

Fil-Am Community Church

March 21, 2010

Giving as a Way of Life!

(Proverbs 3:9-10) (NIV)

⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops;

¹⁰ then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Galatians 6:9) (KJV)

⁹And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

The story was told about a 3 year old daughter that had the habit of giving half of her 2 quarter allowance to God each week. When they were absent one week from church the following week she gave an extra quarter as making up for the time they were absent. She thought she would give one quarter to God and the other to Jesus. The following week she had her normal allowance and started to cry because she only had the one quarter for God and needed another for Jesus. She was rewarded with an allowance increase, so she now gives on quarter to God, and one to Jesus each week, we are all just waiting to see what will happen when she finds out about the Holy Spirit.

The above story, although amusing also shows the family was teaching their daughter a great truth, that ***giving should be a part of your life***. It should be done from the first fruits and not with what is left over.

God does not want us to give as a duty or obligation but loves a cheerful giver.

The story was told about William Colgate and how he started in poverty and worked his way up always believing in the principle of giving God 1/10th of everything he earned, he went on to become a millionaire, and he gave God millions

We may never be a millionaire but the principle still applies, ***you will prosper*** if you learn to give cheerfully.

How we give is far more important to God than what we give, he is interested in your heart. Giving is to be;

- An Act of Reverence
- An Act of Reliance
- An Act of Reassurance

1. **An Act of Reverence:**

It says in Proverbs 3:9 “Honor the Lord your God with your wealth.”

When we give God what we possess it’s a way of honoring him. It is considered an act of Worship. It’s a way of showing respect.

Why is giving to God honoring him?

Because by giving to God we're acknowledging two simple truths.

The first is that God is the owner. Below are some Biblical texts to help illustrate the message.

Psalms 24:1, "The earth is the LORDS and everything in it, the world and all who LIVE IN IT."

Psalms 50:9-12, I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the FOREST is mine, and the CATTLE on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the MOUNTAINS and the creatures of the FIELD are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is MINE, and all that is in it.

Haggai 2:8, The SILVER is mine and the GOLD is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? YOU are not your own; you were bought at a PRICE. Therefore honor God with your body.

It all belongs to God, once we understand that truth it leads us to the second truth, which is we are just a steward for the Lord.

We don't own it, it all belongs to god we are simply watching over it for him.

Below are the property Laws of toddlers.

If I like it, it's mine.

If it's in my hand, its mine.

If I can take it from you, it's mine.

If I had it a little while ago, its mine.

If it's mine it must never appear to be yours in any way.

If I am building something, all the pieces are mine.

If it looks like mine, its mine.

If I saw it first, its mine.

If you were playing with it and set it down, its mine.

If it's broken, it's yours.

It may be silly but many adults act just like toddlers. Look what it says in James 4:1-3, ¹What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ²You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

If the earth and the fullness belong to God, we are not owners we are stewards, or another name for it is manager. We are simply managing what God has given us.

The Tithe or Ten Percent was first mentioned in the first book of the Old Testament.

(Genesis 14:17-20) (NASB)

¹⁷Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. ¹⁹He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all.

Abraham gladly paid his tithe to Melchizedek to express his appreciation to God for the deliverance, this should be the same thing we do for God.

We should realize that all of our possessions are gifts from God.

John Wesley said when I have money I get rid of it as quickly as possible, ***lest it find a way into my heart***. He understood an important lesson and realized that it was possible for money to become an idol and rule in our hearts.

The second thing we must realize about giving is that it is to be:

2. An Act of Reliance:

Look back again at Proverbs 3:9 where it says the first fruits of all your crops. Notice the emphasis is FIRST! Not what you have left over after you have paid all your bills, God should be the first in the sequence of people we intend to pay, then your wife, your children, your creditors, Uncle Sam, relatives in the Philippines, so on and so forth. God does not want what's left over, so to make sure we don't give him leftovers he gave us the below practice instructions.

(1 Corinthians 16:2) (NIV)

²On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

We should pay God first! When do we need to start, let's start with the very next paycheck, and make sure God get what belongs to him.

(Deuteronomy 26:2-4) (NASB)

² take some of the first fruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name ³ and say to the priest in office at the time, "I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the land the LORD swore to our forefathers to give us." ⁴The priest shall take the basket from your hands and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God.

The place of giving in the Old Testament was the tabernacle, later the temple, where is the place today? It should be the Local Church.

There are many ministries and missions all competing for our money but as Pastor David Jeremiah said you should give where the center of your spiritual life is , that should be your local church where you are being spiritually fed and built up in the Lord.

We should honor God by giving him our first fruits in all we have, will you let your giving be an act of reliance upon God? The answer should be yes, because giving is also;

3. An Act of Reassurance

We will go back to Proverbs 3:10, “then your barns be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.”

We must remember when we are faithful with all that God has entrusted to us; we have the reassurance that God will trust us with even more.

The story is told of a German Preacher named August Francke who founded an orphanage to care for homeless children. One day a destitute widow came begging for money and he politely but regretfully told her he could not help her. The woman began to weep so he asked her to wait while he went inside to pray and ask for God's guidance. He was trusting in God to meet his needs and gave what little money he could spare to support her. A few days later he received a thank you letter from the widow which explained that because of his generosity she was praying to the Lord to shower the orphanage with gifts. That very day he received 12 ducats from a wealthy lady and 2 more from another friend in Sweden. He thought he was amply rewarded when he received word that the orphanage would receive 500 gold pieces from the estate of Prince Lodewyk Van Wurtenburg. Francke wept in gratitude, in his obedient sacrifice and sharing with the widow of what he has the Lord provided what he needed!

It is not always how much you give, ***but how you give that is important to God.*** Our giving should be an act of reverence, reliance, and reassurance.

The Christian who consistently Tithes will be surprised:

- At the amount of money he has for the Lord's work
- At the deepening of his spiritual life in paying tithes
- At the ease in meeting his own obligations with the 90% left over
- At the ease in going from one tenth to a larger amount
- At himself for not adopting this plan earlier

(Proverbs 3:5-6) (NKJV)

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

We need to trust the Lord, and remember he says Malachi

(Malachi 3:10) (NASB)

¹⁰ "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

We must remember we ***cannot out give God***, no matter how we try, he gave his only Son for us, that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

When Jesus died on the Cross, he gave all of himself for us, and what does he ask of us? That we give our lives to him in return.

By giving your life to him you acknowledge that he is Lord, he is our owner. Are you ready to let go and make him your owner today, don't wait remember tomorrow is not promised, seize the opportunity **NOW**.