giving pertaining to money.

- Acts 4:32-37 (NLT) *All the believers were of one heart and mind, and they felt that what they owned was not their own; they shared everything they had. And the apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great favor was upon them all. There was no poverty among them, because people who owned land or houses sold them and brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need. For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means "Son of Encouragement"). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles for those in need.* (underlined for emphasis)

Barnabas must have heard Jesus' teaching or had been taught Jesus' teaching. We see this teaching from Jesus in:

- Luke 12:33-34 (NLT) *Sell what you have and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven have no holes in them. Your treasure will be safe--no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.*

Right after this example in Acts, there was the example of, Ananias and Sapphira who sold their property and then kept part of the money for themselves.

Their sin was not keeping part of the money, but lying, saying that they sold it for example, \$10,000, but really selling it for \$15,000.

If they did sell it for example \$15,000 and only gave \$10,000 and they told the truth of what they sold it for, and that they were keeping part of it that would have been all right. Because they would have given what their heart wanted to give and not lying to the Holy Spirit or others appearing as they were good Christians.

They did not have the gift of giving.

If you have the gift of giving, you would be like Barnabas, selling his property for \$15,000 and giving it all to those in need.

If you don't have the gift, you would be more like Ananias and Sapphira, selling your property for \$15,000 but not giving it all away.

Let's look at another example in:

- Mark 12:41-44 *Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. 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."*

This woman had the gift of giving, to the extent that she trusted in God to supply her needs, and she placed her treasure in heaven. I don't think that this woman went home hungry after this. God supplied all her needs just as He does ours.

I have to thank Him every day, not just for supplying all my needs, but supplying above my needs. I consider myself spoiled by God, although I am not rich financially, I am rich with the things He provides me with, and even the physical things He gives me is above what I really need to sustain life.

Just because you tithe each week or every payday, does not mean that you have the gift of giving. Notice how others were giving out of their abundance, kind of like we do when we tithe. We may give 10% out of what God gives us and think we are doing something special.

But are you doing it because someone said you should, or because you want to?

Think of going to a yard sale. You see a table for sale for \$40 but you know you can get it down to at least 30 or maybe even 20 bucks.

Do we do the same with our tithes? Do we ask, "before or after taxes?"

If you say after taxes, then you are giving your first fruits to the Government and the leftovers to God.

- **Ex 25:1-2** *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.*
- **2 Cor 8:12-14** *For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack-- that there may be equality.*

Notice that God wants people to give that are only willing to give from their heart.

Does this mean that if you are not willing that you should not give?

- **2 Cor 9:7-10 (NLT)** *You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. As the Scriptures say, "Godly people give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will never be forgotten." For God is the one who gives seed to the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will give you many opportunities to do good, and he will produce a great harvest of generosity in you.*

In tithing, we are exercising an aspect of giving, but not the actual gift of giving.

To tithe is to give 10%.

To give, is like Barnabas or the widow who gave all.

Did you notice verse

8a *And God will generously provide all you need.*

Once again you must read it in the context. Look at the verse before: ***You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.***

Make up your mind what you will give; don't be pressured into giving like some churches, radio or TV pastor do to fleece the flock of God.

Finally give cheerfully. If you regret giving, then you are not doing it cheerfully. Notice it say's, "***For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.***" Not God loves the person who gives him money because they feel they have to.

If you apply all of verse 7, then the results will be verse 8.

Jesus was showing this example in:

- **Luke 6:38 (NLT) *If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving--large or small--it will be used to measure what is given back to you.***
- **Matt 6:1-4 *"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.***

I really hate the term "love gift", it's like going back into verse 7 of 2 Cor. where you are almost being pressured into giving, just because you may want what they are giving. Sure you can get these so called love gifts for free sometimes from the churches that are offering them. But if it's a love gift then it should be free all the time, not requiring money to obtain it.

I have even heard a Calvary Chapel use this term for their tapes. Send a \$5 love gift and we will send you today's tape.

Just say, the tape is \$5. If you can't afford it, then we will send it to you free.

- **1 Cor 13:4-8 *Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.***

Where does it say that love is in return for your gift?

I will now get off my soapbox, let's move on to take a look at a church that had the gift of giving;

- **Phil 4:15-19 *Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving***

and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Paul even told them in Corinth to put some money aside to help him out in his missionary journeys.

- **1 Cor 16:2 (NLT)** *On every Lord's Day, each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.*

Notice that Paul was wise saying to tell them to put away a little each week, then use that to support me when I come, instead of waiting till I get there and then take an offering.

We all heard of the Good Samaritan, did you notice that he had the gift of giving?

- **Luke 10:34-35 (NLT)** *Kneeling beside him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with medicine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two pieces of silver and told him to take care of the man. 'If his bill runs higher than that,' he said, 'I'll pay the difference the next time I am here.'*

Not only did he give financially, but he also gave his time. Notice that he spent the night taking care of him.

So giving is not just about money, here's another example of this;

- **Acts 3:1-8 (NLT)** *Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three o'clock prayer service. As they approached the Temple, a man lame from birth was being carried in. Each day he was put beside the Temple gate, the one called the Beautiful Gate, so he could beg from the people going into the Temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for some money. Peter and John looked at him intently, and Peter said, "Look at us!" The lame man looked at them eagerly, expecting a gift. But Peter said, "I don't have any money for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man's feet and anklebones were healed and strengthened. He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them.*

You can give someone money, but that's not what they always need.

And here are some more examples:

- **Matt 5:41-42** *And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.*
- **Phil 2:25, 29-30** *Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need.
Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.*

I'm sure you could find plenty more, but this gives you an idea of how giving is not always money.

Now here are some warnings about money.

- **1 Tim 6:10** *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

Judas is an example of this verse, to the extent that he betrayed Jesus for money.

- **Mark 14:10-11** *Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.*
- **Matt 6:19-21** *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

Where are your treasures laid up?

Jesus gave an illustration on money or hoarding your possessions.

- **Luke 12:16-21 (NLT)** *And he gave an illustration: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. In fact, his barns were full to overflowing. So he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store everything. And I'll sit back and say to myself, My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!' But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get it all?' Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."*

This man laid his treasures in the world.

Finally, this is what the Lord wants from us:

- **Hosea 6:6** *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*

God doesn't need your money, but then it's not yours anyway, it's His!