

## **ABOUND IN THIS GRACE**

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss some of the important facts about giving as a Christian should.
2. Acts 20:17-30
  - a. Paul... did not shrink from telling them anything which was profitable. v. 20
  - b. He did not shun to declare all the counsel of God to them (v. 27).
  - c. He warned the elders of troubles to begin among them (v. 30).
  - d. I today declare unto you the counsel of God about the subject of Giving!!
3. There are many references to giving in the N.T.
  - a. Every book in the N.T. discusses this subject
  - b. About one in every 5 verses deals with money in some way
  - c. 19 of the 38 parables of Jesus are on this topic of money
  - d. There is more in the N.T. about money than baptism !
4. Four classes of Givers:
  - a. The covetous man who gives but regrets it
  - b. The unteachable -these resent all teaching on the subject of giving
  - c. The ignorant - these can be taught the truth, they need instruction
  - d. The liberal - these are the ones that believe what the Bible teaches on the subject and do accordingly.
  - e. This lesson is for all 4 classes of givers - to encourage and rebuke and exhort all of us.
5. Text - 2 Cor. 8:7 "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."

**Discussion****I. GIVING IN LOVE**

- A. 2 Cor. 8:8 "...prove the sincerity of your love."
1. Giving must involve the heart. It must be done out of love
  2. Paul was saying here "What you give is evidence of how much you love God."
  3. Why should we love the Lord enough to want to give to Him?
  4. The answer is found in 2 Cor. 8:9 "...though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye though his poverty might be rich."
- B. What did our Lord do for us?
1. "He was rich" --- imagine the glory that was His in heaven
    - a. He became poor — think about how poor He was on earth, and about His death for us.
    - b. Matt. 8:20 "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."
  2. Why did He willingly make that sacrifice? "That you might become rich.:"
  3. We give out of love because before Christ we were lost - we were poor , now we are rich
    - a. You through His poverty, became rich!
    - b. Because He left heaven, you can go to heaven.
  4. We should love God and because we love, we should give.
  5. How do you prove that you love God? By Giving As HE COMMANDS !
- C. People who do not give as they should prove that they love themselves more than God.

## **II. GIVING MUST BE A SACRIFICE**

- A. Religion that is not worth sacrificing for is worthless to us
- B. The O.T. teaches us two important things about sacrifices:
  - 1. **The sacrifice must cost**
    - a. An example of David when he needed to offer a sacrifice to God
    - b. 2 Sam. 24:18-25
      - (1) Araunah offered to give David the threshing floor, the oxen and everything he needed to offer a burnt offering to God.
      - (2) But David said: "...neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing;....."
    - c. David bought the field and paid for the animals in order that his sacrifice to God might not be without cost to himself. He paid 50 shekels of silver
    - d. Lesson --- The cost of our sacrifice shows our love to God. If we give only that which we do not need, or that which means nothing to us, then we do not demonstrate very much love or concern for God.
  - 2. **The sacrifice must be the best**
    - a. Malachi 1:7-17
      - (1) They offered polluted bread, blind, sick and lame animals.
      - (2) That would not be acceptable to the governor
      - (3) Neither would it be acceptable as a sacrifice to God
    - b. Too many Christians want to give their scraps to God, but God will not accept leftovers.
- C. When it comes to our giving are we really sacrificing? We are only when it costs something and when we are giving the very best.

### **III. HOW DO WE DECIDE HOW MUCH TO GIVE ?**

- A. Everyone who wants to do the right really wants to know the answer — under the Law of Moses it was spelled out — but we are under the law of Grace.
- B. The Jews practiced Tithing
  1. **They were not the only people who did**
    - a. Egyptians - along the Nile river gave 1/10 to their gods
    - b. The Babylonians- both the rich and poor gave 1/10
    - c. The Greeks paid 1/10 th of all they had.
    - d. The Romans gave 1/10 to their god Hercules
    - e. Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Lydians all gave 1/10 no matter how rich or poor they were, whether they were a servant or a king.
  2. **Many religions all over the world give a tenth.**
    - a. A book called The Sacred Tenth tells about this practice among all religions
    - b. This is one of the common themes found in most religions
  3. **Even before the Law of Moses was given many gave a tenth:**
    - a. Abraham gave a 1/10 to Melchizedek - Gen. 14:17-20
    - b. Jacob swore to give 1/10 to God - Gen. 28:18-22
  4. **Scriptures of the O.T.**
    - a. Lev. 27:30-33 "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD. 31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. 32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD. 33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed."

- b. Deut. 14:22 "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year."
  - c. A tenth of the produce of the land whether of seed or fruit, was claimed by God and was to be regarded as holy (or set apart) for Him.
  - d. Every tenth calf and lamb was also to be set apart for Jehovah.
5. When you look at all the information for the Jews you see that a god devout Jew gave very liberally. When they followed the rules exactly they gave as much as 1/3 of their income to God.
- C. How Much Should We give today?
- 1. 1 Cor. 16:2 "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
    - a. "As God has Prospered"
    - b. Under the Old Law they gave a tithe - we have been blessed more than they under the law of Christ - we should not give less but more than they did under the Law.
  - 2. If your weekly salary is \$1,000 what should you give?
    - a. 10% is \$100
    - b. 5% would be \$50
    - c. 15% would be \$150
  - 3. A man will be judged by what he has and how he uses it. WE are to be good stewards of that which we have received
  - 4. Under the old law it was regulated.
    - a. We are on the honor system. We are told to give as we have prospered.
    - b. What does this mean?
    - c. Our guideline is the O.T. When the apostles taught the early Christians, they continually quoted O.T. passages to justify their teaching.
    - d. Should we who live under grace give less than those under the law?

## D. When should we give?

1. Upon the first day of the week
2. Every week has a first day
3. Suppose we are sick or out of town on vacation or working?
  - a. Leave your contribution with another brother or sister
  - b. Make it up when you come back the next Sunday.
  - c. How many weeks did you give this year ?

**IV. PRINCIPLES OF GIVING**

## A. Who should give?

1. Everyone one of you - 1 Cor. 16:2
2. Not just the wealthy - not just the working people - not just the retired ones
3. The rich and the poor are to give!!
4. All Christians are to give as they have been prospered!!

## B. How are we to give? Three rules ....

1. **Willingly** - voluntary

- a. 2 Cor. 8:12 "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." Willing = readiness
- b. The brethren in Macedonia were giving willingly even in their poverty.
- c. 2 Cor. 8:3 "For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;"

2. **Purposefully**

- a. 2 Cor. 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
- b. Purpose = plan, make a decision of how much to give - decides to give
- c. Cheerful giver - one who gives with a happy heart
- d. God loves a person who is a cheerful giver

- e. Giving like every command of God must be obeyed from the heart.
- f. A forced baptism would be unacceptable to God.
- g. A forced offering is unacceptable to God.
- h. We must be taught and obey this command cheerfully.

### 3. **Liberally**

- a. 2 Cor. 9:6 "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."
- b. Liberal = generously - largely
- c. If all the members of the Lord's church were liberal in their giving then we could evangelize the whole world in a very short period of time.

## **V. EXCEL IN THIS GRACE**

- A. 2 Cor. 8:7 "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."
  - 1. Abound in all these other things:
    - a. Faith, Utterance = speech, Knowledge, Diligence, Love to us
    - b. Abound = be in excess, abundance, excel, increase
  - 2. Abound in this grace also
    - a. He was talking about the liberality of the churches of Macedonia
    - b. Paul was commending them for their liberality - v.2-6
      - (1) Gave in poverty
      - (2) Gave themselves first
    - c. Paul writing to the Corinthians desired that they follow the example of these in Macedonia
    - d. See that you abound in this grace also.

B. Lesson for us:

1. We should abound in faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence and love.
2. But we should also abound in the liberal giving of our money to help the work of the church.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. A tree, although it must have water to live, cannot stay alive simply by receiving water. It must give away gallons of it every day through its leaves. If in some way a tree should stop giving, it would also stop growing and would soon die.
2. Song - "There is a Sea"
3. We have received abundantly many wonderful blessings:
  - a. We have jobs and make money
  - b. We have cars, houses, clothing, food, computers, books, boats, tools and many other things.
  - c. We have the freedom in this country to worship and serve God without any fear or problems.
4. Our heart will determine how we give! If a person asks, "How much do I have to give?", this indicates their heart is not right.
5. Is your heart right? Do you give cheerfully and liberally? Do you give because you love God?
6. It would be a shame to lose our soul over a few dollars!!