

TIS' THE SEASON TO BE GIVING!

#3094 1217 23A

We all like to be blessed—and have said: *God has blessed me so many times and in so many ways it would be difficult to list them all.* We may have given to someone in need or may have helped another anonymously with finances—but we can also give our *time*, our *energy*, and our *concern* to a worthwhile cause.

A crowd had gathered to listen, so Jesus took the opportunity to give them an explanation of the Beatitudes AV Luke 6:38 *“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over—For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”*

We give first then we are *blessed* second. And we should always give encouragement to anyone going through a trial or a difficult situation. Jesus is exhorting us to give—not just material goods or money, but also to give *support* and the *assurance of our prayers* if a friend or fellow member is going through a tough time.

AV Deuteronomy 3:28 *“Charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.”*

They encouraged Joshua to be the leader that God had appointed him to be. WEY 1 Thessalonians 5:11 *“Therefore encourage one another, and let each one help to strengthen [and edify, build up AV] his friend, as in fact you do.”*

It was once said: *Do all the good you can; in all the ways you can; to all the souls you can; in*

every place you can; at all the times you can; with all the zeal you can; as long as ever you can unquote.

Seven things that we should remind ourselves to always do whenever we can—and if we really want to do that, God will give us the opportunity and ability.

The best thing we can do for someone is to *pray* for them—asking God to *bless* them; to *encourage* them; and to *inspire* them to hold steadfast in faith and trust on Him.

God *blesses* us for being more *giving* toward others—like being more *willing* to help and to *include* them in our prayers.

We should always be *gracious* toward people—which means to be kind, courteous, and respectful. We should strive to be the peacemaker NIV Romans 12:18 *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”*

Being cheerful and joyful in the Lord radiates to people around us, and they begin feeling the same way. NKJV Proverbs 15:13 *“A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.”*

The look on *our* face can change the look on *their* face. We should always try to *encourage* a *discouraged* person.

When we think of what God has done for us, the least we can do for another is to *pray* for them; to *encourage* them; and to remind them that God is merciful. AV Psalm 145:8 *“The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.”*

We have all been *shown* God’s mercy and grace—that is why Jesus said AV Matthew 5:7 *“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”* Everyone *needs* God’s mercy—that is why Jesus told us to AV Luke 6:36 *“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”*

If we have not always followed that advice, it is time for *change*. A humble spirit seeks God’s

mercy—as the publican did AV Luke 18:13 *“God be merciful to me a sinner.”*

A grateful person has a thankful heart attitude for all that God has given. AV Psalm 136:1 *“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.”*

That psalm quotes that phrase 26 times: *“His mercy endureth for ever!”* We can always be a little more *merciful* toward others by offering more *prayers* for them—including encouraging and helping them in any way that God enables us to.

It is common today to hear *angry* words, but God says NKJV Proverbs 15:1 *“A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.”* If anyone is *angry at us* or *angry with someone near us*, a kind work or soft reply immediately lessens the tension and diffuses wrath.

Jesus said it is more blessed to *give* than to *receive*—but giving can mean many things—giving of our *time*; our *energy*; our *resources*; giving *assistance* with some task; and maybe just giving a *smile* to a downhearted soul.

If anyone says: *Just pray for me*, we should always *do* that and adding that we will *keep* them in our prayers. AV Matthew 18:20 *“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*

The apostle said WEY Acts 20:35 *“In all things I have set you an example, showing you that, by working as I do, you ought to help the weak, and to bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”* When we give encouragement, we are following the Lord.

Today we live in a very *selfish* world—but we are called to *selflessness*. It is always *one* or the *other* in our dealings with others—*selfish* or *selfless*. The world says: *Don’t touch my stuff*; the believer says: *Feel free to use my stuff—God has blessed me, and I know it is only on loan, so if*

you can use it, please do—God has more in store for me.

As a Christian we are supposed to be *givers*—and God has shown the example AV John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he **gave** his only begotten **Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

We should be *looking* for ways to *give*—like giving our boss extra time at work; giving assistance to someone facing a tough task; anonymously giving a financial blessing; and always giving encouragement to a discouraged soul.

Giving is a *heart* issue—it is not how *much* money we have or do *not have*; it is simply the willingness in our heart to *give* when there is a need. We will always *want* to give if we want to *follow* the Lord—we should be in a *giving mode* all the time.

God makes this offer NKJV Malachi 3:10 “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try [prove AV] Me now in this,’ Says the LORD of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.’”

The *selfish nature* we began life with—wants to *keep* everything for *itself*—but when the Spirit of God is within, we will want to *give* to anyone who has a need—and as God presents the opportunity. Believers should be *givers* first and then be *receivers* of God’s blessings.

When we give anything to anyone, Satan will try to put *pride* in our heart for having done so. He wants us to *tell* others of our giving, or to mention how we helped someone—the list could be *long* and the pride *deep* in our heart.

NKJV Luke 18:10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other

men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’

13 “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ 14 ‘I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’”

Even if we have zero dollars, we can *still* give—we can give our *time*, our *interest*, and our *energy* to help someone with the children or with some job they need completed.

There are many ways to *give* to people, we just need to be *willing* to ask *God* to show us **how** we can help; **where** the need is; or to **whom** we can give of our time and interest.

We should *not* be concerned if we have *little* or *much* to give—the issue is whether we are *willing* to give what we have—be it large or small.

The song lyrics say: *Little is much when God is in it—labor not for wealth or fame; there’s a crown and you can win it, when you go in Jesus’ Name.* It is not the *amount* but the *attitude* that counts.

Jesus knew how important it was to *give* His *life* for the sins of the world, and He instructed His followers AV John 15:12 “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

Some claim they would lay down their *life* for Jesus but are often not willing to lay down a dollar for the poor. Many say they would *die* for Jesus but do not give their *time* to Him. We can say many things, but our *actions* will prove the sincerity of our words.

Christians are *not* hoarders but *givers*. AV 1 Timothy 6:7 “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”

We should always *look* for ways to give to those less fortunate. We take *nothing* with us—but we can *send* it on ahead by *giving* it away on earth.

Jacob had a *giving* heart and said to his brother Esau NKJV Genesis 33:11 “Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.’ So he urged him, and he took it.”

The instructions are *clear*, and the reward is *great*—AV Luke 6:35 “Love ye your enemies, and do good, and **lend**, hoping for nothing again; and your **reward** shall be great, and ye shall **be** the children of the Highest.”

There is a *reward-day* coming—what we *did* with what we *had* reveals what is the *contents* of our heart!

God wants to *give* *rewards* for the kind of life we lived on earth. AV 1 Corinthians 10:31 “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

The same *God* Who has given us His *Son*, has something *else* to give us—and it is truly amazing because it **keeps on giving** for an eternity! It all starts **now** by giving it **away** on earth!



Do all **the good** you can; in all **the ways** you can; to all **the souls** you can; in **every place** you can; at all **the times** you can; with all **the zeal** you can; as long as **ever** you can.

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