

# CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES

for New Church Members

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~ 1963 ~

THE BAPTIST CENTER MALATE, MANILA, PHILIPPINES

## LESSON FIVE - CHRISTIAN GIVING

### INTRODUCTION

Christian giving is a part of our acceptance of CHRIST as the LORD of our lives. By returning a definite portion of our income back to GOD we acknowledge that GOD is the owner of our lives and of all that we have. Giving to GOD is as old as man himself. The first family that GOD made brought offerings to Him, in recognition that GOD made them and they belonged to Him.

**"And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."** (Genesis 4:2-5)

Ever since this time, every person who has really known God and loved Him has brought gifts to Him.

### I. REASONS FOR GIVING

Everything that comes into our hands is a reason for giving, for **"every good gift and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father"** (James 1:17). Everything we have that is good is from GOD, and true appreciation will result in giving back to GOD. Specifically, there are four reasons why we should give:

#### A. BECAUSE GOD IS THE OWNER OF ALL THAT WE HAVE

**"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein"** (Psalm 24:1).

**"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Haggai 2:8). "For all that is in the Heaven and in the earth is Thine... Both riches and honour come of Thee, . . . and of Thine own have we given Thee". (I Chronicles 29:11-14).**

We do not own anything. All that we have - life, mind, body, talents, money, time, home - are gifts of GOD. GOD made all things and He lets us use the things He has made, but they are His. We are stewards only. He trusts us to use for Him all that He lets us have and He asks that, we bring our offerings to Him so that we will not forget the owner.

## **B. BECAUSE HE COMMANDS IT**

**"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me . . . Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, If I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:8-10). "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." (Proverbs 3:9). JESUS says in Matthew 23:23, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone".**

JESUS says that those who would substitute giving of tithes for faith, mercy, etc. are hypocrites. Woe to them! But, JESUS makes it clear that faith, mercy, etc. are not to be done in place of giving. They go together. Notice that JESUS said, **"These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."**

The Bible is full of God's calls to His people to bring Him their offerings. He promises His blessings to those who obey; to those who refuse He says; **"Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed Me"** (Malachi 3:9).

## **C. BECAUSE OUR GIFTS ARE NEEDED FOR HIS WORK**

**"Whosoever shall upon the name of the LORD shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:13-15).**

The lost world is waiting for the Gospel. Many men and women are ready to go. But they cannot go until the church members bring their **"offerings unto the LORD."** The needs are everywhere. The hungry are to be fed; the sick are to be healed; the lost are to be saved. JESUS established His church to do for Him this work in the world. The church can do it only when the church members bring their offerings.

## **D. BECAUSE OF HIS EXAMPLE**

**"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 poverty you might be rich" (II Corinthians 8:9). "God so loved the world that He gave..." (John 3:16). JESUS gave up the riches of Heaven for us. JESUS gave His life for us on the cross. God so loved that He gave up His Son to come to earth to die. JESUS has given us an example that we might follow. If we would be like Him we**

too will give. The more we give, sacrifice, and deny ourselves, the more like JESUS we shall be.

## II. GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR GIVING

GOD, the owner of all things, has not only commanded us to give, but He has given us a plan to follow. He has told us in His Word how He wants us to make our offerings. He clearly offers five suggestions:

### A. GIVE CHEERFULLY

**"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver"** (II Corinthians 9:7). GOD looks on the heart and He knows when we cheerfully bring our offerings to Him. An unwilling gift is not acceptable. God refused to accept the first gift that was ever offered Him because the spirit of giver was wrong (Genesis 4:5).\*\* Because God loved us. He gave us His best. He expects us, because we love Him, gladly to give our best to His church.

### B. GIVE SYSTEMATICALLY

**"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him"** (I Corinthians 16:2). **"They shall not appear before the LORD empty: every man shall give as he is able"** (Deuteronomy 16:16, 17). We are plainly told that on the first day of the week we should bring our offerings to God. When we come to worship, we are to bring our gifts, for our offering to Him is a part of our worship. **"And fell down and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh"** (Matthew 2:11).

*\*\*Note: Cain not only had a wrong spirit, he also chose to come a way other than the one chosen by the Lord: the way of a blood sacrifice - this was shown to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:21. Cain's way is the way of bloodless religion, the way of man's works, man's best, the fruit of his hands - which could NEVER be enough to cover his sin. Only the blood of a sinless substitute could do that - all those OT sacrifices typified the blood of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. See also Jude 11.*

### C. GIVE PROPORTIONATELY

**"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse"** (Malachi 3:10). **"And of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee"** (Genesis 28:22). **"And all the tithe . . . is the Lord's: It is holy unto the Lord"** (Leviticus 27:30). **"Ye pay tithe mint and anise and cummin,... these ought ye to have done"** (Matt 23:23).

In acknowledgement of God's ownership of all things, and to carry on the work of His church, GOD requires us to give a certain proportion of our income to Him. The proportion which He commanded in the Old Testament and which JESUS endorsed in the New Testament is the tithe, or one-tenth of what we have. That means that out of every peso that comes to us, we are to give ten centavos. When we withhold our tithe, we are robbing GOD and spending that which is not ours. God's command is, **"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse."** Those of us who fail to

do it are unfaithful servants and unworthy followers of JESUS.

#### **D. GIVE INDIVIDUALLY**

**"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store"** (I Corinthians 16:2). GOD expects from each member of the church an offering each week. Just as each person must accept CHRIST for himself, so each person is to bring his own offering. A father cannot be saved for his child: he cannot attend the church services for his child: neither can he give for his child. The responsibility is an individual responsibility. GOD wants each one to worship Him with his gifts.

#### **E. GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**

**"And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need"** (Acts 2:44-45). **"And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living"** (Mark 12:42-44).

When we have brought our tithe to GOD, we have not yet made an offering, for the tithe is what we owe Him. It is a debt. Our offerings are the gifts we make beyond the tithe - gifts of love. If we wish to be and do our best for the Master and the church, the tithe will be the least that we give, and then through sacrifice, we will bring our love offerings to Him. God judges our gifts not by what we give, but by what we keep. The widow's gift was larger than all others, because she gave all that she had.

"I gave My life for thee,  
What hast thou given for Me?"

Christian giving is an outward expression or symbol that our whole being has been given to God: that He is the LORD and MASTER of our lives. It is possible to express the symbol without the inner surrender of ourselves to GOD (as did the scribes and Pharisees described by JESUS in Matthew 23:23), but it is not possible to surrender ourselves without expressing it by Christian giving.

If we are surrendered to God, we will fulfill His commands and desires. We will show our love in definite ways. We will bring the tithes and offerings into the storehouse.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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