



CONTENT:

Weekly:

Sunday sermon Bible readings,
Worship song,
Reflection,
Small group questions,
Family time.

Daily:

Memory verse,
Prayer.

THE GIFT OF GIVING

There is good reason to believe that humans are “hardwired” for lives characterised by giving. We live with a strong sense and are even expected to live in the realm of giving. We give ourselves to development and growth. We give ourselves to education and work. We give ourselves to worthy causes. We give ourselves to intimate relationship. We give ourselves to family and friends. This sense and expectation of living “giving lives” is reinforced by society. To live in the realm of giving is society’s explicit message; the marketing and advertising industries willingly tap into this sense and expectation of living “giving lives”. Yet within this embracing of living lives in the realm of giving, economic concepts and

modes of thought begin to creep in and quietly influence and modify the realm of giving. Because of this, we find ourselves talking about giving and receiving; we speak about givers and takers and soon we are not able to think of giving without considering how that giving will benefit us. While this giving for self-gain is widely practiced, it is not openly owned. It is not expressly publicised or explicitly stated. It remains the silent and unspoken agenda behind so much of society’s giving. It begins to poison society. It stands to reason that while society’s unspoken practice is to give to self-benefit, it separates the intimate link between human society and the kingdom of God; between people and God; between the God who gives and the people who are made in the image of God to give. This divorce allows society to define giving in its own way without interference from God and His kingdom. **Over the month of October, we explore giving as God’s gift to humans and to society at large. May we be people who are known for giving the gift of our time, talent and treasure.**

WEEK 1: 2 OCT THE GOD WHO GIVES – Rev Kamogelo

Giving is God’s idea - God the Creator, God the Redeemer and Lord, God the Helper and Counsellor defines giving.

WEEK 2: 9 OCT ADDRESSING MONEY AS A RIVAL GOD – Khanyiso Njwabule

Money makes godly claims but only disappoints is a God rival.

WEEK 3: 16 OCT GIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD (PART 1): SACRIFICIALLY, REGULARLY/FREELY AND GENEROUSLY – Rev Gavin

As God gives, so too do we – sacrificially, freely and generously.

WEEK 4: 23 OCT GIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD (PART 2): GRATEFULLY AND OBEDIENTLY – Tony Mathee

Giving as a response of thanksgiving and obedience.

WEEK 5: 30 OCT A CHURCH KNOWN FOR ITS GIVING – Rev Boitumelo

As God is known as a Great Giver, so too should the church be known as such.

WEEK 4: 23 OCTOBER

GIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD (PART 2): GRATEFULLY AND OBEDIENTLY

Giving as a response of thanksgiving and obedience

BIBLE READINGS

Psalm 95
 Malachi 3:6-10
 I Thessalonians 5:16-18
 I Peter 1



WORSHIP SONG:



482. We give Thee but Thine ow: <https://youtu.be/IHR1PQ5YwLo>

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION WRITTEN BY:

Local Preacher: Tony Matthee

This topic really deserves a lot of deeper delving. We are so inclined to think that the little we give to the Church will not make any difference, but nothing could be further from the truth. Consider for example the incident recorded in the Bible concerning the giving of the Widow's mites (Mark 12: 41 – 44). Her giving was extremely small compared to others, but it attracted the attention of Jesus more than the others who gave generous amounts. Does it not raise the question that they gave generously, but they could have given more?

Let's look at obedience aspect of giving first. Malachi is blistering in his comments (which are God inspired) in saying that we are robbing God by not giving as we should to the Church. Going against God is a serious indictment. It is a commonly accepted principle from Scripture that we should give a tenth to God of what we receive. However, this passage of Scripture goes even further and suggests we are robbing God by withholding our tithes AND offerings. Why does the Bible not stop at "tithes"? This passage also offers a CHALLENGE to us and there are not many of those to be found in the Bible. "Test me in this", says God and see if I don't open the floodgates of heaven on you." He does not promise us money in return, although it could be, but blessings in other forms that we can see and identify as blessings.

Another challenge to us is grateful giving. Here are just two reasons (and there are many) why we should give gratefully:

1. Everything I have comes from God

Before the Israelites entered the promised land Moses said to the people "You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me'. But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth." (Deut. 8: 17 – 18). And then in James 1: 17 we read "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly heights." If we really examine our lives, can we truthfully say we got to where we are without the blessing of God. I look at the folk that stay at Forest Farm and say "There, but for the grace of God go you and I."

2. God is the Owner, and I am the Manager

"For everything in heaven and earth is yours." (Chron.29: 11). Is it not true that the creator of something is also the owner until he/she parts with it? If God is the Creator, that makes us the managers of his creation. Years ago, we used to sing this hymn when the offertory was received. "We give Thee but Thine own, what're the gift may be; All that we have is thine alone, a trust O lord from thee." We are basically giving back to God what already belongs to him. We are grateful for what he has given us and therefore we give back to him gratefully.

THE GIFT GIVING

The amazing thing in this matter of giving is that God has given us a free will. We can choose to give or to withhold. When King David was collecting material for the Temple the leaders, officers and commanders gave willingly. *“They gave towards the work on the temple of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold.....”* (1 Chron. 29: 7). The talent was the heaviest measure of weight and equal to 34 kg. 5000 talents translate into 170 000 kg of gold. Now that’s a lot of gold and if you use your calculator to determine the value of that gold the figure you come up with is astronomical. The Israelites gave willingly as they were grateful. Can we do the same?

Life Application

The grateful person says, *“How much CAN I give?”* The greedy person says, *“How much MUST I give?”* Which are you? Give what you CAN this week.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Discuss how the depth of gratitude influences the degree of giving.
2. What do you think motivated the poor widow when she gave her 2 mites?
3. What is your understanding of the term “tithes and offerings”?
4. What is your response to someone who says, “I earn. Therefore, my money is mine to use however I please.”
5. Do you think a Church should harp on giving?



DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

| DAY | VERSE | PRAYER |
|------------------|---|---|
| MONDAY | <i>“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”</i> (Psalm 95:6-7) | Loving God, we are grateful for your care and your love. We praise you, Father! Amen |
| TUESDAY | <i>“I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty.”</i> (Malachi 3:6-7) | Almighty God, we acknowledge our failure to live as we should as your followers. Please forgive us. Amen. |
| WEDNESDAY | <i>“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”</i> (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) | O Lord, it is difficult to give thanks in difficult circumstances, but help us to focus on all our blessings and give you the necessary thanks. Amen. |
| THURSDAY | <i>“But you ask, ‘How are we to return? Will a mere mortal rob God?’ Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ In tithes and offerings.”</i> (Malachi 3:7-8) | Dear Lord, everything we have is yours and you have enabled us to accumulate our wealth. Help us to give gratefully and willingly. Amen |
| FRIDAY | <i>“God’s elect, ... have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood.”</i> (1 Peter 1:1-2) | Heavenly Father, we are blessed to be your children and we would like to show our love for you by our obedience. Amen |
| SATURDAY | <i>“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. ‘Test me in this,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.’”</i> (Malachi 3:10) | Gracious God, we truly believe that you love cheerful givers and will bless them. We give with gratitude and obedience from what you have already given us. Amen |



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SCRIPTURE: I THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances.

- **What does that mean to you?**

Let's have a closer look at these commands to see what they mean.

To rejoice always, doesn't mean that we can't be sad. Of course, when hard things happen, you are allowed to be upset. But even while you are crying, you can still be comforted knowing that you belong to Christ. Christ should mean everything to you. If we look to our toys to make us happy, our happiness will end if we lose them, or they are taken away. However, because Christ will never leave us or be taken away from us, if we are happy in him then we will always be happy!

- **Can you rejoice always?**

To pray without ceasing doesn't mean that you need to be praying all day every day. If you try to do that you wouldn't be able to talk to other people or do your schoolwork! It does mean that prayer must be in our daily lives. We should never stop being praying people. You can't just ask the Lord to bless you at the beginning of the year, and then not pray about it again. No, every single day you need to ask for the Lord's blessings and say than you to what we have received.

- **What things do you think you can pray or talk to Jesus about?**

To give thanks in all circumstances reminds us to be thankful about everything. It's easy to be thankful to the Lord when things go well for us. But does this command also mean that you must thank the Lord if you get sick for example? No, but you do need to thank the Lord that he is caring for you, even while you are sick. No matter what is happening in your life, the Lord is in control and if you lean on God, you will be ok in the end.

- **Where or what can you give thanks to the Lord for?**

These things aren't easy to do, but God has also given you the Holy Spirit to help you to rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks in all circumstances.

- **Which of these three things (in the verses above) do find the hardest to do? Why?**