

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GIVING

INTRODUCTION: We must first consider our view of Scripture. If we doubt or question the authority of the Bible, then we have no real basis upon which to establish our convictions about giving. There are two preliminary principles of inspiration:

1. DIVINELY INSPIRED WRITERS

II Peter 1:20-21 "...no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

2. DIVINELY INSPIRED WORDS

II Timothy 3:15-17 (esp. v. 16) "All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."

From this premise, we can discover what the Bible teaches about GIVING.

I. The Bible teaches us that NOTHING IS OUR OWN.

- A. God CREATED everything. (EX-NIHILO) Genesis 1:1
- B. God SUSTAINS everything. Colossians 1:17
- C. God OWNS everything. Psalm 24:1

II. The Bible teaches that WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD.

- A. Consider the PRINCIPLES of the PARABLE OF THE TALENTS in Matthew 25:14-30.
- B. Consider the PRECEPTS related to accountability.
 - 1. Luke 16:2
 - 2. Romans 14:12
 - 3. I Corinthians 4:2

III. The Bible teaches that WE SHOULD GIVE TO GOD.

(Assumptions (1) the Bible is our rule of practice; (2) the Bible teaches that God owns all things; (3) we are stewards of God's possessions, and (4) we are accountable to God.) HOW TO GIVE GOD'S WAY (cf. II Corinthians 8:1-5)

- A. Giving God's way is giving PROPORTIONATELY (v. 3a "according to their ability...they gave...")--"ability" is defined by God. It is "God-given ability."
- B. Giving God's way is giving SACRIFICIALLY (v. 3b "...and beyond their ability...")- -How do I give "beyond my ability?" I GIVE NOT IN PROPORTION TO MY FUNDS, BUT IN PROPORTION TO MY FAITH. Matthew 9:29 (In another context) ...Jesus said, "It shall be done to you according to your faith."
- C. Giving God's way is giving VOLUNTARILY (vv. 3c-4 "...they gave of their own accord...")
- D. Giving God's way is giving PERSONALLY (v. 5b "...they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.")

CONCLUSION: The Bible teaches that GIVING IS BASIC TO CHRISTIAN LIVING.

- A. We can DO more because we HAVE more! (Romans 15:26-27)
(We have God's SON, SPIRIT, SCRIPTURE, SALVATION.)
- B. We should give THROUGH HIS CHURCH. (Acts 4:34-35)
- C. We should give LIBERALLY & GENEROUSLY. (Luke 6:38)
- D. We should give SACRIFICIALLY. (II Corinthians 8:1-4)
- E. We should give CHEERFULLY. (II Corinthians 9:7)
- F. We should give REGULARLY. (I Corinthians 16:2)
- G. We should GROW IN OUR GIVING. (II Corinthians 8:7)

Giving, whether a tithe or more, becomes a joyful act and an expression of devotion to our Lord. HOW DEVOTED ARE YOU TO YOUR LORD?