

Acceptable Worship

Giving (I Co 16:1-2)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on “Acceptable Worship.”
 - a. Last week we examined what it means to “Worship.”
 - i. Being able to know what worship is makes us able to then make our worship acceptable.
 - b. This week we will begin to dive into the different “acts of worship” starting with “Giving.”
 - i. **I Co 16:1-2** “Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”¹
3. Illustration:
 - a. One preacher reflected on an event that happened to him, “While I was preaching one Sunday, an elderly woman, Mary, fainted and struck her head on the end of the pew. Immediately, an EMT in the congregation called an ambulance. As they strapped her to a stretcher and got ready to head out the door, Mary regained consciousness. She motioned for her daughter to come near. Everyone thought she was summoning her strength to convey what could be her final words. The daughter leaned over until her ear was at her mother’s mouth. ‘My offering is in my purse,’ she whispered.”
(<http://goo.gl/qwGGKt>)
4. Giving
 - a. This is the one act of worship that few in the denominational world argue with as necessary.
 - b. This is the one act of worship that few in the world seem to get right however in every facet.
5. With that in mind let us examine this great responsibility that God has given us.

I. The Mindset Of Biblical Givers

- A. It is based in stewardship
 1. When one actually realizes nothing is theirs, they are only stewards, the mindset starts becoming biblical.
 - i. **I Ch 29:14** “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.”
- B. It is based in J.O.Y.
 1. This is a common acronym used for having a joyful life.
 - i. Jesus 1st
 - ii. Others 2nd
 - iii. Yourself Last

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

Acceptable Worship

2. We are to be joyful givers.
 - i. **II Co 9:7** “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”
 - a. Notice the mindset, not reluctant or out of compulsion but with joy.
 3. When one understands they are only stewards and that our gift is for God’s work which will help others we will find ourselves joyfully giving.
 - i. Remember what Jesus said.
 - a. **Ac 20:35** “...It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
- C. Thus...
1. If we want a biblical mindset we must never lose site of the fact that we are stewards and that what we are giving goes to spiritual benefit of others.
 - i. This is how

II. Questions Often Asked Concerning Giving

- A. How much do we give?
1. This always seems to be the first thing people think of especially when they are “young Christians.”
 - i. For far too long however many brothers and sisters have taken this chance to say “the Bible is silent on how much to give” as if this is a selling point of the church of Christ or something.
 - ii. They are right in that God at no point says Christians have a certain percentage like tithing, that we are required to give.
 2. This idea that we have no idea what God want us to give is not true though.
 - i. We have been instructed to look at the principles of the O.T. and learn from them.
 - a. **Ro 15:4** “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”
 - b. **I Co 10:11** “Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.”
 - ii. Under the Old Law the Israelites were to give about three tithes.
 - a. **Lv 27:30-33; Dt 14:22-27; Dt 14:28-29**
 1. These equaled out to about 20 percent.
(<http://goo.gl/gCQIBd>)
 - iii. Now consider this...
 - a. We are now under the New Law not the Old Law.
 1. **Co 2:14** “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”
 - b. This New Law is better than the Old Law.
 1. **He 7:22** “This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.”

Acceptable Worship

3. In America today we prosper through money or currency.
 - i. Thus as we receive money we prosper.
 - ii. We prosper, not every week, but one, two, or at most three times a month.
 - a. 1st & 15th or every other Friday...
 4. How people are giving many times today in America.
 - i. Example:
 - a. They get paid on the 1st & 15th.
 - b. They set aside out of that check 11 percent.
 - c. They then break that 11 percent into two checks one for each of the Sunday's between the 1st & 15th.
 5. There is a problem with this method.
 - i. It cannot be found in the Bible.
 - a. **I Co 16:2** "...each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper..."
 - ii. It lends itself to having something happen that happened to that older lady in our illustration. She almost died before she could give.
 - a. If one breaks up their contribution and something happens to them and they cannot give all set aside to give from that which they prospered they have failed and sinned in their worship of giving.
 6. The usual objection to this truth.
 - i. We are prospered every week with all sort of blessings like rain, health, time with family...we therefore can give based on that each week.
 - a. Remember what God said our giving consisted of.
 1. It consists of physical, storable, and usable by the Lord things.
 - i. Thus God is not talking about non-physical proposing such as blessings, time...
 - ii. There is nothing wrong with giving more than you set aside on the week you did not prosper biblically but one cannot withhold the first week to do so.
 7. Thus we see we are to give all we have set aside from our prospering the first Sunday after receiving such.
- E. Who do we give to?
1. There are many people who support other works than simply the congregation they are members of.
 - i. Such as Hope Harbor, In Search of the Lord's Way or missionaries.
 - a. Do we take out of our set aside from proper to give to these or are these from the excess?
 2. What we can see is that our set aside funds are for the congregation to use as it sees fit for the work of the Lord.
 - i. **I Co 16:2; Ph 4:15**
 3. Thus when we individually support other works, without going through the congregation, we must give of our excess.

Acceptable Worship

- F. What is our giving for?
1. Our giving is to be used by the congregation for one purpose, to further the work of the Lord.
 - i. This means that when elders or men set a budget the focus is on what is expedient.
 - a. Expedience is fulfilling an obligation from Scripture where details of how to do not specified and left to human judgment.
 - b. Expedience is determined based on a biblical advantage being made for the congregation.
 1. **II Co 8:10** “And herein I give my judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will.” (ASV)
 2. Thus our giving is to be used to benefit the Lord and His work always.
 - i. If the expenditure does not benefit the Lord’s work it should not be done.

CONCLUSION

1. Brethren I’m reminded of an illustration about a preacher and a deacon.
 - a. During a meeting a deacon said to the preacher “Brother, if you don’t stop talking so much to our people about giving, you are going to kill this church!” The preacher responded, “I have never head of anybody or a church giving itself to death. But if that should happen, I am going to conduct the funeral. I will stand on the front steps and read loudly Rv 14:13, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”
 - b. Brethren we are not asked by God to give until it kills (II Co 8:12-14) but we are asked to give cheerfully and with great excitement (II Co 9:7) and liberally (II Co 9:6).
2. Question: Are you giving so liberally it brings great joy to your life?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**