

## BIBLICAL ECONOMICS

### THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL

### INTEGRITY, [2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15](#)

#### Matthew 6:19-21 (NASB)

<sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”

<sup>20</sup> “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

<sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

How do you properly lay up treasures in Heaven? How are we supposed to give? Basic elements of giving are given in the next verse.

#### 4. ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)) Stewardship— Giving: the giver who pleases God gives deliberately, not grudgingly and not from compulsion.

##### 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)

<sup>7</sup> “Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

It is absolutely crucial to note one thing: God does not accept the gift of a person who does not want to give.

God expects four things of the person who gives.

1. **The giver must give as he *purposes* in his heart.** This does not mean that people are not to be encouraged to give nor that they cannot be stirred to give. It means that a person is...

- to think about the need.
- to think about what he should *give sacrificially*.
- to make a *deliberate decision* about what he should sacrifice in order to give what he should.
- to give exactly what he should give.

2. **The giver must not give grudgingly: not out of sorrow, not with reluctance or regret.** If the giver is going to be mulling over his gift and regretting that he had given it, his gift is unacceptable to God. The person needs to straighten his heart out with God, for...

- he is failing to see the desperate needs of the world.
- he is failing to see what Jesus Christ has done for him.

**3. The giver must not give out of necessity.** A person's gift is not acceptable to God when he...

- is forced to give.
- gives because he fears what others will think.
- gives just to please others.
- gives to keep others from pestering him.
- gives out of a desire for personal honor and recognition.

**4. The giver must give cheerfully if he wishes God to accept his gift.** The word “cheerful” (*hilaron*) means “joyful”. The giver is pleased and delighted to give to meet the needs of God’s people and of the world. Note that God *loves* the cheerful giver, for the cheerful giver is just like His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ willingly and cheerfully gave all He was and had to meet the needs of the world.

**Luke 11:41 (NASB)**

<sup>41</sup>“But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.”

**1 Corinthians 13:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.”

**1 Corinthians 16:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup>“On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.”

**2 Corinthians 8:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup>“For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what *a person* has, not according to what he does not have.”

**Ephesians 4:28 (NASB)**

<sup>28</sup>“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need.”

**THE ELEMENTS OF GIVING—2 Corinthians 9:7**

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup>“Each one *must do* just as he has **purposed** in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Paul gives use several important elements about how we are to give today. We will note four important principles.

1. Give as you Purpose in Your Heart.
2. Give without Pessimism and Peevishness.
3. Give without being Pressured
4. Give with a heart of Praise and Pleasantness.

*We are to first of all, give as we purpose in our heart.* The term translated “**purposed**” occurs only here in the New Testament and indicates a premeditated,

predetermined plan of action that is done from the heart voluntarily, but not impulsively. It will be necessary for the giver to consider what is required for his own immediate needs. He will have to think of just obligations which he will incur in the course of normal life, but then above that, he should think of the needs of his fellow Christians, and of the claims of Christ upon him.

The giver is to think about the need, think about what the Lord would have him give, and give to the Lord the amount that He lays upon his heart. Pray about a plan for giving and then implement the plan and giving goals that God has given to you.

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)**

**<sup>7</sup>“Each one *must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*”**

*Secondly, we are to give without pessimism and peevishness.* We are not to give “grudgingly.” What does this really mean? We are not to give with “grief, sorrow, or sadness,” which would indicate an attitude of regret, depression, and reluctance that accompanies something done strictly out of a sense of duty, obligation, and void of any joy at all. It is possible to give and yet, not be happy about it. If the giver is going to be mulling over his gift and regretting that he had given it, his gift is unacceptable to God.

God does not want any grudge giving. The Lord does not want one penny from you if you would rather keep it for yourself. Would you want to receive a gift from a person who griped and complained about giving it to you or put you on a “guilt trip” because they could not afford it? If they gave because they felt forced or obligated, would you really want their gift? I wouldn't want it because I would always be reminded of their reluctance or lousy attitude instead of their love. God is no different.

In the Jewish temple, there were two chests for the giving of alms. The one chest was for that which was necessary or required by the Law. The other chest was for the free-willing offerings of the people. To escape perdition some of the people would grudgingly give what was required of them by the Law. On the other hand, others would give cheerfully, out of love for God, and compassion for the poor. Of the first chest, nothing is said. God's people simply did what the Law required. Of the second, much is said in the Scriptures.

God loves those who give with a willing heart. The benefit of giving is lost to the giver when he does it with a grumbling heart. When a person gives grudgingly, he becomes blind to the needs of others and fails to recognize or remember what the Lord Jesus Christ did for him. Not only that, the actual act of giving has the opposite effect in the person's life. Voluntary, sacrificial giving develops a tender heart, gratitude, and joy. Grudge giving develops bitterness and a hard heart. This is why the Lord tells us to keep our gift if we are going to gripe about it.

The story is told of a very wealthy man who, upon the occasion of his daughter's marriage, sent a check for \$5,000.00 to the bridegroom as a wedding present. He sent it by the hand of the bride's sister and when she returned, the man eagerly asked: "What did your new brother-in-law say when you gave the check?" The girl replied. "He didn't say anything, but when he looked at it he began to cry." "And how long did he cry?" was the question. She replied, "Oh, I imagine for about a minute." "Only a minute?" roared the disappointed giver, "Why, I cried for an hour after I had signed the check!" Beloved, God wants us to give to others without regret and crying.

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)**

**<sup>7</sup>“Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

*The third element is the giver is to give without being pressured or out of necessity.* The word “necessity” means “compulsion.” This refers to external high-pressure tactics and coercion. Believers are not to give based on the demands of others, the pressure of emotional appeals, public embarrassment, or according to any arbitrary standards or set amounts. The gift is not acceptable to the Lord when the person is *forced*, when he *fears* what others think, when he is *frustrated* by others pestering him for money and he wants them off of his back, or when the individual is *focused* on gaining personal recognition and honor. The real source of prestige giving is not love but pride. The gift is given not to help, but to glorify the giver. In fact, the chances are that it would not be given at all if it were not seen and praised.

Our giving is to come from a heart that is willing to sacrifice because of our love for God or others. For example, during the Crusades, a knight was taken captive by the Moslem Saladin. The knight begged for his life, claiming that he had a wife in England who loved him dearly. Saladin commented that she would soon forget him and marry another. On second thought, the cruel chieftain offered to set the man free if the lady in question would send her right hand as token of her love for this captive. When word was sent to this lady in England, she immediately cut off her right hand and sent it to Saladin. The man was immediately returned to England. There is a statue of this faithful woman in one of the old cathedrals of England. She is very beautiful, but the statue shows her without her right hand. Her gift was a willing sacrifice.

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)**

**<sup>7</sup>“Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

*The fourth element of giving is the fact that we are to give with an attitude of praise and pleasantness.* We are to be cheerful givers, not bitter ones. This word “cheerful” is from the Greek word *hilaros* {hil-ar-os} which forms our English word “hilarious.” *Hilaros* means “to be cheerful, joyous, or prompt to do anything.” God loves a heart that is enthusiastically thrilled with the pleasure of giving. Giving is a serious matter, but it is also to be a delightful experience. If you want to see an example of a hilarious giver, see the film *A Christmas Carol* and enjoy the behavior of Scrooge after his night with the

three Christmas spirits. Scrooge found out the wonderful joy of giving on Christmas day and for the rest of his life.

**Don McCullough** shared his experience about a missionary he visited in **Ghana**. This missionary told him an interesting thing about the Presbyterian Church in Ghana. The Presbyterians are the largest Christian group in that country. The church was established over a hundred years ago by Scottish Presbyterians, and their worship service is very much like a Scottish Presbyterian service. Recently they have allowed the African traditional experience into the worship service at the offering.

At the offering, they let the people dance. That's a part of African culture in religious, spiritual worship. They let the people dance as they bring their offerings forward. The music is going, and they individually turn it into a production as they bring their offerings to the offering plate. They take their time, too. The offering could go on for a long time because they are dancing all the way down the aisle. It's the only time in the service when they smile. Don thought, "How interesting. The only time in the service when they smile is when they're giving their money to the Lord." This is the attitude we are to have when we give to Christ or others in need.

**What makes a man a cheerful giver?** The answer is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God's grace sustains us throughout our lives. His grace gives us our daily bread, supplies us with lungs full of air, and grants us the ability to make a living. God wants an *abundant* life for us. His grace makes it possible. God loves the cheerful giver, for the cheerful giver is just like His Son, Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ willingly and cheerfully gave all He was and had to meet the needs of the world.

There are three kinds of givers—**the flint**, **the sponge** and **the honeycomb**. To get anything out of a flint you must hammer it, and then you get only chips and sparks. To get water out of a sponge you must squeeze it, and the more you use pressure, the more you will get. The honeycomb, however, just overflows with its own sweetness. Which kind of giver are you? God wants us to be like the honeycomb, beloved.