

COMMANDS OF CHRIST

6. GIVE



We have been studying the commands of Christ. Can you remember what some of them are? In this study we will look at the command found in Luke 6:38. What is the command found in this verse? It is to give. We are going to see what we can learn from a poor widow who knew how to give.

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:41-44

A. Why should we give?

Why do you think the poor widow gave? What do you think was in her mind as she gave? Discuss.

a.) She loved God

This widow gave because she loved God, and this is the reason we should give. In 2 Corinthians 9:7 it says, "Each one should give then, as he has decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty, for God loves the one who gives gladly." The rich men in the story gave because it was their duty and they wanted people to see how good they were. This does not please God. But the widow humbly gave all she had, and Jesus said that God was pleased. Let us learn to give because we love God as this is one of the ways we can express our worship to Him.

b.) She trusted God would care for her

The widow gave all she had, even though she was poor because she trusted God to care for her. She even had to trust God to provide her next meal! Although the rich men gave generously, it was only a little of what they had. They were trusting in their riches, not in God. Many are trusting in their possessions and jobs, and these things prevent them from giving and really trusting God. But God wants us to be free to give. Giving is like sowing. As we give in faith we will receive God's blessing. Many people think they are poor and do not want to give, but by not giving they hold back the blessing of God and remain poor. If they learnt to give they would be blessed! In 2 Corinthians 9:6 it says, "Remember the person who sows few seeds will have a small crop, the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop."

c.) She was free from the love of money

The widow gave all she had because she did not love money and hold onto what she had. How different she was to the rich man. Many people, even poor people, are bound by the love of money. Read 1 Timothy 6:9-10. These verses tell us that when a person loves money it leads to all kinds of evil. What are some of the evil things that love of money can lead to? Selfishness, pride, stealing, lying, cheating and much more. The love of money can draw people away from the Lord. The first command God gave to His people was that they were to worship no other god. When a person loves money they make money their god. Jesus said that where our treasure is, there our heart will be. Let us examine our hearts and seek God's forgiveness. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

d.) She cared for others

The woman could have said, "I'm poor. Others should give to me." Many people are like that. But she had a beautiful attitude. She gave because she saw that others had greater needs than she did, and she wanted her money to be used for God's glory. She was storing up riches in Heaven that would last forever.

B. How much should we give?

a.) All we have!

How much did the widow give? It tells us she gave all she had. When we give our lives to Jesus all we have belongs to Him – our land, our house, our job, our money and our possessions. We have been given it by God to use for His glory.

b.) A tithe – one tenth

God taught His people to give one tenth of their income (money and food products) to Him as a sign that all they had were His. Turn to Malachi 3:8-12. When God's people did not give Him their tithe, they were cheating Him of what belonged to Him. Ask the Lord for faith to begin to give one tenth. At first it may seem a large amount, but all, rich or poor, young or old can learn to tithe. As we obey God's word we will experience the blessing of God. See Malachi 3:10-12

c.) Offerings

As we learn to give one tenth, the Lord will teach us to give more. The widow was giving more than one tenth and the Lord was pleased.

C. Who do we give to?

a.) To the Lord

Like the woman in the story, we are to give to the Lord. Although we may be giving to the church, or people in need, we are to understand that we are really giving it to the Lord in worship and faith.

b.) To our Church

The woman took her gifts for the Lord to the Temple. This was the place where she worshipped God. This is where God wants us to give our tithe – to the Church fellowship where we worship Him and receive our spiritual food. Turn to 1 Corinthians 9:13-14. We are to support the work of the Lord and His servants.

c.) To missions work & Christians in need

We are also to give so the Gospel can be spread to other places, and finally we are to help our brothers and sisters in Christ who are in need. That is what the early Church did, and they saw God's blessing in a wonderful way.

Conclusion

Let us obey the command of Jesus to give. This is so different to the spirit of the world where everyone wants to get for themselves. As we learn to give, to express our love and worship to God, we will receive far more in return from God than we could ever dream of. Remember Jesus said, 'Give to others, and God will give to you. You will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands, all that you can hold. The measure you use for others, is the one that God will use for you.'