

AN EXAMPLE OF GIVING

Acts 11:28-30

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: There are always situations when someone needs help and there are organizations that are formed to do just that and then those organizations turn to others for donations and such. There arose a famine in a Jewish area and Gentile Christians in Antioch became determined to help those in Judea so every person gave according to his own ability, totally free, unconstrained, spontaneous, all prompted by the Holy Spirit. By giving to meet the needs of their brethren, these Antioch Christians followed the example of the Lord Jesus, Himself. With the Church at Antioch as an example, here are eight things clearly revealed in God's Word about giving.

I. ONE'S GIFT MUST BE MOTIVATED BY LOVE AND GRATITUDE TOWARD THE LORD JESUS

1. *2 Corinthians 8:7-9*

- One's giving is to be proof, demonstration of one's love for Christ.
- Sincerity of professed love to Christ is proven by what one gives and why.
- Love for the Lord Jesus Christ is the key to giving for it determines what, how, and frequency one gives.

II. ONE'S GIFT MUST COME FROM A WILLING HEART

1. *2 Corinthians 2:8-12*

- That which is given out of a sense of duty, responsibility, debt is not free.
- ONLY when one's gifts come from a willing heart, freely and cheerfully given are they accepted by God.
- How much one gives doesn't matter to the Lord, it is the motive behind the giving that matters.

III. ONE SHOULD GIVE ACCORDING TO ONE'S ABILITY, IN PROPORTION TO HIS/HER BLESSINGS

1. *1 Corinthians 16:2*

- In today's Church "thinking" the talk is about giving a "tithe" or 10%.
- The New Testament says nothing about Christians giving a certain percent.
- God's people are His Children and when a Christian gives, it is giving to meet the needs of his/her Christian family, the Church.
- There should be equal giving for not just a few are to carry the load for all. Everyone is to support Christ's kingdom but each is to give as he/she can.

IV. ALL GOD'S CHILDREN SHOULD GIVE FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL

1. *1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7*

- Men, women, rich, poor, old and young, all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ should give a portion of their earthly goods for the support of the Gospel.
- Everyone should be willing to share what he/she has for the common good of God's Church.

V. ONE MUST BE BOTH LIBERAL AND SACRIFICIAL IN GIVING

1. *2 Corinthians 9:5-6*

- Believers are to be liberal because they have been treated liberally and generously by God.
- Giving is like planting seed in the soil, scattering it generously.

- Believers have given nothing until they have taken what they want, what they need and what they can use for themselves and have given it to the Lord Jesus.

VI. ANY GIFT THAT JESUS ACCEPTS MUST AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP, FAITH AND COMMITMENT TO HIM MUST BE VOLUNTARY

1. *2 Corinthians 9:7*

- God's Word leaves it entirely up to the believer as to what is given, to whom it is given, where it is given, the way it is given and when it is given.
- Believers are not in bondage and God loveth a cheerful giver.
- God will not accept gifts from a grudging attitude or spirit.

VII. WHATEVER IS GIVEN MUST BE GIVEN AS UNTO THE LORD, HIMSELF

1. *Matthew 6:1-5*

- Believers are to do nothing to get anyone's attention or to be recognized and honored by others.
- That which is done for the Lord, for the honor of God, will be seen and honored by Him.
- Worship, prayer, giving, fasting, Bible reading, etc. done to get attention from others is exposing one's self as a hypocrite.

VIII. THIS IS THE ONLY KIND OF GIVING THAT IS WELL PLEASING TO GOD

1. *Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:16*

- Give out of a loving and grateful heart, expecting nothing in return.
- One will never suffer loss by being generous.
 - "The only way to have more than enough to spare is to give more than you can spare..."
- The more one can be trusted with to use for God's kingdom, the glory of Christ and the furtherance of the Gospel, the more one will have to use.
- If one is willing to give, God will supply with the ability to give.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christians (believers in Jesus Christ) are expected to give of what they have to support the cause of God.
2. What is given is to come from a loving, caring heart with the intention to bring honor to the Lord and not one's self.
3. God will bless that which one gives freely, lovingly and deliberately and will enable that person to give even more at times.
4. Christian, how do you give?