

Try Me!

A Study in Faith Fueled Generosity Selected Scriptures

Christians are to always be on guard against any and all attachments that would keep us from full devotion to God. This is a very difficult task because we are constantly bombarded with images that birth thoughts that lend themselves to developing unholy, unhealthy connections with the temporary things of this world. It is very easy to become possessive of what you have and covetous of what you do not have. “Things” are attractive and falsely offer a sense of immediate gratification and accomplishment. The attraction will lead to attachment. The attachment will lead to addiction. The addiction will lead to annihilation. There are never enough things to satisfy the gaping hole in the human heart. That space can only be filled by a loving, growing relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Most of us know this intellectually but find this hard to live out practically. It is an easy concept to understand but a difficult principle to fully adhere to. The only way out of the soul crushing, dissatisfying addictive cycle of consumerism is to develop a lifestyle that is deeply committed to material generosity. That is to say, that the pathway to satisfaction travels on the trajectory of what we give rather than what we gain. Let’s be clear, this is not theoretical or hypothetical. This is the clear teaching of the Bible and it is literal and concrete. We can choose either to be empty materialists or satisfied givers. The practice of material generosity is one of the most spiritually developmental behaviors that a believer in Christ can engage in. Generosity is one of the communicable attributes of God. It is eternally and perfectly always true about God and, as we are made more like Him by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, it should become progressively more and more true about us.

This lesson is designed to encourage us to be deliberate about developing a lifestyle of generosity to our local church and beyond. We do well to remember that this is counterintuitive to the carnal, consumer-driven culture that we are all currently surrounded by. Only God's Holy Spirit can empower us to resist the Sirens' song that beckons us with the beautiful melody of materialism that would cause us to crash the ships of our souls on the rocks of exasperation and despair. Giving is the only antidote to a life plagued with the disease of greed. Greed is not just the malady of the rich, is it the heart's disposition that manifests in a fear to part with what one possesses. It is a horrible and crippling sin. Thankfully, God provides what we need and offers us His abundance when we reject materialism and greed. In fact, the wonderful irony of generosity is that it results in having more than hoarding and greed produce. When we demonstrate our willingness to reflect the nature of God through giving, we position ourselves to enjoy the benefits of sharing in that nature: contentment and abundance. Contentment is the ability to be satisfied with whatever one possesses. Abundance is to live in God's overflowing blessing. This is marked by having more resources than one needs. Proverbs 10:22 says, "The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it."

I. Four Characteristic of Biblical Giving

- a. Sacrificially – My giving must _____ and the work of my local church.
- b. Proportionally – The amount of my giving should _____.
 - i. I cannot give _____.
 - ii. I cannot deny _____.
- c. Expectantly – My giving must _____.
- d. Consistently – I must develop _____.

II. Ten Principles of Stewardship

- a. _____.
- b. _____!
- c. _____.
- d. _____.
- e. _____.
- f. _____.
- g. _____.
- h. _____.
- i. _____.
- j. _____.