

CONTRASTS IN GIVING
Exodus 36:2-7

Introduction:

- 1. If a poll were taken among religious people on the subject of giving, I believe the majority would favor the following:**
 - a. No appeals be made for money for any purpose.**
 - b. No sermons ever be preached on the subject of giving.**
 - c. No encouragement to give of one's time, talents, or money.**

- 2. Religious racketeers have given Christianity a bad name.**
 - a. They "suppose that godliness is a means of gain" (1 Tim. 6:5).**
 - b. People are turned off by their all too apparent hypocrisy.**
 - c. Non-Christians tend to judge all religious teachers alike.**
 - d. I am thankful the Lord's church does not appeal to the broader public to support their God-given work.**

- 3. Money is necessary to carry on the Lord's work.**
 - a. The Gospel must be preached (Matthew 28:19,20).**

"Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14).
 - b. The needy must be helped (Matthew 25:40,45).**

"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).
 - c. The worship, work, and fellowship of the church must be carried on.**

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

- 4. We are going to contrast the attitude of four sets toward giving.**

Discussion:

I. THE POOR WIDOW AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

- A. Jesus watched as people put their gifts in the temple treasury (Luke 21:1-4).**
- 1. Jesus sees us when we give in the assembly (Matt. 18:20).**
 - 2. The rich gave large amounts of money.**
 - 3. The poor widow gave only two mites - the smallest coins.**
- B. Jesus said “This poor widow put in more than they all.”**
- 1. The rich gave out of their abundance - they would never miss it.**
 - 2. The widow gave everything - all that she had to live on.**
 - 3. We cannot imitate the widow unless we give till it hurts!**
- C. The Rich Young Ruler wanted to know what to do to have eternal life (Mark 10:17-22).**
- 1. He came running to Jesus - he was eager and earnest.**
 - 2. He knelt before Jesus - he showed great respect for Him.**
 - 3. He asked the right question: “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”**
- D. Jesus told him to “keep the commandments” for he lived under the Law of Moses (Hebrews 7:12; 8:6-13).**
- 1. He replied: “All these have I kept from my youth up.”**
 - 2. “Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, ‘One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven, and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.’”**
 - 3. The young man went away sorrowful for he was very rich.**
- E. The poor widow gave everything to the Lord trusting Him to care for her needs; the young ruler was unwilling to give up his great wealth to have eternal life.**

II. JESUS AND JUDAS.

A. Jesus set the greatest example of giving ever known.

- 1. He gave up Heaven to come to earth (2 Corinthians 8:9).**
- 2. He gave up Deity to become humanity (John 1:14; Philipians 2:5-11).**
- 3. He gave His life that we might have life (Romans 5:8).**

B. Judas was a lover of money and would do anything to get it.

- 1. He stole from the treasury of the disciples (John 12:1-6).**
- 2. He betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16).**
- 3. He betrayed the most innocent Person Who ever lived, but died by his own hand in shame and disgrace.**
- 4. Jesus died for sins and made salvation possible for all.**

III. BARNABAS AND ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

A. The members of the church at Jerusalem sold their property to to feed the hungry and care for the poor (Acts 4:34-37).

B. Joses was named “Barnabas” by the apostles.

- 1. Barnabas means “son of encouragement.”**
- 2. He was a Levite from Cyprus.**
- 3. He sold his land and gave it all to the church.**

C. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, sold their land, but kept back part of the price of the sale (Acts 5:1-11).

- 1. They were under no obligation to give it all as Barnabas had done (Acts 5:4).**
- 2. They apparently represented it as the entire amount.**
- 3. In doing so, they lied to God {the Holy Spirit} (Acts 5:3,4).**

IV. ISRAEL AT SINAI AND THE JEWS IN MALACHI’S DAY.

- A. Israel gave so much at Sinai to build the tabernacle they had to be restrained from giving any more (Exodus 36:5,6).
 - 1. The churches of Christ exhibit at the 1965 World's Fair had so much given, brethren were asked to give no more.
 - 2. The editor of a denominational publication mused how a relatively small church gave too much when several prominent denominations together could not fund their joint exhibit.

- B. In Malachi's day, the Jews made a mockery of giving.
 - 1. They offered the blind and lame as sacrifices (Malachi 1:8, 12-14; Leviticus 22:18-25).
 - 2. They robbed God because they did not give their required tithes (Malachi 3:8-10).
 - 3. God withheld His blessings because of their selfishness.

Conclusion:

- 1. We can only keep that which we give away (Matthew 6:19-21).
- 2. There is greater joy in giving than in getting (Acts 20:35).
- 3. The Lord will judge us, not on the amount of our possessions or the size of our bank accounts, but on how we have used that which He has given to us (Matthew 25:31-46).
- 4. The Rich Young Ruler, Judas Iscariot, Ananias and Sapphira, and the Jews in Malachi's day have been dead for two thousand years or more.
 - a. Where are they now?
 - b. Do they have any regrets about their selfishness?
 - c. Would they make any changes if it were possible to do so?
- 5. Now is the only time we have to prepare for eternity. Are you ready?

(4)

Rod Rutherford: July 12, 2015.

