

Giving as an Act of Worship

Text: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Introduction: (God's Pie Video)

Ohhhh that is the sad reality that we are living in right now. The video is not about you, but about the person beside you.

That is our problem, we are trying to create our own formula and removing God from the equation. This is also true when it comes to our finances. We want God to give us this and that, but once we already have it. We put God at the very last of our priorities, but oftentimes, God is not even on our list.

So today I will not tell you how to become a millionaire. No, ask other people about that. But instead, today I will preach about the call for Christians to give as an act of worship.

Background:

In our passage, Paul is reminding the church at Corinth that they have the duty to give and participate in the collection for the church at Jerusalem. Let me give some initial points about giving. First, we can see that collective giving to the church was practiced in the New Testament church. (Another example is in Acts 4:32-37, and the prior verses about the Macedonian churches).

Secondly, Paul is not just aware of the common practices of the churches but also eager in reminding and warning them about this essential act as faithful followers of Christ. To tell you, the Corinth church already started their collection a year ago but did not complete the duty due to the hindrance of some false teacher who was trying to spread fake news about Paul's apostleship. Thus, the reason for the remaining chapters after chapter 10.

Other than reminding them, Paul encouraged them to also look at how the churches in Macedonia were looking up to them and faithfully doing the act of giving to the church. Looking at verse 13, since they will be giving, this can motivate and encourage other churches (or believers) to give glory to God out of thanksgiving in their hearts. This verse is strong support that giving is an act of worship, not just for individual worship but also for communal worship.

Lastly, the act of giving is more than just an outward act. It is an attitude of our hearts. It is an inside-out act. We are giving out of our grateful hearts to revere and worship God. Giving is a transformational experience for Christian spirituality.

With these points, I can already end my sermon for today. I already told you how giving can be an act of worship. It is true that worship is not limited only during the praise and worship time, but it stretches out from the call to worship, prelude up to the benediction. The entire program is an act of worship: singing, listening to the Word, praying, and even in giving.

I hope we will remember that.

Seven principles about biblical giving:

Let us proceed to more points, we already had 3 points a while ago, so let us add 7 points more.

1. God's ownership

- In biblical logic, God is the creator of all things. To that, God is the owner of all things including our wealth, life, and all our possessions. (Haggai 2:8)
- Even our ability to produce wealth is God's gift to us. (Deut. 8:17-19)
 - o 17 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." 18 But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. 19 If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.

2. God is the Ultimate Giver

- John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-9

3. Beyond Tithing

- Tithing was already practiced during the time of Abraham to Mosaic laws, and even to the prophets like Malachi. It was first and foremost support for the Levites, who were the priests during that time.
- But we are no longer under the law, hence we are no longer bound to this "Deuteronomistic principle." We are now under the grace of God, that when we give, we are not forced or coerced to give but rather encouraged to give according to our own will.
- I am not saying that tithing is already insignificant, but rather tithing is a starting yardstick for Christian giving. Meaning that Christians are encouraged to give more than 10 percent. Tithing is part of the OT practice, since we are living in the New Covenant time, we ought to go beyond the former practice.

4. Purposeful and Freely Giving (v. 7-8)

- Now that we are under the grace of God, Dr. Thomas Schreiner said, "Since God is to be our treasure, believers are to give generously and freely." (read verse 7 again)
- When we give it is for the purpose of glorifying God. Think that when you are giving, it is not the same as spending, but it is an investment to God's kingdom.
- When we give do not plant a virus in our giving. What does it mean? Do not publicize or keep on reminding others that you were the one who donated these and that... for example, engraving your name on church chairs, or other equipment. Let God acknowledge your giving, and other people will also see that in your spirituality.

5. Cheerful Giving or Generous giving (v. 7)

- The NT giving is called "generous giving". Actually, in verse 7, we are called to give cheerfully. So, when we give to God, we should be excited because this is an act of worship.
- Do you know Manuel Quezon (20 php) and Ninoy Aquino (500 php)?

6. Sowing and Reaping Principle (v. 6)

- Sowing and reaping principle. What you sow, you shall also reap. Meaning, if I planted a mango seed, I will have a mango tree that will bear a mango fruit. If I planted a banana seed, I will have a banana. No one in his right mind will plant an avocado then will pray hard soooo hard and expect a banana. (say more about this)
- It is also good to start them to give while they're still young, so when they grow older, they will be generous givers. (Share my brother's story)

7. Kingdom-centered Giving

- Finally, we know that the last verses of our passage, it speaks about the purpose of giving is for the whole body of Christ.
- Specifically, this also for missions, helping the poor, community, and those who are sick.
- In short, these are for kingdom eternal purposes.
- Remember in Matthew 6:33, "seek first the kingdom of God" and the rest will follow. This is similar to our verse 8. God is able to give us abundant and flourishing life.
- Now we also talked about sowing and reaping, realizing that the best soil to plant is the healthy soil for God.
- These are, of course, missions and evangelism, church planting, community outreach program, gift-giving, giving to the poor and in need, and many things more.
 - o Youth spirituality, camps, and other more
 - o There is a joke, do not take this seriously: so the healthy soils (in Tagalog, matatabang lupa) are church planting, missions and evangelism, and church outreach. But there's another healthy soil (or matabang lupa), the pastors, that's why look at most of the pastor, we are all healthy (matatabang lupa).

Conclusion:

For my conclusion, let us evaluate your giving budget formula: (take note, I do not have any access to the database of our tithes and offerings; even I am not exempted in the giving of tithes and offerings).

Show them ppt.

Salary - bills - spending - savings = tithes/ offerings

(Bills + spending) – salary = debt (no savings, no tithes)

Salary - tithes/ offerings - savings = generous giving (then bills and another spending)

*Do not spend more than what you are earning. Be wise. Be biblical. Let us give! Is God first in your finances, wealth, and giving? Or are you the same as the person that we watched a while ago?

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