

The Gift of Giving

Romans 12:8

I. What is the gift of giving?

- A. This word, “*giveth*,” in Romans 12:8 means “to give over; share.”
- B. Some try to say that this gift has nothing to do with giving of money, but rather the giving of oneself and one’s time. But, on the contrary, the giver has a strong desire to give and share of his or her material resources to help further the work of God.
- C. Givers feel that if God has given them the ability to make money, they should be willing to give back to God and His work. Givers enjoy and live to meet the financial needs of the church and fellow Christians. They live to give.
- D. The giver doesn’t have sticky fingers, allowing money to cling to him. He views himself (as we all should) as a vessel that God can flow His resources through.

II. Why is there a need for the gift of giving?

- A. Right away, someone may be thinking, “So that’s why I do not participate in grace giving at my church. I don’t have the gift of giving.”
- B. Do not confuse the gift of giving with the grace of giving. Every believer is expected to exercise the grace of giving by giving back to God graciously, cheerfully, and bountifully, and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead each of us in giving.
 - Giving is an important part of the Christian life because it reminds us that our contentment can only be found in Christ and our relationship with Him.
- C. But here is the difference: the person with the gift of giving goes far beyond normal grace giving (or desires to). He believes real giving starts where normal weekly giving ends. He would feel that he was cheating God if all he gave was a small percentage of his income. Very often the giver will give 50% or more of his income back to God.
- D. The giver looks for special projects or people that he can give to. We need this kind of person in the body of Christ. As we know, the church has financial needs, and the givers help take up the slack for those who do not give. They also help sponsor special projects that could never be accomplished otherwise.

- E. Those with the gift of giving also challenge the rest of the body of Christ to grow in the grace of giving. The attitudes that we see prevalent in the giver should be evidenced in every believer. So those with the gift of giving are an example and encouragement to the rest of the body of Christ.

III. What are the characteristics of the giver?

- A. Matthew is one of the twelve apostles. Before following Jesus, Matthew had been a tax collector (Matthew 9:9), working with money. He was probably very wealthy.
- B. As we read the book of Matthew, it becomes quite obvious that Matthew had the gift of giving. He did not hesitate to give up a prosperous and lucrative business to follow Jesus. He also gives us wonderful insights about money and giving that none of the other gospel writers give us.
- C. Let's look at Matthew and draw from him some characteristics of the giver.
- D. First, the giver likes to give secretly. Matthew 6:1-4
 - 1. Most givers do their giving **without** fanfare or public recognition. They do not want people to know who they are or how much they have given. They don't give to show off (although some may think so).
 - 2. Romans 12:8 tells givers to "*give with simplicity.*" This means to give with sincerity, without any self-seeking or hypocritical motives. Most of the time, the giver's motives are pure, and God is so pleased because God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7
- E. Second, the giver doesn't worry about money matters. Matthew 6:25-32, 34
 - 1. Givers are not ones to worry and fret over finances. Money to them is simply a necessary tool to do good for others. Money in and of itself means nothing to the giver. Therefore, they are not caught up in worrying about their wants and needs.
 - 2. They would be quick to quote Philippians 4:19, "*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*"
- F. Third, the giver isn't usually tempted to hoard great sums of money. Matthew 6:19-20, 26
 - 1. A giver isn't usually concerned about padding his savings account or retirement fund.
 - 2. His attitude is, "Only what we give away can we take with us to heaven." A giver would be quick to quote Jesus' words, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" Acts 20:35
 - 3. As long as the giver has enough to meet his needs and enough left over to help others, he is happy.

4. The giver can't stand to see his money collecting dust. He wants to put his money to work helping others and the work of Jesus Christ. He understands the biblical motive for working and making money. Ephesians 4:28
 - This brings great meaning to the giver's life. Hoarding money doesn't bring meaning and significance, but giving to Christ does. The giver truly grasps this truth.
- G. Fourth, the giver puts his whole heart into the ministry where he gives. Matthew 6:21
 1. Your givers will usually be some of your most loyal people.
 2. They feel that they have a personal investment in the ministry to which they give and want to see that it succeeds.
 3. People that are givers are going to think twice before they leave the church. They know they have a lot invested in the church, and they want to see it succeed.
- H. Fifth, a giver's life does not revolve around money. Matthew 6:24, 33
 1. The giver usually has proper priorities. He isn't concerned about climbing the ladder of success, although many times he will succeed because of his proper attitude and giving heart.
 2. He views his job or business as a means to be able to give, not as a means to get filthy rich.
 3. There are some people who are very poor when it comes to this world's wealth, and it is because they are such givers. Every time they make an extra dollar, they give it away. This is how they enjoy their money, and this is what Paul taught. 1Timothy 6:17-18
 - When material prosperity comes, they don't view it as an opportunity to buy more, but an opportunity to give more.
- I. Sixth, the giver gives cheerfully, not grudgingly. Matthew 10:8; 2 Corinthians 9:7
 1. The giver understands that all he has belongs to God, and he is simply a steward. Therefore, he doesn't resent giving, but rejoices in the opportunity to give.
 2. He has the attitude, "It was never mine to begin with." He doesn't resent his offering as the plate goes by. He is thrilled to be able to give.

IV. How does Satan attack people with the gift of giving?

- A. Causes pride because of the amount of the gift
- B. Causes blindness to other areas of service
- C. Causes discontentment when decisions are made contrary to where his interests are, or where he has given

- D. Causes the giver to use gifts to control people
- E. Causes the giver to judge others' spirituality by the amount they give

V. Scriptures the giver should memorize

- A. 1 Samuel 16:7
- B. Matthew 7:1
- C. Matthew 6:1
- D. Matthew 6:33
- E. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8
- F. 1 John 3:17
- G. Proverbs 13:7