

Giving as a Lifestyle

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.” - 1 Timothy 6:17-19

The Christian lifestyle is represented through love, generosity, and giving. Giving is not about doing a bunch of good deeds to inflate our egos, being people pleasers or earning more tax right offs. Giving and generosity are about serving God and partnering with the Holy Spirit through love and good deeds to bring glory to the name of Christ. Christians are called by God to be a giving people. **True giving is all about pleasing God.**

God is the ultimate giver

“For God so loved the world, that he gave us his one and only Son.” - John 3:16

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with who there is no variation or shadow due to change.” - James 1:17

“For from him and through him and to him are all things.” - Romans 11:36

Our God is a giving God, and he loves to give freely to all people (Matthew 5:45). Everything that we have has been given to us by God. Everything that we have is to be stewarded in love and obedience toward God. The greatest demonstration of God's giving nature was demonstrated through him giving his one and only Son for mankind.

Why are we called to give?

“Do not neglect to do good and share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” - Hebrews 13:16

“For God loves a cheerful giver.” - 2 Corinthians 9:7

Freely you have received, freely give. - Matthew 10:8

Our God gives sacrificially and extravagantly and expects his people to follow his example. Our giving is a demonstration of who God is and the proper response for what God has done for us. Giving and generosity are the overflow of the love of God coming from a thankful heart that has been filled by the presence of God. Love by its very nature must be shared with others and is outward focused.

God requires and expects us to give.

“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. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” - Matthew 6:3-4

Notice Jesus didn't say *if* but *when* you give...

Important to remember...

- Giving is to be willingly and freely, not under compulsion.
- God wants us to give with the right heart motives as he is leading us to give.

There is a blessing in giving.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” - Acts 20:35

“Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.” - Luke 6:38

One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.” - Proverbs 11:24-25

There is a joy and happiness that we experience in pleasing God through a spirit of generosity and giving. When we move in a spirit of generosity, it gives us the opportunity to receive from God and be refilled by him again. A spirit of generosity and giving are an

outward and inward indicator that we are being led by the Spirit and walking in the Holy Spirit.

Who are we called to give to?

- God

"So rend your hearts and not your garments." - Joel 2:13

"The eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth, so that he may strongly support those whose heart is completely his." - 2 Chronicles 16:9

"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." - Luke 20:25

*"But they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us."
2 Corinthians 8:5*

- Individual families

"But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." - 1 Timothy 5:8

- The Church/Family of God

"Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." - Romans 12:13

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" - 1 John 3:17

- Unbelievers & the Poor

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." - Galatians 6:10

“The only thing they asked us is to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.” - Galatians 2:10

What our giving can look like?

- Spiritual sacrifices - prayer, praise, surrender of the will (Hebrews 13:15, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 2:5)
- Time - (Ephesians 5:16)
- Finances & resources - Tithes & offerings (Malachi 3:10, Proverbs 3:9-10, 2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giftings & talents (Ephesians 2:10, 1 Peter 4:10-11)

Conclusion

- God is the ultimate giver
- Giving should be out of love and obedience to God and love for others
- Giving should be sacrificially and extravagantly.
- Giving should be with a joyful heart