

Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: “When It’s Good To Give”

SCRIPTURE Acts 20: 22-38 (NIV)

22 “And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there.

23 I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.

24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

25 “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again.

26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you.

27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.

28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God,^[a] which he bought with his own blood.

29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.

30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

32 “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

33 I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing.

34 You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.

35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

36 When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed.

37 They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him.

38 What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

I. Key Words:

- Stewardship

II. People, Places, & Time:

- Apostle Paul
- Miletus
- Ephesian Church

III. Background:

Paul was on his trip back to Jerusalem following his third missionary journey.

He was eager to get to Jerusalem by Passover because he wanted to deliver the gift from the Gentile Christians to relieve the suffering of the Jewish Christians.

Enroute the ship docked at the port of Miletus.

Under the pressure of time, Paul did not visit Ephesus.

Instead, he sent for the leaders of the Ephesian church to meet him at Miletus.

There he delivered his farewell address to them.

In this address Paul gave an account of his stewardship as an apostle.

He also warned them of both their duty and their danger.

Paul made certain of claims in his address: he claimed that he had spoken fearlessly, lived independently, and faced the future gallantly.

In this address Paul also quoted an unrecorded saying of Jesus.

We know that Jesus said a lot of things that were not recorded in the Gospels, and this is one of them.

IV. In Depth:

1. Lesson Emphasis #1: It is good to give when you know where the money goes.

A. A principle.

Paul reminded his listeners that he had labored with his own hands to support himself when he ministered among them.

He had set an example of giving; he had personified the principle Jesus had stated.

They knew where the money they had given to Paul went: it went to ministry.

B. A practice.

It is important when you give money that you know where the money goes.

You must know that it is used responsibly and with accountability.

That is why a church has a budget.

The people in the church know where the money goes.

In adopting a church budget, they agree on how the money is to be spent.

In the regular reports to the church, they find out that it was spent as agreed.

There is a public accounting of where the money has gone.

Usually the best-accounted gift that you can give is your gift to the church.

It is used responsibly and accounted for regularly and accurately.

2. Lesson Emphasis #2: It is good to give when you know what the gift shows.

A. Involvement.

It's giving of your time your talent and your tithe.

Paul indicated that these people had known of his personal involvement with them.

He had not shirked his duty.

Your gift of love to the church shows your involvement in the church and its ministry.

When you give, you become involved.

B. Interest.

You give to those things in which you have an interest.

Giving to the church and its ministry shows interest.

It shows your attentiveness to your love for Christ and His Church and the work of the church.

C. Initiative.

Giving also shows the initiative to respond to God's love.

God has showered his love on us.

Remembering John 3:16, God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son that whoever believed in him shall not perish but have every lasting life.

Romans 5:8, But God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

By giving we take the initiative to respond to that love.

Real Christian giving should not be from compulsion, duty, threat, or guilt. It should be a person's response to God's love.

3. Lesson Emphasis #3: It is good to give when you know that the church grows.

A. Concern.

Paul's concern was with the future of the Ephesian church.

He had laid the foundation well.

But he warned the leaders that problems could arise, questions could emerge, and leadership could be challenged.

The very future of the gospel at Ephesus was at stake.

It would depend on their faithfulness to God's principles.

Isn't it interesting and instructive that the concluding word in Paul's farewell address was the reference to Jesus' statement that it is more blessed to give than to receive?

The continuation and growth of the church would depend on how they acted on that statement.

Every church must give and increase its giving for the church to grow.

With inflation and a need for expanded programs, a church cannot continue to give the same dollar amounts year after year and have church growth.

B. Concept.

But how can a church grow?

Paul gave some pointers for church growth to the Ephesian church leaders that will also help us to grow churches for God's glory today.

1. Be eager to work.

There is no church growth without work.

Growth never comes automatically.

Someone has to work for it to be realized.

2. Be consistent in giving.

The best way to give to the church is regularly and consistently.

This is a key to strong churches and to their growth.

3. Be Faithful to the Gospel.

- Proclaiming the gospel
- Living a life of obedience
- This includes:
 - Being reliable, steadfast, and unwavering in your actions
 - Being trustworthy in your word and promises, even if it means suffering a loss.
 - Practicing what you preach and maintaining integrity in all areas of life, like your marriage, work, and friendships.
 - Preserving the gospel's integrity: Faithfulness means protecting the gospel from being distorted by others who may claim it offers forgiveness without requiring holiness.

V. Make It Happen

- When is it a good time to give church?
- How often should a person give to the church?
- Should we ever withhold our Tithe and offering from the church?
- What does a persons Tithe and offering demonstrate?
- List ways we can help the church to continue to grow?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?
