

Godly Giving

How excited are you about the giving portion of worship? Do you wake up on Sunday zealous and passionate about giving? Is that something you eagerly look forward to in the car ride to church?

Giving is likely the least celebrated aspect of our worship. Maybe that is because many view it as a spiritual "tax." The Apostle Paul will help us appreciate the blessing of giving in our Bible reading from 2 Corinthians 8-9.

During a time when famine was severely impacting the church in Jerusalem, Paul encouraged churches in Achaia and Macedonia to be benevolent. Paul reminded the saints in Corinth to remember their commitment to raise funds for their Jewish brethren and have them ready when he arrived. 2 Corinthians 8-9 are among the greatest chapters about giving in the Bible.

Let's consider five words that can help us be godly givers.

Pattern

- There is only one authorized way for a church to raise funds – through its members taking up a collection on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-3).
- The methods for taking up the collection are a matter of judgment. Only the day when the collection is to be taken up is specified.
- It is interesting that out of all the things we do in the worship assembly, our giving is the only thing we are directly commanded to do on the first day of the week. We only have an example of the Christians eating the Lord's Supper on Sunday (Acts 20:7).
- We need to be careful of minimizing the significance of the giving! It is just as important to God as everything else we do in our worship.

Participation

- Through our giving, we partner and share in the work of God. We share in the work of benevolence and evangelism (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:3; Philippians 1:5; 4:15).
- Many of the works we do for the Lord require money. We don't get free electricity because we are a church!
- Every dime collected on the first day of the week contributes to God's people at Monte Vista doing the most important work in the world!

Purpose

- Purposeful giving is planned (2 Corinthians 9:7). It is not determined at the last minute. It is not left to chance or giving God the leftovers from the week.
- Our giving must be a top financial priority. It should be the first thing listed in the family budget. We must decide what we will give to God and work everything around it.
- If God is truly first in our lives, He should also be first in our weekly budget.

Cheerful

- Cheerful giving comes from a heart of love for God, Jesus, and kingdom work.
- Cheerful giving comes from a heart of gratitude for our physical blessings and the sacrifice of God's Son on the cross (2 Corinthians 9:15).
- Cheerful giving comes from seeing all of the good accomplished in the kingdom due to the giving of the saints.

Generous

- Christians are commanded to give as they have prospered (1 Corinthians 16:1-3). This varies among disciples. God doesn't specify a number for Christians to give. God expects us to examine our hearts and return to Him what we know is right.
- God is more concerned with our hearts and attitudes than an exact dollar amount (2 Corinthians 8:2-3; 9:6).
- Our giving is a demonstration of faith. Generous givers have faith that God will always care for them and ensure they can continue being generous.

Conclusion:

Let our giving always be in the spirit of Jesus (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

- Shawn Jeffries