



Searching Outside Yourself To Help Others

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Monthly Newsletter

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This month, I want to teach on “**A Disciple And His Giving.**” All disciples are disciples of the Lord. Discipleship is designed to conform us to His image, to become like Him in every way. One of the premier attributes of Jesus, who was God in the flesh, is

that He was a giver. **John 3:16** states, “*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.*” The principle in this scripture is, you can give without loving, but you can’t love without giving. If you truly love God, you will give your all to him; and if you truly love others, your love will mainly be expressed in your giving to them. Scripturally another way of spelling “love” is “give.” Jesus was birthed into this world to give His life away to others, which include you and me. He gave His time, His strength, His schedule, all of His resources, and ultimately gave His life. He continues to give us His word, His grace, His mercy, His promises, His Spirit, His power, and His intercessions. To be like Him we must do the same.

In this article, I am primarily going to focus on the giving of our finances. I have found most Christians don’t have a problem with giving of their time (schedule) or talent (gifting), but

DISCIPLE

BE ONE. MAKE ONE.

Part Six

a lot of us bristle when a pastor or a leader begins to challenge us about our tithe (money). My purpose for talking to you about money is not to get something from you, but actually to get something to you. As we continue, you are going to see that God has chosen the means of our giving as the catalyst for our receiving.

In the New Testament the words give, gives, giving, and gave appear 389 times. There are over 2000 scriptures in the Bible concerning a person and his or her money. Of the 29 parables, 17 have to do with a person and his or her money. Let the truth of the following two verses, stated out of four different translations, get into your heart and then out through your life. **Proverbs 11:24-25** out of the NASB “*There is one who scatters, yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, but it results only in want. The gen-*

erous man will be prosperous, And he who waters will himself be watered.” Out of NLT it states it this way, “*Give freely and become more wealthy; be stingy and lose everything. The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.*” The NCV says, “*Some people give much but get back even more. Others don't give what they should and end up poor. Whoever gives to others will get richer; those who help others will themselves be helped.*” And finally the Message says, “*The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller. The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped.*”

Biblical giving is demonstrated in three ways, through our tithes, through our offerings, and through our alms. I believe the tithe, which is at least 10% should go to the local church, for that is where you are being fed and cared for. Offerings, which are given in addition to your tithe, are designed to go to mis-

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sionary organizations that are seeking to fulfill the Great Commission throughout the world. Alms are anything you give to meet the needs of individuals. It's not a matter of doing one of the three; it's my opinion that we don't become a true Biblical giver until we are in the habit of doing all three.

The question that I want to ask is what kind of giver are you? Most Christians are tippers not tithers. By that I mean they give, but their giving is meager. Did you know that the average charitable giving in the US is 1.7% of their gross income? The average among Christians is a little higher; it is 2.5% of their gross income. If this is true, and I believe that it is, then less than 3 cents of every dollar among Christians is spent on something other than their own needs. If you are a tither, someone who gives at least 10% of your income, but you don't give offerings or alms, you are then what I call an average giver. This is a good place for every Christian to start, but that shouldn't be where you finish in the realm of giving. I believe every sincere disciple should ascribe to be a tester, where you give extravagantly, thereby testing God where His giving is concerned. If your giving isn't testing you, then it surely won't test God. **Malachi 3:10-11** speaks to this, "*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,*" says the Lord of

hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you."

There are two ways in which a Christian may view his or her money. First, how much of my money shall I use for God? Or secondly, how much of God's money shall I use for myself. The Bible clearly speaks to the fact that God has chosen "*sacrificial giving*" as the means to "*abundant receiving*." The abundant life doesn't happen in the midst of an abundance of blessings; it happens in the midst of an abundance of opportunities to be a blessing. **Acts 20:35** states, "*the Lord Jesus Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*" All this means that the "*more, or the abundance*" happens when you become a blessing, not when you receive a blessing. **Luke 6:38** says it this way, "*Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.*" It's our measure of giving that determines our measure of receiving. In the world, people's receiving determines their giving. For a disciple, who is seeking to be like our Lord, then it's our giving that determines our receiving. **Philippians 4:15** states, "*No church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone.*" Notice the order of Paul's commendation

of this church; he puts giving before receiving. Like his Lord, Paul understood that giving is the catalyst for receiving. My point is this, the "*provision for our needs*" come when "*we make provision for the needs of others.*" At the risk of overemphasizing, let's look at **Luke 6:38** again, but this time out of the Message. "*Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back, given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.*"

The reason a lot of Christians don't sow is that they perceive there to be a lack of seed. They are waiting to receive before they give, when in reality they have already received an abundance of seed for sowing. **2 Corinthians 9:10** tells us that this is true, "*Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness.*" This scripture tells us that each of us have been supplied with seed to sow from the Lord of the Harvest. Most of us aren't aware of this, because the seed comes to us at the same time God gives us our daily bread. Therefore, we mistakenly view God's provision as all bread and consume our seed right along with our bread; not knowing that a portion of what He has given us is seed that He wants us to sow into the lives of others.

This happens because of selfish thinking on our part. We need to understand that everything that comes to us was meant to go out from us. We were never meant to be a vessel in which God fills with blessing, but a channel in which God dispenses blessing. **Matthew 10:8** states, *“freely receive, freely give”* and **2 Corinthians 9:11** states, *“you will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion.”* You can’t separate the being *“made rich in every way”* from the opportunity to *“be generous on every occasion.”* God does the first, so that we can do the second. **2 Peter 1:4** tells us *“God’s promises are given so that we may partake of His nature.”* Which means that God will give us what He has, so that we are equipped to become like He is. Therefore riches are what He has, but generous is what He is. Ultimately what God is trying to teach us is that becoming like He is is better than receiving what He has. God is a sower and He wants us to be one as well.

In light of this, I want you to see that in everything that comes to us from God, a portion of it is seed for sowing and a portion of it is bread for consuming. Let me give an example of what I mean. Let’s say you are lonely and in need of a friend, so you pray and ask God to send you someone to befriend you. Within a few days, God answers this prayer and sends you a friend. Don’t just see this friendship as bread to consume upon your loneliness, but also see it as seed to sow into the life of someone else who is lonely. As the scripture states above, now that you have been *“enriched in a certain way,”* look for the *“occasion to be generous”* by sowing a portion of your enrichment into someone who is poverty stricken in that area.

Or let’s say that you have been afflicted in some way, either by a circumstance or by a person, and you are in need of God’s comfort. After praying and within a few days God’s provision of comfort comes to your life. You need to realize that it’s not only bread for your situation, but a portion of this provision of comfort is seed that God wants you to sow into the affliction of another person. This is what **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** states, *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”*

In closing, let me sum up everything I just wrote. It is only our sacrificial giving that will release His abundant provision. As a young disciple myself, I struggled with this concept and one day in prayer I heard the Lord speak to me by the still small voice these words, *“Son, are you only willing to act like a Christian as long as it doesn’t cost you anything.”* On that day, I began to understand that Christianity was birthed in sacrifice. Jesus died so that we might live. In **2 Samuel 24:24**, David states in reference to an offering that he wanted to make to God these words: *“I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”* In David’s mind, if it didn’t cost him something, it wasn’t an acceptable sacrifice. Jesus saw the same thing in a widow’s giving. **Mark 12:41-44** it states, *“And He (Jesus) sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.”* These verses teach us that God measures generosity not by the size of the gift, but by the size of the sacrifice. Remember, we sow horizontally, but we reap vertically.



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Notes From The Newsom's From Diane's Desk

Thank you so much for your prayers last month. Jim's ministry trip was very successful, and made an impact on so many lives. His hand is doing much better; he has been massaging it with coconut butter and dipping it in a hot wax bath. This has helped loosen the scar tissue and keep the skin moist.

Ronan will be ice-skating in a local competition this month. He has been working hard on his routine and is so excited. He will also be starting practices for performing in the "Nutcracker on Ice." This year he will be one of the mice. It is great that he has found a sport that he loves and is very good at.

Jessica, Nick and Ronan will be headed to Florida for a vacation this month. While they are away, I will be staying at their house to take care of their fish, four cats and dog. While staying at their house, I am planning on writing my second children's book. This time I am going to try to do my own illustrations, so please pray that God helps me with this project.



Jim's Itinerary For November - 2022

November 1-2 - Harvey, IL
Restoration Ministries
Ray Banks - (708)339-3573

Please Remember this ministry in your mission giving.

If you can give, please make out your check to "**Outward Focused,**" then place your tax-deductible contribution in the envelope provided. You can also give through our website. The address is: www.outwardfocusedinternational.org

If you would like to schedule Jim to come speak at a school, prison, or church in your area, please call or e-mail Jim at the above number or address.