



WORSHIPPING THROUGH GIVING

One way people have always shown faith in and love for God in worship is by giving a gift to God. The patriarchs did, the Jews did, and Christians do. Jesus said the man who shares his blessings in doing God's work will be greatly blessed (*Luke 6:38; Matthew 5:42*). Jesus also said a man's heart will be where he keeps his treasures (*Luke 12:34*). One way a Christian can give his heart to Christ is to share his blessings with Christ.

The church in Jerusalem faced serious trouble because many strangers who had been baptized had no food or money. To meet the trouble, the Christians shared their money and property to help the Christian strangers (*Acts 2:44, 45; 4:34-37*). They were not commanded nor forced to do this. They did it of free will in love for their brothers. The church also fed the widows who had no one to care for them (*Acts 6; 1 Timothy 5:3-11*).

Giving should be done as act of faith, an expression of sincere love, proof of real interest in the work of God, and an expression of thanks for God's blessings. There is no worship in dropping money in a pan without plan or thought. Worship is showing honor and respect to God by giving a true offering from the heart.

Paul ordered the churches to give on Sunday in preparing to do a Christian work (*1 Corinthians 16:1,2*). Each person was to give freely as he himself decided. Giving was to be according to the amount of blessings the person had received.

2 Corinthians 9:6-10 gives some facts about how to give properly. First, the more a man freely gives to God, the more God will spiritually and physically bless the man. The Christian must purpose in his heart. He plans his giving before coming to

worship. He does not give unwillingly nor by force. The Christian gives because he wants to show his love for God. He will give cheerfully. Christian giving comes from a glad heart.

The Christian has many reasons for giving. He gives because Christ gave up heaven's riches for each of us (*2 Corinthians 8:9*). He gives to show his love for God (*2 Corinthians 8:24*). He gives because God will remember his gift (*Hebrews 6:10*) and will give him treasures in heaven (*Matthew 6:19-21*). He gives because he is only God's steward taking care of God's things (*1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 10:26*).

How can the church's money be used? It can support a preacher (*1 Corinthians 9:9-14*). It can help the needy (*Acts 11:29, 30; Galatians 6:10*). It can help spread the gospel which is the purpose of Christians (*Matthew 28: 19,20*). It can also be used to provide the needs of the church in worship and work.

In the New Testament, even poor Christians gave freely, and liberally (*2 Corinthians 8:1-5*).

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What did Jesus say about sharing our blessings?
2. When the church in Jerusalem faced serious trouble, what did the Christians do?
3. When is giving true worship?
4. When did the church at Corinth give?
5. What are the facts of proper giving?
6. What reasons does the Christian have for giving?
7. How can Church money be used?