



Lesson 31 – A Generous Church

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul gave the believers instruction regarding the general principles underlying the support of God's work in the earth.

1) What did he ask the Corinthian Church?

1 Corinthians 9:7 Who goeth a warfare at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and _____ not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

1 Corinthians 9:9-10 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not _____ the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in _____; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

1 Corinthians 9:11-12 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your _____ things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have _____ this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

1 Corinthians 9:13-14 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things _____ of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which _____ the gospel should live of the gospel.

The apostle here referred to the Lord's plan for the maintenance of the priests who ministered in the temple. Those who were set apart to this holy office were supported by their brethren, to whom they ministered spiritual blessings.

2) What was the Old Testament example that Paul was describing?

Hebrews 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take _____ of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

3) Why Levi?

Deuteronomy 18:5 For the LORD thy God hath _____ him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

One tenth of all the increase was claimed by the Lord as His own, and to withhold the tithe was regarded by Him as robbery.

4) What did Paul tell have to say about it?

1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that _____ out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

1 Corinthians 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should _____ of the gospel.

The payment of the tithe was but a part of God's plan for the support of His service. Numerous gifts and offerings were divinely specified. Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy.



By this system of benevolence, the Lord sought to teach Israel that in everything He must be first. Thus, they were reminded that God was the proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that it was He who sent them the sunshine and the rain that developed and ripened the harvest. Everything that they possessed was His; they were but the stewards of His goods.

5) What did Jesus tell us?

Luke 12:48 ...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much _____: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

It is not God's purpose that Christians, whose privileges far exceed those of the Jewish nation, shall give less freely than they gave?

In the hands of His followers, Christ has placed the treasures of the gospel, and upon them He has laid the responsibility of giving the glad tidings of salvation to the world. Surely our obligations are much greater than were those of ancient Israel.

6) What command was given to God's people?

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and _____ me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a _____, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

If professing Christians would faithfully bring to God their tithes and offerings, His treasury would be full. There would then be no occasion to resort to fairs, lotteries, or parties of pleasure to secure funds for the support of the gospel.

Men are tempted to use their means in self-indulgence, in the gratification of appetite, in personal adornment, or in the embellishment of their homes. For these objects many church members do not hesitate to spend freely and even extravagantly. But when asked to give to the Lord's treasury, to carry forward His work in the earth, they demur.

7) What did God tell the world through Malachi?

Malachi 3:8-9 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have _____ me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are _____ with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

It is the spirit of covetousness which leads men to keep for gratification of self means that rightfully belong to God, and this spirit is as abhorrent to Him now as when through His prophet He sternly rebuked His people.

8) What did the Apostle John say?

1 John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to _____, even as he walked.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. This spirit finds its highest manifestation in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. In our behalf the Father gave His only-begotten Son; and Christ, having given up all that He had, then gave Himself, that man might be saved. The cross of Calvary should appeal to the benevolence of every follower of the Saviour.

On the other hand, the spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan. The principle illustrated in the lives of worldlings is to get, get. Thus, they hope to secure happiness and ease, but the fruit of their sowing is misery and death.



Not only should we render the Lord the portion that belongs to Him, but we should bring also to His treasury, as gratitude offering, a liberal tribute. With joyful hearts we should dedicate to the Creator the first fruits of our bounties, our choicest possessions, our best and holiest service. Thus, we will gain rich blessings. God Himself will make our souls like a watered garden whose waters fail not.

9) What did Jesus do for us?

2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his _____ might be rich.

Even the very poor should bring their offerings to God. They are to be sharers of the grace of Christ by denying self to help those whose need is more pressing than their own. The poor man's gift, the fruit of self-denial, comes up before God as fragrant incense. And every act of self-sacrifice strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to Christ.

10) What did Jesus point out to encourage us?

Mark 12:41-42 And Jesus sat over against the _____, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two _____, which make a farthing.

11) What did He say about it?

Mark 12:43-44 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast _____ in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her _____ did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

He esteemed her gift of more value than the large offerings of those whose alms did not call for self-denial. From their abundance they had given a small portion. To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow. Thus, He taught that the value of the gift is estimated not by the amount, but by the proportion that is given and the motive that actuates the giver.

12) What example did Paul make?

Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall _____ also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a _____ giver.

The apostle Paul in his ministry among the churches was untiring in his efforts to inspire in the hearts of the new converts a desire to do large things for the cause of God. Often, he exhorted them to the exercise of liberality.

13) What did Paul say about the Macedonian Churches?

2 Corinthians 8:1-2 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the _____ of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty _____ unto the riches of their liberality.



2 Corinthians 8:3-4 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and _____ their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the _____ to the saints.

Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world's goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches.

14) Who moved on their hearts?

2 Corinthians 8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the _____ of _____.

It was not necessary to urge them to give; rather, they rejoiced in the privilege of denying themselves even of necessary things in order to supply the needs of others. When the apostle would have restrained them, they importuned him to accept their offering. In their simplicity and integrity, and in their love for the brethren, they gladly denied self and thus abounded in the fruit of benevolence.

15) What does Proverbs say about it?

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honour the LORD with thy _____, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall _____ out with new wine.

The followers of Christ should rejoice in the privilege of revealing in their lives the beneficence of their Redeemer. As they give to the Lord, they have the assurance that their treasure is going before them to the heavenly courts.

16) What blessing did Isaiah share with us?

Isaiah 32:20 Blessed are ye that _____ beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.

17) What should we be aware of?

Proverbs 11:24-26 There is that _____, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. He that _____ corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God's gifts.

18) What promise did Jesus make?

Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same _____ that ye mete withal it shall be measured to _____ again.

Can you see the Gospel is dependent on God's people?

Would you like to be a blessing?

When is the time to heed the Spirit's call?