

Biblical Principles of Christian Giving

by Colin Peckham

Christian giving is an act of worship and thanksgiving to God, and it should be done with a loving and generous heart.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 31:21, Matthew 6:3, Matthew 25:21, Mark 12:44, 1 Corinthians 4:2, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Corinthians 8:12, 2 Corinthians 9:7, 2 Corinthians 9:15, Ephesians 5:3

Topics: "Christian Stewardship", "Giving"

Description

Colin Peckham emphasizes that Christian giving is an act of worship and thanksgiving to God, reflecting the believer's devotion and loyalty. The sermon highlights the importance of giving systematically, proportionately, individually, cheerfully, wholeheartedly, sacrificially, willingly, purposefully, faithfully, responsibly, generously, secretly, honestly, gratefully, and accountably, stressing the need for genuine motives and heartfelt surrender to Christ in stewardship.

Transcript

Christian giving is an act of worship and thanksgiving to God. It is the loving expression of the Christian's supreme devotion and loyalty to God. Scripture lays great emphasis on the manner in which we give.

Systematically

'On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money.'¹

Proportionately

'... each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income.'² '... in proportion to the way the Lord has blessed you.'³

God does not expect us to give above our ability, but what we can and should, that we must give. In the old dispensation one tenth of the income belonged to God, and this cannot be less in the new! A proportion must be paid as God has prospered, and this needs constant review as income increases.

Individually

'each one of you should set aside a sum.'⁴

Everyone, from a personal response of gratitude and love, should give to God. Even the poorest has the privilege of giving something.

Cheerfully

'... their overflowing joy ... welled up in rich generosity.'⁵

A person may give without loving but he cannot love without giving. If love is the inspiration, then Christian giving will be a joyful, heart-warming event.

Wholeheartedly

'... they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord.'⁶

The consideration must not be what others will think of me if I do not give, or of seeking reputation by giving a commendable amount. Rather it is a recognition of my wonderful privilege of dispensing the sacred trust which God has given to me, and of doing it with all my heart and will.

Sacrificially

'Out of the most severe trial their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.'⁷

God estimates a gift not by the sum given but by its cost in self denial. Although the widow of Zarephath was staring death in the face, with only a handful of meal and a little oil, Elijah asked her to make him a little cake first before baking one for herself and her son. She sacrificially obeyed and God graciously sustained her thereafter.

Willingly

'For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what he has, not according to what he does not have.'⁸

Our stewardship gives evidence of our surrender to Christ.

Purposefully

'Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give.'⁹

We are to give with determination and resolution, not casually or thoughtlessly. If the giving is only when the emotions are stirred or when a sense of duty prevails, it does not stem from gratitude and love which produce a constancy of purpose.

Faithfully

'Now it is required that those which have been given a trust must prove faithful.'¹⁰

We must conscientiously and efficiently seek the maximum good for the Master's cause by dispensing that which has been entrusted to us.

Responsibly

'Who then is the faithful and wise servant.'¹¹

God's gifts should be handled in a way which will bring the largest gain possible for the Lord's Kingdom. There should be hard work, careful planning and wise management. Many unworthy causes make strong demands, and discernment and guidance are necessary, that gains are not unwisely distributed or squandered. In giving one tenth to the Lord we are in no way relieved of responsibility toward God for the remaining nine tenths. As we are the Lord's it follows that it is the Lord's money we use for our daily needs and this thought should have a wholesome effect upon our expenditure.

Generously

'... their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.'¹²

In Eph. 5:3 God classifies stinginess, or greed, in the same category as the sin of fornication: 'it is improper for God's holy people.'

Secretly

'But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret.'¹³

Jesus was speaking to the hypocrites who gave in pride, not in compassion to the poor. We must give so that others do not know what we are doing. And we must not let our left hand know what our right hand is doing. That is, we ourselves must not be taken up with our own giving. It is enough that God takes notice of us and will reward us in His own way.

Honestly

'All these things have I given willingly and with honest intent.'¹⁴

God charges Israel with robbing Him in tithes and offerings.¹⁵ The tithe, therefore, belongs to God. When we sing: 'O, how I love Jesus' and give the left-overs, we reveal our self-love and shallowness. Let us not pretend. God knows our income, appreciates our need and reads our intentions.

Gratefully

'Thanks be unto God for His indescribable gift.'¹⁶

This verse comes at the close of Paul's explanation of Christian giving. The enormous gift of God in Christ claims all that we are. All that we have is His. Let us gratefully yield all to Him that He might guide and direct His monies in our charge to the place where He sees needs it most.

Accountably

'For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ.'¹⁷

There is a day when we shall be called to render account for our stewardship. Our motives will all be exposed and we will stand robbed of all but His grace. Will your heart be broken and desolate, our hands tragically empty because of that to which you had clung and which is now stripped from you? You will certainly have to answer for that which you have retained on that great day.

May the Lord open our eyes, melt our hearts, and cause us to give as He directs to His cause.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/colin-peckham/biblical-principles-of-christian-giving/>

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