

# Series: Ultimate Living

**Message Title:** The Art of Giving (part 4)

**Message & Scripture Highlights:**

Have a few people read the following scriptures:

**Matthew 7:20**

Therefore, you will fully know them by their fruits.

**Matthew 15:11**

It is not what goes into the mouth of a man that defiles and dishonors him, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles and dishonors him.

**John 15:4**

Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me.

Discussion Part 1:

The Word of God compares each individual to a fruit tree or a vine branch. This must be important if even Jesus would use this analogy to describe us. If Jesus said we would know people by their fruits, do you think fruit can lie, and do you have a responsibility to discern a person's "fruit"? Discuss what come out of your mouth and how it can either defile you, or bring you to honor. (Think fruit, and what's in fruit [seed], and consider how your words legally represent your choices).

S.Marshall thoughts:

If you're going to bear fruit, good fruit, you've got to GET to GIVE so you can make the cycle of life completely circle. No branch can bear fruit of itself. You must be able to source out the life that helps you produce life. This is why the enemy wants to either reverse the axiom Get to Give, and make the conclusion of the mater GET, or completely alienate the whole concept to a Christians mind. The true joy of the child of God's life is in the giving, bearing good fruit, benefiting others, being generous like our Father God.

Have someone read:

**Proverbs 11:25**

The generous man [is a source of blessing and] shall be prosperous and enriched, And he who waters will himself be watered [reaping the generosity he has sown].

**Hebrew 11:6**

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

### Discussion Part 2:

This is a life law: the generous person shall be prosperous. Discuss how your response to God's Word. Using Jesus analogy a tree that gives a lot of it's fruit away from itself will grow, increase, prosper, grow deeper roots, get stronger branches and produce more and more fruit. Discuss among yourselves if the idea of producing more fruit seems appealing. If prospering is about giving, can you make peace with God wanting you to prosper? Discuss how generosity can effect a person's life.

### Stephen Marshall Thoughts:

We remember that Jesus is the One who taught on good and faithful stewardship in Matthew 25. God loves everyone. That is absolute. God rewards each according to their faith though. Being loved is different than being rewarded and Christians have to be cautious not to buy into a socialistic mentality about faith. You can seek God and you can diligently seek God. Is there a difference? Of course there is. Therefore, the difference between the two faithful stewards and the unfaithful steward is not a matter of love, it's a matter of faith and corresponding action.

### **Life Application:**

Let's apply the art of giving to your life. First of all you can't give what you don't have.

- 1) What do you have? (Talk about this in your group. Talent, time, money, strength)
- 2) What 'ground' has God provided you? (Biblical place to give your 'seed' to)
- 3) Thank God for what you have to give, and speak a blessing over it.
- 4) Give your gift in an orderly, Biblical way. Keep an accounting. (Jesus did).
- 5) Finally, be aware to look & expect the supernatural involvement of God's blessing.
- 6) When God rewards you (which He will), be sure to document His faithfulness

### **Now Pray The Word:**

Get someone (or a few people) to lead out in prayer based on the Truth talked about. Pray according to the above scriptures:

*"Lord God we choose to dwell in You, to live in You so we are abundantly fruitful at all times. We can't produce anything good of ourselves, but You help us to fulfill our destiny of being generous and giving. Faith pleases You Father God and it's not enough for us just to believe You are. We also have to have confidence in Your promise to reward our pursuit of You. Our fruits help identify us as being Your children to the world. Help us to always honor You Father." (Continue to pray specifically for one another's needs ...)*