

# What Shall We Give To God

by Zac Poonen

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**Scripture:** Psalms 116:12, Matthew 11:28, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Philippians 2:25, Acts 7:59, Acts 26:14, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13

**Topics:** "Gratitude", "Living by Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

We don't know who wrote this psalm. It was probably David. I don't know.

Many of the psalms were written by David. We know he definitely wrote, but this one we don't know. Psalm 116, verse 12.

Here is the question. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits worthy? That is a good question for you to ask yourself. Today and every day.

Imagine if you woke up every morning like this. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits worthy in my life? First of all that we are alive today. So many lakhs of people died last night.

In the world. We are alive. So many people in the world are so poor they have to live on the streets.

You have got a house. It may not be a big house. It may be one room only.

Compare that with people who are living on the street. Sometimes when we complain about something, we don't realize there are lakhs of people in the world who are much less than us. The devil will always make you compare yourself with people who are more than you.

To make you unhappy. You think back of that in your past life. Always the devil makes you compare yourself with people who are more than you.

Then only we can make you unhappy. But the devil will never allow you to think of people who are less than you. Why? Because then you will become happy.

Just thought you will be happy. There is not only that. On top of that we are people whose sins have been forgiven.

There are so many people in our country who travel big distances to get what they might have seen. And they roll on the ground with so many big images. Because they have money.

But God has opened our eyes to show us how we can freely receive forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Never forget that. If you are a true Christian, there must be zero complaining and murmuring in your life.

Some of us complain because we have a few aches and pains and a few sicknesses in our life. Think of so many other people who have got ten times more than you. So great.

Then we will be thankful. So what I am trying to say is that the Lord has given us so many benefits. Spiritually first of all.

And physically also. So what shall I give back to the Lord for all that he has done for me? And it is a very interesting answer that the psalmist gives. What can I give to the Lord? He doesn't say I will give something.

He says I will just lift up my cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. That means, Lord, what can I give you? I have to give you nothing. I don't have anything that you didn't give me.

When my children were very small, if they wanted to give me something for my birthday, What do they do? They don't have any money. They have to go and ask mummy for some five or ten rupees and get some. They are taking my money to give me a gift.

But that makes me so happy. I don't say this is my money. They don't have anything.

Five days, ten days or whatever they have. They take from me to get me a gift. That is a picture of how we give to the Lord.

Some of you may have some proud idea, I have sacrificed so much for the Lord. It is the devil who makes you think like that. To make you proud.

I will give you my testimony. I am 74 years old. I have been a believer for more than 54 years.

I left my job to serve the Lord 47 years ago. Here is my testimony. I have never made one sacrifice for the Lord.

Oh, you say that like you are trying to be humble. No, I am not trying to be humble. I am telling you the truth.

I really see that before God from my heart. But you may say, yes brother Zak, but you have done so many things for the Lord. Ok, I will tell you.

At night, we can see so many stars. Small, small dots of light. We can think of those as little, little things we have done for the Lord.

There is one thing I did for the Lord there. Not very bright, but small, small things I have done for the Lord. And then, in the morning, the sun shines.

Now how many stars can you see? Can you see even one? What happened to them? Have they disappeared? No, they are there. There are stars in the sky now also. But why can't you see them? You know the answer.

Even a child knows the answer. Because the light of the sun is so bright that you can't see the stars. So when can you see the stars? In the darkness.

So that is how, when we think of what we have done for the Lord, you are always thinking, I did this and I did this and I did that. That is because you are in the darkness that you can see the stars. You know what you need to do? You must come to the light.

Like when the sun is shining, you will not see the stars. You will not remember in your mind what you have done for the Lord. That is how I always want to live.

I want to live in the sunlight. But I cannot see the stars. I cannot see any of them.

Can you say you are living like that? That you are living in the sunlight of the presence of Jesus Christ, that you cannot remember one thing you did for the Lord. If you live every day like that, Lord, I have done nothing for you till today. You did so much for me.

If you live like that, you will never be a backslider. Why is it so many Christians backslide and fall away? You know good brothers, who once were good brothers, they have fallen away from the church. I will tell you why.

Because they are in the darkness, looking at the stars, thinking I did this for the Lord, I did that for the Lord. So, whenever a thought comes into your mind, reminding you of all the sacrifices you have made for the Lord, you know what you should say? Get behind me, Satan. I am not going to live in the darkness, counting the stars I have done for the Lord.

I am going to live in the light, where I cannot see any stars. So, when I told you in the beginning, I can't think of any sacrifice I have made for the Lord. It is the 100% truth.

Because I compare everything I did with what Jesus did for me on the cross. And it looks like he has given me crores of rupees, and I gave him one rupee. Supposing some king gave you crores of rupees, and one day you gave one rupee to him.

Can you boast about that? I gave one rupee to the king. What stupidity! He has given you crores and you are boasting about one rupee you gave to him. You are comparing yourself with other believers, saying he only gave fifty paisa, I gave one rupee.

But the king gave you crores. So, what am I trying to say? I am trying to say, you must think more about what Jesus did for you, than what you did for him. It is the devil who makes you think about what you did for him.

The Holy Spirit will remind you of what he did for you. Some people ask this question. How can I distinguish between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the devil in my heart? How can I distinguish between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the devil in my heart? Here is the first step.

When you are reminded of what you have done, the sacrifice you have done for the Lord, that is definitely the devil. And whenever you hear some voice telling you what Jesus did for you, that is the Holy Spirit. That is a simple elementary ABC lesson to distinguish between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the devil.

What shall I render to the Lord for all that he has done for me? Lord, there is nothing I can give you. Everything I have is what you have already given me. You gave me crores.

Out of that, I can give you a little bit, one rupee to you. So I shall lift up the cup of salvation and say, Lord, please forgive me. Yeah, that is how we give ourselves to Jesus.

You know, if we really want to endure until the end faithfully, I will give you one verse to remember. It was the secret of the Apostle Paul's life. See, when you compare yourself, we all compare ourselves with the Apostle Paul.

If we compare ourselves, we find we are nothing even compared to Paul. What can you say you have done for the Lord compared to the Apostle Paul? Let me read to you, first of all, 2 Corinthians chapter 11. You know what all the Apostle did for Jesus? You know what all the Apostle did for Jesus? He travelled so many places.

And he did not even have a chariot or a bullock cart those days. You know how he travelled? Not even a bicycle. He walked.

Just like Jesus. How do you think Jesus walked, went in Israel up and down? All the Romans had chariots. Jesus walked.

It is 100 kilometers from his house to Jerusalem, he will walk. Sometimes we read in the Bible, he went to Jerusalem. But we don't realize that is 100 kilometers walking to go to Jerusalem.

So next time you read in the Gospel, Jesus went to Jerusalem, remember he walked 100 kilometers. And then he went back to Galilee, remember he walked back another 100 kilometers. Don't forget that.

When it says Paul went to Antioch. How did he go? Nobody gave him a chariot. Some places he went by ship.

But that is only the coastal city you can go by the ship. But from there you want to go inside, how do you go? You can come to Chennai by ship. You want to go to Bangalore, you can't come by ship.

In Paul's time, you had to walk. He walked and planted churches. And then he walked somewhere else.

And the Jews were always trying to hurt him and kill him. 2 Corinthians 11 He says, I will tell you what all I have gone through. 1 Corinthians 11 verse 23 Are they servants of Christ? I am speaking like a mad man.

I am more a servant of Christ. Are they servants of Christ? I am speaking like a mad man. I am more a servant of Christ.

In what way? I have been imprisoned more than them. Same verse 23 Many times in danger of death. 5 times I received 39 lashes from the Jews.

That means on his back he got 195 stripes. 3 times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned.

3 times traveling to preach the gospel I was shipwrecked. 1 night and 1 day, 24 hours, I was floating around in the water trying to save my life. I have been on more journeys.

That is walking. I have been in danger from rivers. Danger from robbers.

Danger from my countrymen. And dangers from other people. Dangers in the city.

Dangers in the wilderness. Dangers in the sea. Dangers among false believers.

Labor and hardship. That means because he was working to earn his living. He was not a full time worker taking money from others.

He was laboring making tents to earn his living. And through many sleepless nights. In hunger and thirst.

And without food. Sometimes he fasted. And sometimes he did not want to fast but he had no money to buy food.

And in cold and exposure, that means he did not have a blanket to cover himself. And then the biggest problem of all. Verse 28.

The daily problem of my concern for all the churches I have planted. What sort of problem is that? Verse 29. That some brother in some church is a little weak, Paul also feels weak for him.

And somebody is led into some sin, some church and I also feel a concern for him. It's like a mother. He's got one son here, one daughter there and another son over there.

And some grandchildren in all these places. And in one of those places one of those grandchildren is sick. And the mother feels bad.

And then he becomes alright and another grandchild or child over there is not well. And the mother feels bad again. That is how Paul was.

Now after reading this. Tell me my brothers and sisters, what sacrifice have you done for the Lord? Nothing. We do some small thing and we think it is a big sacrifice.

The Holy Spirit allowed Paul to write this for our benefit. And you say Paul you suffered such a lot. He says no.

Do you know what he calls all these things we read? You know he suffered all this for about 30 years. In so many places. He would not have suffered anything if he had just kept quiet and not talked about Jesus.

See what he calls all this now. In one word. 2 Corinthians 4.17 He calls this a momentary light affliction.

Listen to that. All that you read just now. He says only for a few moments and a very light affliction.

You keep that in mind and read that chapter 11 again. Some of you think your affliction is so heavy and it is for such a long time. You know it is because we don't read the Bible enough that we think like that.

I was once in one village in Tamil Nadu. For some conference. And those people were very kind for me.

They put me in one hotel, one lodge. A small hotel. So there in the room they have air conditioning.

So it is very comfortable. But what happens, so all the windows are closed because of the air conditioning. After about, at about midnight.

The power went off. No generator. This is a poor hotel.

All the windows are closed. It is really, you perspire there. You open the windows, all the mosquitoes come in.

Then I thought lying there. Can I call this as suffering? Just being bitten by mosquitoes or a little heat. I thought of Paul.

When he travelled somewhere. No hotel, no room. I don't know where he slept sometimes.

I said so many things, we have suffered nothing. It is a momentary, light affliction. Sometimes when you are sick.

It is good, we ask people to pray for us. Go to a hospital. But I have heard sometimes some believers complain like this.

I was in hospital and nobody came to see me. Oh ho ho, what a suffering that is, nobody came to see me. We haven't understood what it is to suffer for the Lord.

I want to give you an example of one brother in the New Testament who became sick. In Philippians 2. Philippians 2.25 Paul says to the Philippian Christians. I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker.

He is a very good brother. And listen to this. He was longing for all of you.

And he was distressed because you heard he was sick. Now today most people are distressed if they don't hear that you are sick. Oh ho, I was sick, nobody heard about it? Nobody came to see me, nobody called me up or prayed for me.

Look at this man. Those days there was no telephone. And he was in a hospital.

Near the prison in Rome. And Epaphroditus is there. And Philippi is many hundreds of kilometers away.

And he was from Philippi. And those people heard Epaphroditus is sick. And Epaphroditus heard about it and said, Oh I am so sorry, they heard I was sick.

Now how to tell them that I have become alright, I am better now. No telephone. You write a letter.

Don't worry I am ok now. It will take two months to reach there. He was concerned.

He was worried. For two months they will be worried now because they haven't got a letter from him. See, these believers, they were concerned for other people, not for themselves.

And whatever suffering they went through, they said, Ah, this is only a small light affliction for a short time. There was another secret of Paul's life. First of all, he considered everything that he went through,

suffering on earth, as only for a short while.

30 years, only short while. And all this imprisonment and shipwreck and being beaten and all, ah, light affliction. What a man he was.

Why? Because he says in 2 Corinthians 4, that all this, verse 17, is producing for us an eternal weight of glory. Ah, what is it producing for me? An eternal weight of glory that I cannot even compare to my suffering. But he says, it will, read the whole verse, it will produce this weight of glory only, only if I look at the things that are unseen and not the things that are seen.

If I keep on looking at the things that are seen, that will not produce any glory. It will only produce complaining and grumbling and murmuring. Then I keep on thinking of what all I am suffering for the Lord.

We must develop this habit of seeing the unseen things more. See, in chapter 5, verse 7, we walk by faith and not by sight. You either walk by faith or you walk by sight.

You walk by faith means you see certain things other people cannot see. You know, when the things of this earth are more real to you than the things of heaven, then you are walking by sight. That means, you think of what you are suffering and don't think of the glory that you are going to get through that.

And you are concentrating on the suffering. Oh, I am suffering so much. Oh, I am sacrificing so much.

That I am seeing things that are seen. The unseen thing is, God is using all this to produce a glory in me. For all eternity.

Then I am walking by faith. So, we must not waste any opportunity that we get to get glory in heaven. I will tell you what I mean by that.

The Bible says, we saw here, if we look at the things that are unseen, it will work for us a weight of glory. And it says, the things that are seen are all temporary things, the unseen are eternal. So, whatever suffering we go through now is only for a short while and is temporary.

It will not last forever. But if I react to it in a good way, it will produce a glory that is eternal. So, what does that mean? In Romans chapter 8, there are two important verses I want to show you.

You must never forget them in all your life. They have been a great help to me in my life. Romans 8, 28.

We know that God makes everything work together for good if we love Him and we are called according to His purpose. Now, the important word, that is, all. Everything.

Everything God will make work for our good. The bad things that other people do to us, and sickness, poverty, everything God can make to work for our good. Even if somebody kills us.

You know how the Apostle Paul was converted? We know that on the road to Damascus, the Lord met with him on the road. And the Lord spoke to him. He gives his testimony in Acts 26.

To a king. Verse 12. I was journeying to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to torture the Christians there.

At midday, I saw a light. Verse 13. And we all fell to the ground.

Verse 14. And I heard a voice speaking to me in my own Hebrew language. That was Jesus speaking to him.

Now listen to what he said. Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And listen to the next sentence. It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

It's not there? In English, it is there. It is hard for you to kick against these pricks of conscience. It's not there in German.

Verse 17, no? 14. 14, yeah. It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

What is that? What is these pricks? It was in his conscience. Something was pricking Paul in the conscience. And he was resisting it, resisting it.

And Jesus said, you can't keep on resisting it. What was it that was pricking in his conscience? Have you ever thought about it? I'll show you. Turn to Acts of the Apostles.

And chapter 7. Here it reads, at the end of the chapter, that they were all stoning, verse 58. They were stoning Stephen to death. Stephen.

All the Jews were angry with him. They were stoning him to death. And they laid their clothes before stoning him at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Before stoning him, they laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. In Acts 8, verse 1, Saul agreed to stoning him. Saul agreed to that too.

Saul said, give me your clothes and go and stone this fellow. Saul heard Stephen kneeling down and praying like this. Chapter 7, 59 and 60.

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Verse 60. Lord, don't punish these people for this sin.

Those were his last words. And he died. Saul had heard other people preaching about Jesus, that when Jesus died, he said, Father, forgive them for they did not know what they were doing.

But he had not seen that. But now he saw that. He saw Jesus again in Stephen.

He saw Stephen with the same spirit of Christ saying, forgive them. Don't punish them for this. at that moment, Saul was pricked in his conscience.

This Stephen does not look like an evil man. Why are we killing him? But he was already dead now. And he felt a prick in his conscience.

And for the next few days, he kept on getting pricked. And he would say, no, that's wrong. These people are preaching against Moses.

We got to get rid of all these Christians. The prick would keep on pricking him. Did Stephen look like an evil man? He couldn't say he was an evil man.

Because in his whole life, he had never heard anybody pray like this. Lord, don't punish them for killing me. No, no, no.

Paul would say to his conscience, no, they are all evil people. And after some time, conscience would say, but did Stephen sound like an evil man? And he would say, no, no, no, keep quiet. And for days, he was fighting against these pricks of conscience that started with the death of Stephen.

Not with the death of Stephen, but the way Stephen prayed when he died. It was not Stephen's sermon that pricked Paul. But the way he died, God allowed Stephen to die as a young man.

And in his death, he converted Paul. And what a mighty servant Paul became. Stephen was maybe only 30 years old.

And many years later, he asked Stephen in heaven after 40-50 years, Stephen, were you willing to die? He said, oh, I am so happy because of me, Paul got converted. He did much more for God than I could have done with my life. So God's ways are very different from ours.

We may think the death of Stephen was a waste. Why did he die at such a young age? But those are the pricks of conscience that finally brought Saul to Christ. Not the sermon, but the way he lived.

I want to say something to all of you. It is not our words that people listen to so much. But the way you live and conduct yourself in an office, the way you behave, the way you keep quiet when somebody is shouting at you and getting angry with you, I remember once I had to take one strong decision against some brother.

This was not in CFC, it was in another church before CFC started. And somebody else who heard about it in another town was very upset with me because he was his friend. He didn't know the full story.

And he was very angry with me for taking this discipline. So he rang me up on the phone and he began to shout at me for 15-20 minutes. You are an evil man and you did this and this.

I kept quiet. I didn't say anything. I could have put the phone down but I thought that is rude, I don't want to do that.

When somebody shouts at you on the phone, you must put it close to your ear and listen carefully what they are saying. That's good for you. So I kept the phone very close and listened and listened for 20 minutes.

I never said one word. Then he finished. So I said, brother, you finished now? I knew him, I knew who he was.

He said, yes, I finished. I said, okay, brother. God bless you.

I put the phone down. That's all. After 6 months, he discovered the full reason why I had to take this action.

And he wrote a letter to me. Oh, brother, I am so sorry. I did not know the real reason.

You were doing the right thing. I am really sorry that I shouted at you on the phone. I said, that's okay, brother.

I am not disturbed by that. You see, one action like that, he will never forget in his whole life. What was the sermon I preached to him on the phone? Silence.

You know, your silence can be a sermon sometimes. Do you know what it was that convicted pilot Pilate? I will tell you. Matthew 27 Verse 13 Pilate said to Jesus, Do you not hear how many things they testify against you? Verse 13 Verse 13 Verse 14 Jesus did not answer even one single charge and the governor was amazed.

Now many people are amazed when they hear some one-hour sermon. But how was Pilate amazed? What was Jesus' sermon? Silence. No reply.

It is our life that speaks more than our words. So God makes everything work for good. Stephen is being stoned to death.

Stephen is being stoned to death. What good is coming out of that? I will show you. He is praying, Lord, forgive me.

Don't punish them, forgive them. Saul is watching that. Stephen did not know that Saul is watching this and being convicted in his conscience.

Stephen did not know that in a few days this guy will get converted. And that he will become the greatest apostle of all. So remember this, my brothers and sisters.

What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has done for me? I shall seek to live like Jesus lived on this earth. I shall not keep thinking of all the things I have done for Him. But I shall think more of what He did for me.

And say, Lord, help me to live like that. I told you there are two verses that have helped me. Romans 8.28, I showed you.

The other is 1 Corinthians 10.13. 1 Corinthians 10.13. These are two very important verses. You must always remember them. Romans 8.28 and 1 Corinthians 10.13 1 Corinthians 10.13 In the middle of that verse, God is faithful.

He will never allow you to be tempted beyond your ability. Never! I have been a believer 54 years. Here is my testimony.

God has never, never, never allowed me to be tempted beyond my ability. But it says He will make a way of escape there. He will give me grace.

That is the way of escape. So when you have a big trial, He will give you grace to escape that. So if you remember these two verses, what are they? Romans 8.28 1 Corinthians 10.13 Don't forget it.

And say, Lord I believe. You will never allow me to be tested beyond my ability. Can you say that with him? Yeah.

Do you believe it? Only few. Do you believe it? In other words, God will make everything work for my good. Say that.

God will make everything work for my good. Do you believe it? You will never complain against in your life. You will never complain or murmur.

Yes. Your wife will be so happy. You will never complain or murmur.

Your husbands will be so happy. You will never complain or murmur. Your home will become like heaven.

The devil wants your home to be like hell. But God has given us the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the trial can be strong.

But we must ask God for grace. Lord, this is becoming too much for me. Please give me a way of escape.

Give me grace now. He will give you grace. He doesn't leave you alone.

So what shall you render to the Lord for all that he has done for you? I will lift up my cup and I say, Lord, give me some more grace. That is what I shall do. For all that the Lord has done for me, I am going to ask him for some more grace.

It is like if my children want to get a birthday present from me, they have to get money from me only. Our small children. So I say, Lord, what shall I render to you? Lord, give me some more grace.

Then I can give something to you. Don't be ashamed to go to the Lord and say, Lord, give me some grace. So that I can live a life that pleases you.

And don't meditate on all the things you have suffered for the Lord. That is in the darkness only you see those stars. Paul said, forgetting all the things that are behind and reaching forth to the things that are before.

So now stop thinking about all the things that are gone in the past. Stop thinking about all the evil other people did to you. Stop thinking of all the sacrifices you made for the Lord.

See the sunlight of what Jesus has done for you. Your life will be completely changed. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, help us to live in your light at all times. Never to live in the darkness. Never to think of what we have done but to think of what you have done.

Help every brother and sister here that their life and their home will be like heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

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