

DECLARE

SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD OVER YOUR FINANCES

TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:5-15

MALACHI 3:10 - TEST GOD

In the early nineteenth century, private citizens, fueled by the fires of Christian revivalism, organized to both proclaim the gospel and relieve the needy. They met the needs of thousands. Because this giving stemmed from a Christian worldview, they gave not only generously but carefully. As Christians, they recognized humanity's sinfulness and thus discouraged indiscriminate giving that failed to distinguish between the truly needy and the fraudulent. However, as the nineteenth century "progressed," views of humanity began to change, and approaches to charity changed with them. A preeminent example of this worldview was articulated by Horace Greeley, the Universalist publisher of the New York Tribune.

Greeley believed everyone was basically good and, thus, he had no reservations about indiscriminate giving. Furthermore, he recommended the redistribution of wealth so that all would receive an equal share. Though his newspaper did much to change public opinion, Greeley was only the beginning. With an increasing confidence in humanity, charity became secularized. Citizens idolized the state, relying upon it for sustenance. By the end of the nineteenth century, the new direction was clear and chilling:

We ought, therefore, to regard the Nation as the Church, its rulers as ministers of Christ, its whole body as a Christian brotherhood . . . its progressive development, especially in raising the weak, as the fullest service rendered on earth to God, the nearest thing as yet within our reach to the kingdom of heaven.

It is hard to overemphasize the practical effect of this change of outlook. In this new era, private charitable giving was actually discouraged so as not to crowd out government involvement. However, it was the federal response to the Great Depression—the New Deal—and the Great Society legislation that sealed the change in the United States.

President Franklin Roosevelt responded decisively to the Great Depression. His arguably necessary policies were a mixture of federal regulations (e.g., the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) and social reform (e.g., Social Security legislation). From temporary jobs to cheap electricity, Americans expected Uncle Sam to provide relief. One young congressman who drank deeply from the well of the New Deal was Lyndon Johnson. He represented Texas in the House of Representatives beginning in 1937 and became known as Roosevelt's protégé. When Johnson became president in 1963, he brokered his own New Deal, which he dubbed the "Great Society." It was a federalized effort to battle social ills. As one sympathetic author wrote, it was a plan hatched with "the best of intentions."

*There is much to commend Johnson's work. The Civil Rights Act, for example, is part of his legacy. However, Johnson's crusade to help the poor did not work. His policies failed, statistically, and they severed that vital relationship between charity and discernment. As Marvin Olasky, author of *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, argued, "The War on Poverty of the 1960s was a disaster not so much because of its new programs but because of their emphasis on entitlement rather than need." This misplaced emphasis continues. A truly "great society" will embrace wise, private, charitable giving. Such giving is, after all, personal, effective and, at least in the United States, increasingly popular. With the failures of public sector welfare, one can hope that charity finds its way back to the Church and the private sector once again. - Kairos Journal*

WANT TO HAVE WHAT WE CAN SEE, BUT ITS TOUGH TO TRUST FOR GOD PROMISES WHEN WE CAN'T SEE THEM!

1 CORINTHIANS 16

SUPPORT THOSE WHO WERE SPREADING THE GOSPEL AND TO HELP THE NEEDY

THERE IS NO LAW THAT TELLS YOU YOU HAVE TO GIVE A CERTAIN AMOUNT.

UNDER GRACE - IT'S AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER.

YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO SHARE WHAT GOD HAS BLESSED YOU WITH

IF YOU FOCUS ON HIM YOU WILL KNOW WHAT YOU ARE SUPPOSE TO GIVE

TITHING - GENEROUS GIVING

OLD TESTAMENT - TITHE - 1/10

- FESTIVAL TITHE - a tenth of ones income to celebrate once a year

- LEVITICAL TITHE - ONE MOST PASTOR PROMOTE - LEVIS OWNED NOTHING - DIDN'T TAKE A SALARY - HAD NO LAND - BRING THE FAT TO THE LORD -

COOK IT DOWN AND THE LEVITE WOULD GET A 1/4 - JEWISH, LANDOWNERS, WHAT CAME OFF THAT LAND

LEVI

- CHARITY TITHE - EVERY THIRD YEAR 23.3%

2 CORINTHIAN 8 - 9 - CHEERFUL GIVER

The primary reason that Paul addressed this topic here was that false teachers in Corinth were questioning Paul's motives for ministry. Evidently they were suggesting that Paul was pocketing contributions earmarked for the poor believers in Jerusalem. Consequently the Corinthians, despite their announced willingness to help, had not donated to the cause.

First, who should give? All believers can and should contribute to the cause of Christ. The church at Macedonia was notoriously poor, yet they asked for the privilege of being allowed to give (8:4) out of "their deep poverty" (8:2).

In what spirit should we give? We ought to give willingly (8:12; 9:2) and cheerfully, “not grudgingly or of necessity” (9:7). It is a privilege to share in the work of God. Moreover, it is the appropriate response to God’s “inestimable gift,” His own Son (9:15).

How much should we give? Nowhere does the New Testament give us a specified percentage or amount. Paul simply exhorts each of the members of the Corinthian church to give “as he purposes in his heart” (9:7). Ideally, our gifts would be “generous” (9:5) and given with “liberality” (9:11).

The overall message of this passage suggests sacrificial giving. Again, by way of example, the Macedonians, like the poor widow praised by Christ in Luke 21:1–4, gave not merely their “leftovers,” but more than they could afford (8:3).

How should monetary gifts be handled? Paul took special care to explain that the Corinthians’ contributions would be handled with integrity by Titus (8:16–20, 23) and another unnamed brother (8:22). These were men of the highest character. They were trustworthy and above reproach in the handling of money. We should entrust our church finances to men of this caliber.

Why is giving so important? In Paul’s words, it tests the sincerity of our love for God and others (8:7, 8). To paraphrase the words of Christ (Matt. 6:19–21), how we handle material wealth is a barometer of our spiritual health.

What will be the results of our giving? We should not give primarily to get, but Paul makes it clear that giving does lead to abundance. Cheerful givers experience God’s love in a special way (9:7). They enjoy the spiritual blessing of participating in a rich harvest of righteousness (9:10).

- THE LAW MADE TITHING A RULE

- THE CROSS RETURNED TO AN ACT OF WORSHIP

- YOU ARE NOT CURSED BECAUSE YOU DON’T TITHE

- CHRIST REMOVED THE CURSE

UNDER THE NEW COVENANT WE DON’T TITHE TO AVOID THE CURSE

WE TITHE BECAUSE IN CHRIST WE ARE EXCEEDINGLY AND ABUNDANTLY BLESSED

WE LIVE UNDER GRACE - PAUL ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT GENEROSITY NOT TITHING

MANY MEASURE FAITHFULNESS AND SPIRITUALITY BY THE AMOUNT YOU GIVE INSTEAD OF THE ATTITUDE BY WHICH YOU GIVE.

GOD ISN'T AFTER YOUR MONEY.

HE'S AFTER YOUR HEART AND OBEDIENCE.

“IT IS MANIPULATION THAT WOULD CAUSE YOU TO GIVE OUT OF EMOTIONS IN THE MOMENT EXPECTING SOMETHING OF GOD VS THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVING ON YOUR HEART FROM A PLACE OF GENEROSITY.

TITHING ISN'T GENEROSITY. IT IS OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD

TITHING IS NOT A HAVE TO IT'S A GET TO.

IN GRACE TEN PERCENT IS THE FLOOR NOT THE CEILING

THE OFFERING COMES TO THE STOREHOUSE WHERE YOU ARE FED

IF YOU TRUST THIS HOUSE TO DEDICATE YOUR BABIES, MARRY YOU, COUNSEL

IF YOU DON'T TRUST YOUR CHURCH, FIND A CHURCH YOU TRUST TO GIVE YOUR MONEY TO TO DO WHAT YOU BELIEVE SCRIPTURE SAYS THE CHURCH SHOULD DO.

GIVE IT WITH A CHEERFUL HEART.

IF YOU NEVER GIVE YOU WILL NEVER EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF SEEING THE FRUIT OF THE HARVEST.

WHY I GIVE

- 1. IT PROVIDES FOR GOD'S HOUSE**
- 2. IT TELLS GOD I TRUST HIM**
- 3. IT CREATES MARGIN IN MY LIFE FOR GOD TO FILL**
- 4. IT REMINDS ME THAT I AM NOT MY SOURCE**
- 5. IT CONNECTS MY MONEY TO A KINGDOM PURPOSE**

- 6. IT GIVES ME ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE**
- 7. IT TRANSFORMS MY MONEY INTO A SEED**
- 8. IT BREAKS GREED OFF OF MY LIFE**

PHIL 4:19

GEN 12:2

1 TIM 6:10

MATTHEW 25:14-30

PROVERBS 13:11

These declaration are not magic words that will automatically solve all of our financial problems.

They are a reminder of the truth of God's word and a way for us to align our hearts with His will.

We still need to get up and go to work, make wise financial decisions, and trust in God's provision.

We can open ourselves up to these blessings is through the act of giving.

When we give, whether it be our time, our resources, or our talents, we are showing God that we trust Him to provide for us and that we are willing to be a blessing to others.

Making a dedication and commitment to give, whether through tithing or other means, is not just about giving money to the church, it's about recognizing that God is our source and that everything we have comes from Him.

When we give, we are saying, "God, I trust that you will provide for me and that I don't have to hold on to my resources tightly. I am willing to bless others with what you've given me."