

SERMON NOTES: The Cheerful Giver

Main – 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

“Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. 'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.' And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”

1. Who's the Source?

Giving starts with God. He's the source. So, what does God give?

He Gives Natural Life

Acts 17:28 “For in Him we live and move and have our being.”

Our life is in Him, our existence is in Him, our identity is in Him.

But there's a problem. The problem is sin and the enormous gap that sin creates between God and the people He created.

He Gives Spiritual Life

John 3:16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.”

Through Jesus, God generously offers the gift of salvation, the gift of spiritual life.

When we accept the gift of Jesus, we get to live the life we were created to live.

He Gives Supernatural Life

John 10:10 “A thief has only one thing in mind - he wants to steal, slaughter, and destroy. But I have come to give you everything in abundance, more than you expect - life in its fullness until you overflow!”

And Jesus says He came to give us a rich, satisfying, full, amazing, positive life, not just when we get to heaven, but right now.

Jesus came to bless us in this life.

QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define a blessing?
2. Who is the source of all that we have?
3. What are the three things we studied that God gives us?

2. God and Money

There are some myths around God and money.

Here's the main one, 'The Church is only interested in your money' or 'I'd go to church but all they want is money.'

But here are some facts. Almost all of us think about money almost every day.

Here are some stats on the Bible and money.

11 out of 38 of Jesus' parables mention money and possessions.

In the Bible, there are more than 2,000 verses on tithing, money and possessions which is twice as many verses on faith and prayer combined.

The Bible talks a lot about money.

The reason there are so many verses in the Bible about money, is that there's a direct correlation between the way we handle our money and our faith.

Matt. 6:21 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Jesus knows that where we put our treasure, our money, our hearts follow.

God Owns Everything

Psalm 24:1 "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to Him."

Since God is the rightful owner of everything we have, this means that the money we earn actually belongs to God.

Money is About Discipleship

Matt. 6:24 “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.”

Money is a tool God uses to help us live and love like Jesus. Giving builds our faith. Giving shows our love for God.

Fight for Contentment

Phil. 4:11,12 “Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little.”

The Bible teaches us two key truths about contentment. We have to fight for it, and we can actually have it.

Kill Greed

Col. 3:5 “So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.”

Greed is bad, and it’s something all of us will have to fight against in our lives.

Trust in God

1 Tim. 6:10 “For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.”

Heb. 13:5 “Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.’”

Do we trust God, or do we trust money.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is God really interested in our money?
2. Why does the bible teach so much about money?
3. How can we trust God with our money?

3. Pay it Forward

Mal. 3:10 “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in My temple. If you do,’ says the Lord of heaven’s armies, ‘I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!”

A tithe means ten percent.

Entitled or Entrusted

We aren’t entitled to what we have, it’s entrusted into our hands.

Tithing trains our hearts to remember that what I have is entrusted to me and I’m not entitled to anything.

Reluctance or Relationship

Do we give with reluctance or out of relationship?

You’re giving out of relationship. You’re giving to God.

You’re giving to His mission and your giving makes a difference.

Optional or Obedience

Do I give out of obedience or is bringing our tithes optional?

1 Tim. 6:17-19 “Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.”

The God who’s piled riches on us asks us to be extravagantly and obediently generous.

Maintain or Multiply

Do we want to maintain or multiply?

Faith says, ‘I can’t afford not to give.’ Faith says, ‘God won’t leave me with ‘not enough.’”

Faith says, 'God is enough.' Faith says, 'I can see before I see.'

Faith says, 'I can see that God is Jehovah Jireh, God will provide.'

QUESTIONS:

1. Are we entitled or entrusted?
2. Should we give reluctantly or based on our relationship and trust in God?
3. Is giving optional?

Putting it all together (Application)

1. Keep close to the source. Don't lose sight that were running towards eternity. We should look after the benefactor not the benefits. We cannot be short-sighted to focus on the earthly things only. The bible says that the seen things are created from the unseen ones. That is why we need to keep close to the source. Jesus is the source because he is the owner and creator of all things.

2. Bad examples are more viral than good ones. God is not interested in your money. Have you heard that statement before? How about, the church is not interested in your money? The truth is that there is a lot of false teachings and teachers that falsely teach about what the bible says about money management.

On our main scripture, Paul says "And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure" (verse 9). When you are being pressured to give, when you are being told that the gifts of God are conditioned to your monetary offering, do not give. God will never coerce you to give. He wants you to give voluntarily and with cheer and joy. Wanting to. Honoring the one who has given you.

God knew we will have to deal with the burden of money management on a broken world. Jesus said "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John16:33(b) – NLT) Jesus is with you in your trials. That includes your financial trials. Just trust him and honor him with your obedience.

3. We are stewards not owners. Who is the owner of everything?. Because it is God the owner of all the things we have in our hands. We are just stewards. Understanding that will make us understand life through a kingdom vision. His vision.