

January 25, 2012

Money Matters: The Gift of Giving

- SERIES: Money Matters
 - 3 Weeks Ago: The Value of You
 - 2 Weeks Ago: Materialism—The Dream Killing Dream
 - Last Week: Smart Money
 - Tonight: The Gift of Giving

- Dave Ramsey tells this story about a friend of his worth \$20 million...
 - Family took awesome cruise around the Mediterranean
 - ◇ Cost \$25,000
 - At Christmas season, that same family went to a neighborhood in the city with 2 trailers full of bikes and gave them out to every kid in the neighborhood
 - ◇ Cost \$25,000
 - ▣ Which event do you think his friend described to him as being “more enjoyable and more fun”?
 - When he was giving!
 - ◆ There is something about giving that makes us feel good...the question is—WHY?

- **Let’s start off by looking into the question, “Why should I be a giver?”**
 - The answer to that is actually quite simple.
 - ◇ We should be givers because God Himself is a giver.

- John 3:16
 - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
 - ◇ God was actually willing to give up his very own son!
 - ▣ I’ll give you a lot of things, but two things that I am NOT going to give you are my two daughters!
 - That’s giving beyond comprehension!
 - God also gave us everything we have on earth...

- John 1:1-2
 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

➤ James 1:17

- Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
 - ◇ Jesus made everything, and he's given us everything we have.

- So, why do we give?
 - ◇ God is a giver...
 - And, since God is a giver, we should be givers, because the Bible says that we are **MADE IN HIS IMAGE**
 - In other words, we're made to **BE LIKE HIM**
 - ◆ If he's a giver, then we too should be givers.

- You ever have one of those friends who's all about himself (or herself)?
 - ◇ Selfish people aren't a whole lot of fun, are they?
 - Self-centeredness is something that we need to fight against
 - One way of doing that is by **GIVING!**

- Giving works our spiritual muscles to become Christlike
 - ◇ The more you give, the more you become "others" centric and the less you will be self-centered.
 - Giving is an act of worship, and a sure-fire route to selflessness—Christ gave his life so that we could also be givers rather than takers

➤ Matthew 6:21

- For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
 - ◇ When your treasure is all on yourself, that's obviously where your heart is—when you only spend your money on you, you're being pretty **YOU** focused.

- The woman who gave her only two coins to God, while everyone was giving more, but out of a ton of money that they had—**she was giving while she was in need herself**—that's a pretty huge step towards Christlike selflessness.

- **BECOMING A GIVER WILL BRING YOU TO A PLACE OF BEING MORE LIKE CHRIST, BECAUSE CHRIST THINKS**

FIRST OF OTHERS AND IS HIMSELF A GIVER!

- Let's also look now at the question, "What am I supposed to actually give?"
 - Do you think you can be a good giver without being generous with your own money?
 - ◇ You can definitely give of your time, your friendship, your possessions, etc...
 - But, money is the truest test of being a giver, because it's the hardest to let go of.
 - ◇ The test is to see if we can go from being clenched fist with our money to givers with an open hand to others (with responsibility of course)
 - The Bible is clear that we are supposed to give 10% of our finances to God.
- Leviticus 27:30, 32
 - A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. ... 32 The entire tithe of the herd and flock--every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod--will be holy to the LORD.
 - ◇ A lot of people get ticked when they hear that they are supposed to give 10% to the church.
 - "What the heck for?" is what a lot of people wonder...
 - Some wonder, "Does God need my money?"
 - ◆ Well, can God do things without you? Heck yes!
 - ⊗ God doesn't "NEED" anything from you to survive.
 - Ω In fact, he's proven he can keep the church surviving without many people giving to the church
 - ◇ Tithing isn't for God's benefit or for the church's benefit!
 - Tithing is first and foremost for YOUR BENEFIT!
 - It all comes back to building your spiritual muscles to become a giver like Christ is a giver.
 - ◇ Do you think there are any FINANCIAL benefits to being

SELFLESS?

- Who do you think gets the most promotions—self-centered people or others centric people?
- Who do you think God is willing to bless with financial miracles—those who hold on tightly to all they have, or those who look to actively bless others?

- Being a giver of your money will not make you a multi-millionaire.
 - ◇ When you give, it doesn't mean you'll necessarily be blessed with even more in return.
 - But, you will be growing into the person Christ wants you to be—'cause he's calling you to be like Him.
 - That can never be a bad thing.

- After all, all those people holding tightly onto their money—they're just going to die with it and it will do them no good at that point anyhow.

- You may be thinking, “Seriously, I don't have anything to give. I have no money. How am I supposed to become a giver?”
 - ◇ [VIDEO](#)

- Every time in my life, I believe that I've been better off living off of 90% with God's help than I would with 100% and a lack of God's hand upon my finances!
 - ◇ He doesn't want us to be so ME focused that we feel our money is only deserving of our own selves.
 - **HE GAVE US THAT MONEY—WHO ARE WE TO TELL HIM THAT WE'RE GOING TO USE IT ALL FOR OURSELVES!!!**

- We've talked in recent weeks about being good with our money.
 - We've talked about living like no one else, so that later, you can live like no one else.
 - ◇ (Talk about how fun it would be to have \$1,000,000 to give away)
 - ◇ (Talk about lady giving me and 4 guys \$20 at Monical's to help pay for our pizza)
 - It doesn't matter if it's \$5 or \$50,000—giving to someone in need feels awesome!
 - I'm telling you, it feels good to give to others.
 - ◇ I think it feels good because deep down, we know that it's the right

way of living.

■ And, we know that because, deep down, we know it's God's way of living.

□ Romans 1 says that we all inherently know God and His ways.

◆ When you give, you WILL feel good about yourself because you WILL inherently know that it is right—that it is God's way!

➤ God has blessed everyone of us so abundantly!

• We shouldn't worry about what God gives to someone else—focus on your own blessings!

◇ When your attention is focused on others who have more than you, you'll never be content and experience the joy that comes from a generous heart.

• Giving is a SPIRITUAL ACT OF WORSHIP. Remember, you're made in God's image.

◇ AND GOD IS A GIVER!

■ So, when you give, you become more and more like Jesus.

➤ PRAY

• 1) I want to be a more selfless person—I want to give of my money and time and friendship and whatever else I have to be a blessing to others instead of being so self-focused.

• 2) (This may be the hardest commitment I've ever asked anyone to pray about—even harder than committing your life to Christ)

◇ I want to commit to giving the first 10% of what I earn to God by giving it to the church so that God can use it and so that I can become more like Him—the ultimate Giver!