

# What Giving Does For the Giver

(Philippians 4:10-20)

**M**AN, by his very nature, tends to wonder, "What is in it for me?" when any study begins. This is not just true of our generation. The apostles raised the same question:

Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Beyond, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much and shall inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last; and the last, first" (Matthew 19:27-30).

Jesus explained to them the tremendous blessings which would be coming—a hundredfold now and "eternal life" to come. He also warned them about becoming too carried away with the rewards (Matthew 20:1-6). In this lesson on giving, we will try to look at what we do get as rewards for our giving without giving undue emphasis to the subject.

## I. THE NATURE OF THIS GIFT (Philippians 4:10-16)

Paul was now in prison in Rome. The Philippian church had sent Epaphroditus, one of their own members, to Paul with a gift. This was not something new for them, for they had sent gifts before. They were often the only ones who had aided Paul. They were people Paul used as an illustration of liberal giving to the Corinthi-

ans when encouraging them. (See 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.)

Look at the gift itself. It was an unsolicited gift. Remember, Paul had learned contentment in every state. They volunteered the gift! It was a sharing, a matter of fellowship. They got involved in his distress. It was an abundant gift (Philippians 4:18), not an effort to get by with as little as possible. A stingy gift will not help the giver or the one receiving it. As we give liberally, we receive liberally.

## II. THEIR GIVING WAS FRUIT TO THEIR ACCOUNT (Philippians 4:17, 18)

We glorify God by our fruit (John 15:8). One way we bear fruit is in our giving. We bear fruit when we give to support the preaching of the Word. We share in every conversion. This gives us the right smell to God. We are like a "fragrant aroma." This is based on the idea of incense being an aroma to God. When we give, it is an "acceptable sacrifice" to God. This is, after all, our goal: to please God in everything. Thus, we learn that He is watching and concerned about our giving.

## III. GIVING OPENS THE DOORS FOR GOD TO BLESS US (Philippians 4:19)

God will bless us abundantly when we give. The Old Testament says,

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open

for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until there is no more need" (Malachi 3:10).

Honor the Lord from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine (Proverbs 3:9, 10).

Jesus taught the same truth (Luke 6:38). Thus, we determine the size of God's blessings for us. If we give in a miserly way, God gives back with

the same measure. When we give abundantly, God gives back with the same measure. His wealth is unlimited; His ability to help is unlimited. Let us not limit God's blessings by our poor giving.

### **CONCLUSION**

The best gift you can ever offer God is yourself. Have you given yourself to Him?

—Leon Barnes

©Copyright, 1986, 2005 by Truth for Today  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED