

GIVING IS FAITH



SO NEITHER THE ONE WHO PLANTS NOR THE  
ONE WHO WATERS IS ANYTHING, BUT ONLY GOD,  
WHO MAKES THINGS GROW.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:7 NIV

Disciples of Jesus Christ put their faith and trust in Him, and follow His teachings. Jesus teaches us the following in Luke 6:38 –

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosoms. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.

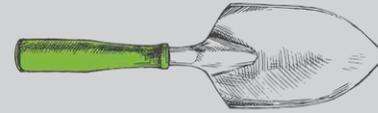


In this teaching, Jesus is directing the listeners to have a willingness to give, and He assures them that if they are obedient in their giving, they can be confident that God will always care for them. For the one who is generous, they will receive back what they need in full measure. Are you willing to put your faith in that teaching? Be reminded that Hebrews teaches us that *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*. When Jesus is the One you are looking to and who your hope is in, He will give you the strength to walk by faith and give without the worry that you will not have enough for yourself.

When we follow God willingly and obediently in our giving, we demonstrate our faith. All that we have, whether it is a little or a lot, is a gift from God. It is by His grace alone. Just as God has been generous and faithful to us, we are called to be generous with all that we have received. But sometimes fear overwhelms faith. With the uncertainty of the time we live in, the concerns that many have over their employment and the economy, fear of insecurity can be an obstacle that diminishes one's desire and willingness to give. Be encouraged during those turbulent times of life to steady your faith in Jesus, who is the author and finisher of faith (Hebrews 12:2). He has done all things necessary for us to endure in our faith. He will always be faithful to us and the Scriptures are proof of this. Read about the Israelites, and the experiences of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David,



etc...Through their experiences, we see how God fulfilled His promises and remained faithful to them all. And just as Jesus taught the disciples not to worry about what they will wear and what they will eat, we should take this encouragement to heart and hand over our worry and fear to Jesus (Matthew 6:31).



Paul taught the following to the believers in Corinth:

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work (2 Corinthians 9:7-8).

If the question wells up within you about whether or not you can afford to give of your money, joy, time, etc...keep this lesson from Paul in mind. If one who is obedient and faithful with what one has been given and shares it as the Spirit guides them, they will experience how God continually provides.

Think for a moment about the work a Sunday School teacher does. They give their time and use their gifts, passions, and energy to teach young students. They share what they have been given. They don't know exactly what the child will grow up to be like, but they have hope that their work will inspire that young person to grow up with a thirst for the knowledge of God. Or think about the work of parents. Parents give to their children out of what they have received. They set an example and, in faith, hope that their children will grow up and follow their lead. This goes beyond the material things and extends to the giving of time, a listening ear, compassion, and so on. Again, parents do not know exactly what their children will grow up to be like, but they

give of themselves in faith, hoping that they make a positive impact. God knows our good deeds and when we act according to His will, we believe He will bless all that is done, bringing us closer to Him and others. In this way, our giving is faith.

When we give by faith, then what we share with others will be acceptable to our God. In the story of Cain and Abel, the two brothers brought their offerings and presented them to God. The Bible tells us that *the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering* (Genesis 4:4-5). The reason why God accepted one and not the other wasn't explained in Genesis, but the author of Hebrews offers us some clarity in Hebrews 11:4 (ESV) -



By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. Abel's offering was acceptable in the sight of God simply because of his faith.

Because of his faith and his desire to do the right thing, he was commended as righteous. And even after his death, Abel's faith still spoke loudly. His actions were, and still are, an example for all to follow. The intention isn't for us to give out of obligation or because we will receive a reward if we do. We are to give out of our love for the Lord and out of our faithfulness to Him. We are to share what we have with the right heart's intention. Then, our offering will also be commended as righteous, and our faith will speak loudly to the world around us.

The concern of God is not how much we have, but how faithful we are. Our willingness to give demonstrates our faith in God and our confidence that He will always care for those who have

surrendered their hearts to Him. In Luke 12:48, as part of an answer to Peter, Jesus said,

*"For everyone whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."*

Jesus is emphasizing here that great privilege brings great responsibility. The greatest privilege given is to be children of God. When we believe that we received that title through faith, then whether we have a little or a lot, we will be led by the Holy Spirit to utilize what we have in the service of Him.

GIVING IS FAITH BECAUSE IT IS OUT OF OUR CONFIDENCE IN GOD AND OUR DEVOTION TO JESUS THAT WE OBEDIENTLY SHARE WHAT WE HAVE IN FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT OUR GOD WILL ALWAYS CARE FOR US.

This doesn't mean that we should have the expectation that if we give \$10, God will reward us with \$100. Or that if we serve with our car, that He will one day reward us with one that is brand new. Our God will continue to be faithful to us and will provide us with those things we need in order to continue to serve Him by serving others. May this teaching on **giving is faith** strengthen your understanding of God's faithfulness to you and your desire to share with others because of your commitment and faithfulness to Him.

- MJB

