

## **GIVING FROM THE INSIDE IS WHAT REALLY COUNTS**

**Luke 11:37-41; 1 Corinthians 13:1; Acts 3:6**

**(Not entirely original with me)**

**Introduction:** Ever have somebody come up to you and ask for a "hand out?" Ever see people standing on street corners with a sign, saying something like "out of work, have family to feed, etc..?" There are countless people who have needs and some are serious. A pastor and his family were eating at a well known sandwich place and he noticed a ragged looking man slipping over to tables that were vacant and eating food that the previous people had left. The pastor got up and went over to the man and told him to go to the counter and order something to eat that it was paid for. Thrilled, the ragged man hurried over to the counter and ordered a sandwich. The pastor paid for it. Years later after the pastor's two children had grown up and finished college, both were always helping people in need. When asked why they were so giving they both answered, "I learned it from my parents..." Anybody can give a little money, but the reason behind it is really what counts.

Jesus teaches that giving blesses others but what really counts is what is inside the giver. Is there compassion? Is it from the heart? When one's heart is opened, then his/her hand is opened.

### **I. THE GREATNESS OF A GIFT DEPENDS UPON THE VALUE IT HAS TO THE GIVER**

1. The closer and more vital the gift is to the giver, the more valuable is the gift.
  - Giving of one's wealth can be generous, but it is not giving one's REAL self.
  - The moment a person's heart is touched and he/she gives something vital and essential to his/her own self, it is not accidental but thought out and given from inside that person.
2. When one gives that which is within, it is giving from the depths of his/her own being, just like God did when He gave His only begotten Son to die for the sins of mankind.

### **II. WAYS OF GIVING FROM THE INSIDE/HEART**

1. Giving from the inside/heart is blessed because it opens up other areas of giving.
  - Giving of money brings much gladness sometimes although it may not be much, but to some it enables them to eat, pay rent, pay utilities, buy gasoline, clothes, etc.
  - There are areas in people's lives in need that money can't help.
    - Loneliness
    - Love
    - Sympathy
    - Relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Jesus never said that giving from the heart would be easy, yet there is no happiness compared to that of giving from the heart.
3. If giving money was the only thing one is asked to give, then countless would be shut out for they just don't have much, if any money to give.
  - Those in poverty cannot give money to others, but they do stand by each other and assist each other with a unity that is often so beautiful.

- Visiting a shut in, driving a older person to see the doctor, sitting and talking with someone who is a shut-in, taking someone who can't drive anymore to the store, etc.
- Although a person may not have money/wealth to share, there are other ways to give to give of what one has.

### **III. THE EXAMPLE IN HOW TO GIVE FROM THE INSIDE/HEART**

1. Giving from the inside/heart brings one into harmony with the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Jesus fed the hungry, turned water into wine, had His disciples keep a small bag of money to give to the poor.
  - Remember, Jesus was born in a poor home, lived His entire life as a poor man and He left nothing for others when He died except His only garment.
  - Countless have and can give far more than Jesus gave, and can do so in a single day more than Jesus gave in His whole ministry.
  
2. Jesus gave from within, from His heart.
  - He gave His virtue, healed the sick, comforted those who were in sorrow, gave His joy and made others happy again.
  - Jesus gave peace and restless souls were quieted, gave His prayers and faith was strengthened and courage revived.
  - Jesus gave heaven hearted people a vision of God, the Father and they were once again elated and sang again.
  - Jesus gave His love to the fallen and forgave sins of those who came to Him.
  - Jesus gave of His life to the last drop of His blood.
  - Because Jesus gave, WE LIVE TODAY.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Everybody can give something and usually everybody does give something but the importance of what is given in God's eyes is the reason for the giving. Was it from within, from the heart?
2. There is much more to give than money and every Christian must learn how to give as Jesus gave.
3. Christian, if you want happiness, then learn how to give as Jesus did.
  - *"...For it is more blessed to give than to receive, and he that loseth his life shall save it..."*