

1: Do You Understand?

2: Are You Taking Action?

3: Why / Why Not?

Sunday, 5/13 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 5/14 at 7 PM

Seventh Sunday of Easter – 2018

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: If I was knowledgeable about a method that was **ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN** to ➡ give you good health **or** ➡ remove your worries **or** ➡ make you happy, *wouldn't you want me to share that method with you?* I'm guessing that you would!

Therefore, today, I'm **not** going to help you with ➡ physical health, ➡ freedom from worry, or ➡ daily happiness, *but I am going to **try** to help you understand some key Biblical teachings on the topic of giving that – if applied – will be a great blessing to you!* May the Holy Spirit grant you ➡ open ears to hear, ➡ an open mind to understand, and ➡ an open heart to follow God's Word.

Before we get to today's topic, let us remember that **we are saved on the basis of Jesus' finished work**; therefore, *this sermon is not about being saved*; instead, this sermon will focus on some giving **truths** and **principles** that – *if understood and applied – will bring you countless blessings!*

1. **Give First:** ^{NAS} **Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce...**
 - a. Honor / Dishonor: We **honor** by giving ➡ **first** and ➡ in a right proportion; therefore, we **dishonor** when we give ➡ last and ➡ in a wrong proportion!

- b. Giving **first** expresses trust in God: When I give to God **first**, I show that *I believe He will provide whatever I need with whatever I have left!* When I give to God last, I show that *I don't trust Him to provide whatever I need!*
- c. Enough: When we **trust** God and **believe** His Word, then we know that whatever we have left will be enough – *BECAUSE God will take action with whatever we have left to supply **all** of our needs and even **many** of our wants!*
- d. Summary: Do you now understand **how** to honor the LORD, **how** giving **first** expresses trust, and **how** whatever you have left will be enough? If you understand, do you believe? And if you believe, *what new actions will you begin taking in your life?*
2. **Don't Rob**: Our GROSS income is a gift from God! Why is that true? Because He has given us **life**, **health**, **abilities**, and **jobs**, **and continues to sustain us!**
- a. Paycheck: It has three parts:
- i. **God's part**: *10 percent*; that amount is still in the check, along with our take home pay. For example: If the check is \$1,000, then God's part is \$100.
 - ii. **Government's part**: *Let's say 20 percent*; that amount has already been taken out of the check. For example: If the gross pay is \$1,000, and 20% has been taken out by the government, then the take home pay is \$800. Note this: The take home pay includes BOTH *God's part* AND *our part*.

- iii. **Our part:** The calculation is simple: *The take home pay minus God's part equals* our part. For example: If the take home pay is \$800, then God's part is \$80. Since we are called to give to God first, God's part is really \$100 (\$1,000 x 10%).
- b. Robbing God:
- i. ^{NIV} **Leviticus 27:30** "A tithe of everything... belongs to the LORD..." // In other words, 10% of all we receive – paycheck, retirement check, SS check, etc. – belongs to the LORD. The government doesn't trust us, *so it takes its portion first*; God gives us the opportunity to **show our trust in Him by giving Him His part** **or** **rob from Him by keeping His part.**
 - ii. ^{NIV} **Malachi 3:8** "**Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' In tithes and offerings.**" // It's simple, what we receive is **part God's** and **part ours**; when we keep God's part, we are robbing from Him 😊.
 - c. Summary: Do you now understand **what is God's part**, **what is the government's part**, and **what is your part**? If you understand, do you believe? And if you believe, *what new actions will you begin taking in your life?*
3. **Be Encouraged:** God doesn't say, "Give me my part or else!" Instead, He says, "Give me my part *first* and *in the proper proportion* AND **I will richly bless you!**

These passages apply ONLY to those who do give **first** and **in the proper proportion** (thus at least 10%):

- a. ^{NAS} **Proverbs 3:10** “...your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.” // *So God will give an abundance!*
- b. ^{NIV} **Proverbs 11:24** “One man gives freely, yet gains even more.” // *When we give according to God’s Word, God gives us even more!*
- c. ^{NIV} **Malachi 3:10** “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse...and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.” // *When we tithe, God opens the floodgates!*
- d. ^{NIV} **Luke 6:38** “Give, and it will be given to you...” // *When we give FIRST, God will give to us!*
- e. ^{NAS} **2 Corinthians 9:6** “...he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.” // *Generous giving will result in generous receiving!*
- f. Summary: Do you now understand how God is promising to bless those who **give first** and **tithe**? If you understand, do you believe? And if you believe, *what new actions will you begin taking in your life?*

Let Us Pray: Dear Father in heaven, TY for Your goodness to us in countless ways! Help us to ever-rejoice in Your salvation and honor You with our giving! In Jesus’ name!

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