

Upcoming Events...

1 Corinthians Class: Every Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.

Barnabas Group Meeting: July 25

Quotations about Giving

“No person was ever honored for what he received. He was honored for what he gave.” – Calvin Coolidge

“It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving.” - Richard Braunstein

July Birthdays

22 Morgie McKnight 30 Willie Henderson

August Birthdays

4 Noah Perales 6 Gigi Zamarripa 12 Debbie Hoffman
16 Nick Hoffman 19 Keith Lovelady 25 Pat Limburg

August Anniversaries

2 Buddy & Dolly Cashion

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Thoughts on Giving

(Excerpts from homilies on 2 Corinthians 8
of the Pulpit Commentary)

Editor note: I find that so many of those who have contributed to the Pulpit Commentary express things so well, I thought I would share some regarding our giving. Enjoy...and consider.

The contributions of beneficence are only virtuous as they spring from a generous desire. *“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”* The doctrine is this, that the disposition of the heart, not the doings of the hand, constitute the essence of moral character. This is the Divine method of estimating human conduct. *“The Lord judgeth not as man judgeth,”* etc. The motive is the soul of the deed. *“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,... and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”* Do not judge the desire by the effort, but judge the effort put forth by the desire. The poor widow would have made munificent contributions, but she could only give a “mite;” but in that mite there was more value than in all the amount in the temple exchequer. Some have the means to do good and not the heart, and some have the heart but not the means. The former are grubs in the universe, the latter are angels. There are deeds done in the body, seen of God, infinitely more numerous and essentially more valuable in most cases than deeds done by the body.

The general principle here propounded. It is that the requirements of God correspond to the possessions of man. What men have, they have received from the undeserved bounty of their Creator. This holds good with regard to property and to talents and opportunities. An account is expected from every man by Him who is the Judge and sovereign Lord of all. We are to some extent

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
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and in some matters accountable to our fellow men, but for everything to Him in whom “*we live, and move, and have our being.*” The rule according to which the supreme Governor will judge mankind is one of absolute rectitude — “*according to that a man hath.*” The feeble man will not be expected to have done the work of the strong; the dull man the work of the genius; the peasant the work of the prince; nor the beggar to have given with the generosity of the millionaire. But each must answer for that which has been entrusted to himself. In all things the disposition, the spirit, the endeavor, will be taken into account; “*if there be first the ready mind*” — “*if the forward zeal be at hand.*” Such is the universal condition of Divine acceptance and approval.

The special application of the principle here deduced. In the matter of gifts there is scope for moral culture and watchfulness. Unless liberality be shown upon definite principle, it will most likely not be shown at all. There is need of watching against selfishness and avarice. It is well for every Christian to anticipate and apply beforehand the Divine principle — to judge himself, that he may not be judged by God; to put to himself the question, “How much owest thou unto thy Lord?” Especially should the inspired rule of liberality be observed by those who are prospering in the world. As means increase, let gifts be enlarged. The Judge cannot accept from the wealthy the gifts which were approved when offered by the poor.

Signs of a Dying Church

By Shane Idleman

Church is boring for many because the power of God has vanished from many congregations...there is a lack of desire to pursue Him in the pulpit as well as in the pew. Like Samson, they “*know not that the Spirit of the Lord has departed*” (cf. Judge 16:20). High attendance is not the gauge of success, faithfulness is. Granted, a healthy church should experience seasons of growth, but even cults generate large numbers of followers. Here are some simple ways to gauge the health of a church (continued from last week).

Is the church known for either emotionalism or dead formalism? Unfortunately, Christians often embrace one of two extremes when it comes to the topic of revival and the Holy Spirit. At one extreme are those who embrace pure emotionalism and hysteria—“if it's odd it's God” is often their motto. All weird behavior is excused. The other extreme resembles a cemetery. There's no living, vibrant spiritual life taking place. The church is dead, cold, and lifeless; talk of revival is either dismissed or ridiculed. Both extremes are characteristics of a dying church.

Is sin excused and holiness minimized? In short, has the fear of the Lord vanished? Some time ago, a pastor of a large church in my area made an unforgettable statement, “We should avoid mentioning the fear of the Lord. It makes people feel uncomfortable.” Just writing that sentence makes me feel uncomfortable. The fear of the Lord is mentioned frequently throughout the Bible as the beginning of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. “*The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him...*” (Psalm 147:11).

Fear can also motivate a person to repent. Jesus said, “*Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*” (Matthew 10:28). Jesus spoke more on the fear of hell than on the glory of heaven. “That makes me both love Him and fear Him! I love Him because He is my Savior, and I fear Him because He is my Judge” (A.W. Tozer).

The present condition of the church (and America) leads one to wonder if this lack of fearing the Lord is contributing to her spiritually dead condition: “*I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked*” (Revelation 3:15-17).

(To be continued next week)