

A Liberal Church

by Seth Rees

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of generosity and liberality, trusting in God to provide for our needs.

Scripture: Proverbs 11:24, Malachi 3:10, Luke 6:38, Acts 4:32, 2 Corinthians 9:6

Topics: "Generous Giving", "Financial Stewardship"

Description

Seth Rees preaches on the spirit of liberality inspired by the Pentecostal fire, which leads believers to give generously and sacrificially. This spirit of giving defies human logic and reasoning, emphasizing that it is more blessed to give than to receive. The sermon highlights the biblical principle that generous giving leads to abundance and blessings from God, contrasting it with the consequences of hoarding and stinginess. Rees stresses that a Pentecostal Church fueled by liberality will thrive financially, eliminate debts, and have more than enough to support missions and ministry.

Transcript

"And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every man had need. 'Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the price of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet."

It is not the manner of liberality to which we desire to turn our attention, but to the spirit lying back of the generous action. The manifestation may alter, but the spirit of Pentecost never changes. From the days of the Apostles until this hour, whenever Pentecostal fire has fallen upon men or churches it has invariably burned the purse strings off and filled the possessor with the spirit of liberality. Spiritual lightning burns up all miserliness, stinginess, penuriousness, and covetousness, causing us to give in a princely way. We then for the first time, having our eyes illumined by the Holy Spirit, really perceive that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." We apprehend the law of Divine grace that the more we give the more we have.

This is, of course, contrary to all human law and precedent. It is diametrically opposite to human reasoning. The world says: "If you would be rich, save all you get and get all you can." God says: "Go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." The world would have said that it was the sheerest folly to ask a widow woman who, with her son, was starving, to give away the last handful of meal in the barrel. But when she gave the precious food to God's prophet, God gave her a larder that never failed. It was God's way of opening up to the widow inexhaustible supplies. That handful of meal from the bottom of the barrel, doubtless stale and musty, was the key that unlocked the storehouse of boundless provisions.

"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty. "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall himself also be watered again." "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." "Not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of all thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." All that we give to the Lord is clear gain; all we save is lost. All we scatter will keep forever; all we keep will rot.

Our hoarded money will eat our flesh like fire. Many in our churches feel that every dollar they put into the Lord's work is just so much out of pocket. It is no wonder, when we remember this, that people cry, "Hard times" when money is needed. But the liberal giver never complains of hard times. A man who gives unstintedly and gives unto the Lord will always have something to give.

Those who complain of hard times in the churches which the writer has been permitted to serve have been those who give little or nothing. As a matter of fact, they give nothing, for they fail to pay even their rent, which is one-tenth of their income, to say nothing of a free-will offering over and above the just debt.

A Pentecostal Church will always have plenty of money without prostituting herself by unholy connection with this Godless, Christless world. She will never have to hire or sell herself to the world to get money. She will never become a slave to the Gentiles, feeding them with oysters, clams, cake, or ice cream. She will never need to turn the house of God into a second-rate theater, nor desecrate the temple with merchandise of any kind. Pentecostal liberality will liquidate our church debts, cancel our mortgages, and fill our church treasury to overflowing. It will send millions to the foreign field for the salvation of the heathen. When a man receives the Holy Ghost he ceases to put a five-dollar hat on his head and put five cents in the missionary collection; he will stop wearing a twenty-five-dollar overcoat until he can put more than a quarter in the basket for church purposes.

In one of our New England conventions a wealthy man and his wife came to the altar seeking the baptism with the Holy Ghost. They did not seem to be able to get the witness, and we wondered why. They were back again the next night. The usher informed us that, when the plates were passed, the gentleman put in one penny while his wife dropped in two. When the call was made, here came the couple again. We do not need to say that such stingy seeking as this was in vain. It is doubtful whether they received even three cents worth of spiritual blessing. A Christian lady was complaining one day after she returned from church about the dullness of the sermon. Her little boy, who sat beside her in the pew, and had noticed the amount of her offering, spoke up quickly, "Why, mamma, what could you expect for a nickel!"

Nothing will ever protect the church from a bankrupt treasury and a burden of debt but this generosity breeding flame from the skies. When it falls, pew rents, entertainments, bazaars, festivals, poverty suppers and all other devilish nonsense will disappear. Lord, send down this fire!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/seth-rees/a-liberal-church/>

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