

How to Become a Channel of Blessing Philippians 4:10-18

Introduction:

1. Jesus said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* **Acts 20:35**
 - Jesus is teaching that I am **more** blessed when I learn how to take my existing blessings and share them with others.
 - In other words, I am blessed in order that I might be a blessing.
2. We have learned that some awesome things take place when I begin to understand that God wants me to share my blessings, not hoard them and keep them all for myself.
3. The Philippian believers understood this principle. They had given sacrificially to the work of God. The result was that the gospel of Christ had been proclaimed and was changing lives. Paul tells them that this fruit was abounding to their account in heaven.
4. Paul tells them that even though they had given sacrificially to the work of God, God would be faithful to meet their needs. vs. 19
5. I want to get very practical this morning and answer this question, "How can I become a channel of blessing that God can flow His power through and use me to help further His work here on this earth?"
6. Let's examine these Philippian believers and learn from their example.

First, it requires a personal decision. vs. 15

1. Paul makes an amazing statement in verse 15. Let's read it.
 - Philippi was in the province of Macedonia. Paul left Macedonia and headed for Athens and Corinth. He was at Corinth a year and a half.
 - How many churches gave to Paul's ministry after he left Macedonia? Only one, and that was the church at Philippi.
2. They understood that they were blessed to be a blessing and they made a personal decision to share their blessings to help further the work of God.
3. Giving is a personal decision of the heart. It is between you and God. It doesn't matter what others are doing. We give out of the grace that has been extended to **us** by God. We give out of a personal love in **our** hearts for God.
 - The grace giver gives whether anybody else does or not. What others do is not an issue. **John 21:21-22**
 - Paul said, "You're the only ones that gave, but the spiritual fruit that I am seeing (made possible by your gifts) is abounding to your account in heaven."
4. If I am to become a channel of blessing for God to flow through and use, it requires a personal decision on my part. **2 Corinthians 9:7**
 - The word "purposeth" means "to choose for oneself." We become a channel of blessing when we make a conscious choice of our will to give.
 - God will not take anything from you by force. He wants it to come from your heart, a willing heart that is in love with Him.

Second, giving must become a regular practice. vs. 10, 16

1. Did you notice, there was a **pattern** to their giving?

- Paul said "...*your care of me hath flourished again.*" vs. 10
 - Paul said that they had sent once **and again** unto his necessity. vs. 16
 - These people had a habit of giving. It was a practice in their lives.
2. This is so important. Giving should be a regular grace that you practice in a systematic fashion.
 3. The opposite of this would be erratic, occasional, or spontaneous (when the urge hits you or there happens to be a big surplus).
 - It's the idea, "I have an extra ten bucks this week, so I guess I'll give it to God." We kind of tip God.
 4. The grace of giving is far too important to a Spirit-filled believer to treat in such a casual, flippant way.
 - You are giving to your Lord and Savior (the One who saved you from eternal hell, redeemed you, and changed your life) and the Bible says you show your love for Him this way. **2 Corinthians 8:8, 24**
 - So, when you give, it is a serious thing to you. There is a regular, definite, systematic way you approach it. **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**
 5. Is giving a regular practice in your Christian life? There is an easy way to find out. Look at your check book entries for the past year. It will most likely tell the story. Are there regular systematic entries to your mortgage company, FPL, car, etc? What about God?

Third, trust Christ to give through you. vs. 13

1. Giving can very easily become a work of the flesh.
 - A ritualistic law - we do it thinking that somehow we are **earning** God's favor. We're scared if we don't. We want to conform to what others expect.
 - An act of greed - we approach giving like a magic genie in a bottle - "Let's rub it and God will bless us."
 - An act of pride - Jesus said in **Matthew 6:2** that the Pharisees gave that they may have glory of men. They were giving in order to get attention.
 - In every one of these instances, giving becomes a work of the flesh instead of a **reflection** of our walk with Jesus Christ.
2. You may be thinking, "I hear what you're saying, but I just can't bring myself to give. I love my stuff." **You** can't do it, but Christ can do it **through** you. vs. 13
 - Only Christ working in us can bring the ability to shed the cultural trappings of materialism and greed.
3. If you are saved, you have the ultimate grace giver living inside of you - Jesus Christ. **2 Corinthians 8:9** We are saved by His amazing grace!
 - Giving is the normal and natural response of a person that is walking in a close relationship with Jesus Christ. It is a fruit of that relationship.
4. Let me show you the key to the Philippians' giving hearts. **2 Corinthians 8:2-5**
 - As they yielded themselves to Christ who lived **in** them, the gracious and giving heart of our Savior was living **through** them. This is why they had become such channels of blessing.