

CHRISTIAN GIVING

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INTRODUCTION

- Scriptural evidence
 - *God's character of giving*
 - *Pivotal point of God's giving character demonstrated at Calvary. (John 3:16)*
 - *Man was created with this character*
 - *Human history has revealed it throughout all ages, irrespective of religious convictions*
 - *There are good "givers" who are non-Christians, especially in the western hemisphere.*

INTRODUCTION

- Giving is older than the law itself (Gen. 14:17-15:1) Abraham to Melchizedec.
- Giving is enforced by the law (Lev. 27:30-33)
- Giving is approved by the Lord (Matt. 23:23; Lk. 18:12)
- Giving was practiced by early Christians, and taught by the apostles

Biblical pattern in different ages

- **Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedec** (Gen.14:17 – 15:1 and Heb. 7:1-2)
- In verse 20 – “gave tithes of all”
- **Giving was enforced by the Law** (Mosaic economy)
 - Lev. 27:30 *“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 to the Lord.”*

Time of prophets

Taught/corrected by Prophets:

- Malachi 3:8-10 ***“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, in what way we have robbed you? In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation”***

Tabernacle age

- **Tabernacle and temple (Under the Law)**
 - Apart from Tithe, there are two other modes of giving
 - Free-will offering, above and over tithes (Ex. 35:4-9; 1 Chronicles 29:6-9)
 - V.5 ***“whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the Lord; gold, silver Sweet incense, onyx stones...”***
 - This was a type of giving which was done by a willing heart, and people rejoiced for the opportunity to give.

Upkeep and maintenance of temple

- **Ex 30: 12-16**
- ***V.13: “This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give; half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary***
- ***V. 15 “The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel***
- **This is generally known as the “poll tax” among Israel, equal across the board.**
- **So far we have seen three modes of giving**
- **1. Tithe 2. Freewill offering 3. Poll tax for maintenance of the temple**

Mosaic economy

- MOSAIC ECONOMY: Num. 35:1-8
- God commanded Moses that the 11 tribes should give 48 cities and their suburbs to the Levites.
- V.8 “..... *From the larger tribe you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives.*”

Lord's earthly life

Giving was approved by the Lord
Both in Mat 23:23 and Luke 18:12-14

The Lord said “*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law; justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving others undone.*”

Early Christians

Giving was practiced by the early Christians

Very little is mentioned in the book of Acts about finances or giving

But in Acts 2:45, 46 we see a fundamental principle of believers taking care of one another by giving.

Throughout the book of Acts, the apostles and other Christians travelled from place to place

It is obvious that their needs were met. (Acts 21:16,17)

Folks in 1st century

Giving was practiced by the early Christians

We see that the Barbarians of Malta showed kindness to Paul and others (Acts 28:12)

When there was a famine in Judea, believers sent relief by the hands of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 11:28-30)

In essence, giving was an integral part of the life-style of the people in the first century.

Lord's earthly life

Jesus fulfilled the legal requirements of paying taxes
(Matt 17:25-27)

He accepted hospitality
(Matt. 26:6; Lk. 7:36; JN. 2:2; 12:1-2)

When Jesus sent out the 12 and 70, He told them not to be concerned about their need,
(Matt.10:9-14)



Apostolic teachings:

- James and Jude did not mention finances
- Peter exhorts to “***be hospitable one to another without grumbling***” (1 Pet 4:9)”
- Peter warns elders against dishonest gain (1 Pet 5:2) “***Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion, but willingly, not for dishonest gain...***”
- Paul refers to finances in three out of 100 chapters he wrote (1 Cor 9:2; 2 Cor. 8 and 9)
- In 1 Tim 5, Paul gives instructions on looking after widows in the church who have no family members to support.

NT biblical principles of giving:

Sacrificially

(2 Cor 8:1-9); Acts 16:20; 17:5; Phil 1:1, 28; 1Thes
1:6; 2:14)

Spontaneously

(2 Cor. 8:3-4)

Spiritually (they gave themselves to God) - 2Cor 8:5

Secretly (refers more to attitude of heart) (Matt 6:3-4)

Voluntarily

(2 Cor. 9:7)

Cheerfully

(2Cor 9:7)

Worshipfully

(Phil 4:18)

Liberally

(2 Cor 9:6)

Paul's example

No appeal by him for his own needs.

Reminds believers of their failure in supplying to the needs of others

(1 Cor. 16:17; 2 Cor 11:9; Phil 2:30; 4:10)

Paul's explanation of support of workers

- Privileges of an apostle (1 Cor 9:1-6)
- To receive adequate support , v.4
- To live a married life, v.5
- To be granted exemption from manual labor, v.6

Old testament principles of giving

- Abraham commenced it (Gen 14:20)
- Jacob continued it (Gen 28:22)
- Moses commanded it (Lev 27:30)
- Levites consented to it (Neh. 10:38)
- Malachi was convicted of it (Mal 3:8,10)
- Jesus corrected it (Matt. 23:23)
- In the NT period under grace you give more (not less) (2 Cor. 9:7)

Provisions for the Lord's servants

- A country supports soldiers, v.7
- A farmer eats the fruits of the vineyard he tends, v.7
- An ox that threshes should not be muzzled, but be permitted to eat the grain it threshes (1 Cor. 9:9)
- Shepherd drinks the milk from his flocks , v.7
- Equal treatment should be accorded to all laborers , v.12
- The priests and the Levites lived with the tithes, offerings and first-fruits (v.13 cf. Deut. 18:1-5)
- It is the Lord's appointment that the gospel preachers should live by the gospel, v.14

Paul's instructions

- 2 Cor. 9:6

- “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.”***