

The Blessing of Giving Becomes Real When Experienced!

Jesus said, *“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again”* (Luke 6:38). This is a broad sweeping promise that many Christians ignore. This promise is not real until it’s personal. Let me tell you a story of a man who found this promise to be real.

In the early part of the twentieth century, dry goods stores were the pharmacies, groceries, toy stores, candy stores, clothiers, and in the days of the old Klein store in our area, you could even pick out your casket. They were quite literally the last people to “let you down.” In the archives of the Tennessee Baptist history, there is a true story of an owner of a dry goods that proved to be quite remarkable.

As in most business endeavors, without the element of risks, there will be little hope of success. The businessman had been reading in a catalog delivered to him that these new battery-driven toy Ferris wheels would be the estimated best sellers among the new children’s toys for the approaching Christmas holiday season. If his store did not make a drastic turn for the good, they were heading for a closing at the first of the year. So, in his mind he had to try something. His was the only store in the area to have delivered three hundred toy Ferris wheels. His anticipation of the windfall excited him. Even the excitement lifted his and everyone’s spirits at the store. Everything was on the line, contingent upon the sale of the Ferris wheels.

Shortly after Thanksgiving he began to display the Ferris wheel on his front counter, right next to the cash register. The first week, the only one who showed any interest in the Ferris wheels whatsoever was an incredibly poor little boy of about 9 years of age. The little guy would come to the counter and with wide-eyed drama, would request the owner to turn it on. The owner would turn it on and the boy would smile and politely say, “Thank you.” When the owner turned it off, the boy would disappear into the neighborhood. Every day the little guy went through this ritual.

The second week, no one but the little boy showed any interest. The owner was beginning to get worried. The third week, the same ignoring from the community, made even more pathetic because the only person that showed interest could not even afford a piece of licorice. Coming into the final week before Christmas, the owner realized, due to the lack of sales, he would now suffer such a loss, he could not possibly recover. Therefore, he began to make plans accordingly; he would be out of business by New Year’s.

It was now three days before Christmas. As soon as the store opened, the little poor boy rushed in came to the counter and began with his usual question, “Sir, would you mind, please – would you please, Sir, turn the Ferris wheel on.” The owner kindly looked down and said, “Would you like to have this Ferris wheel?” The little boy looked at the owner and said in a remorseful way, “Well, yes, Sir, I would love to have that Ferris wheel more than anything. But I don’t have any money, Sir.” The owner thought to himself, “Well, there should be somebody that should have something to be happy about this Christmas, and it might as well be this little poor boy that would not otherwise have much, if any Christmas.” The owner lifted the Ferris wheel off the counter and said, “It’s yours, take it!” The little boy could not believe his ears! He immediately placed it on the floor, turned it on, clapped his hands together saying, “Thank you, Sir! Thank you, thank you, thank you!” As the little boy began to continue playing with his new toy, the owner, not wanting the little guy to be in the way of customers, said, “Son, take it home, it yours; now go on.” The little guy still so excited about the new Ferris wheel did not want to wait until he was home. So he took the Ferris wheel just outside the door of the store, placed it down on the sidewalk. He turned it on, clapped his hands and danced all around it. Christmas had come early to a precious little boy!

Three days before Christmas and folks were walking through town holding the hands of their toddlers looking for last minute items. When the other children saw the joy in the life of the new Ferris wheel owner, they froze and stood in amazement. It was contagious - they wanted that same joy supplied by the likes of a new Ferris wheel, too. So naturally, moms and dads would ask the young man, "Where did you get that?" And the overjoyed poor boy, with excitement pointed to the dry goods store and said, "Right in there!"

An uncanny phenomenon occurred. The little boy, ignoring all previous timidity, on the two