

While the biblical teaching about giving has been horribly distorted by false teachers, it nevertheless remains a critical part of the Christian life.

? What are some common misconceptions about giving?

* Giving is not paying God back for Calvary.

* Giving is not a 'seed' to get a bunch of money back from God.

Consider these Scriptures and discuss God's purpose in commanding His people to give.

📖 2 Cor 12:14; Psalm 50:14; Luke 6:38

In commanding you to give, God is not seeking what is yours, but you - 2 Cor 12:14 . God does not need our money - Psalm 50:14. Ironically, He wants us to give because it enables us to receive more of Him - Luke 6:38.

? How does 'giving' accomplish these purposes?

📖 John 3:16
It helps us to understand His heart. God is a sacrificial giver.

📖 Haggai 1:2-9; Matthew 6:19-21
It breaks the power of covetousness in our lives. When we give, we are forced to break out of the materialism and rat-race living of the unsaved. Our budgets, and so our entire lives are re-structured around eternal matters.

📖 Phil 4:17-19
It helps us to walk by faith not by sight. We gain an eternal focus, while God meets our needs presently.

📖 2 Cor 8:8
It proves the sincerity of our love for God.

📖 1 Cor 9:13-14
It meets genuine needs in the church.

? How are you to give?

📖 2 Cor 8:5; Rom 12:1; 2 Cor 12:14

Give yourself first.

God does not want our money if He does not have our hearts.

📖 Prov 3:9; Mark 12:42-44; 2 Cor 8:2; 2 Cor 9:6
Give your firstfruits.

Firstfruits were the very first and often best parts of the harvest, which were given to God as an act of thanksgiving and faith. The farmer recognised God had given him the harvest and trusted Him for more. Part of Biblical giving is to give to God not the leftovers but amounts which reproduce this same idea of thanksgiving and sacrificial faith. The sacrifice is felt because you are giving not necessarily from an abundance, but often from need. Consider also the law of sowing and reaping - 2 Cor 9:6.

📖 2 Cor 8:12; 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:7; 2 Cor 8:3
Give according to what you have, proportionately.

God does not require you to go into debt in giving, or to give what is impossible. He desires we consider how He has prospered us and give sacrificially in keeping with that. In this way, giving is considered and intelligent, not rash, last-minute or impulsive. At the same time, generous giving may sometimes be more than we think we can manage.

📖 2 Cor 9:8
Give willingly.
Reluctance in the heart dishonours God by demeaning the whole act to merely giving God money. Joy in the heart reflects someone who has grasped the concept – mirroring God's heart, living by faith, trusting Him, storing up for eternity. If you don't want to give - you shouldn't. At the same time, it is a sin to not want to!

📖 1 Cor 16:2; Gal 6:10
Give deliberately and consistently.
Our primary place of giving is to our local church. Once we have given to God, and have met other needs privately, surplus income may still be available for other causes.