

THE GIFT OF GIVING - A SERVING GIFT

TEXT: Romans 12:8,13

EXPLANATION

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS GIFT

- A. The gift of giving was the God given ability to give in a cheerful and unselfish way so that others in the Lord's work were helped and the work of the Lord was prospered as a result.
- B. This gift was not self-seeking like the way the pharisees gave (Matt. 6) but it called for "simplicity" (Rom. 12:8) or singleness of mind and heart. It wasn't to receive something in return or for vain glory, but rather it was a gift based upon one's delight in doing the Lord's work.
- C. Simply stated this gift involved the use of temporal possessions for the good of others and the glory of God.

EXERCISE

II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The gift of giving was evident in the early church and many gave liberally in the Lord's work to meet various needs and this resulted in a powerful testimony and the furtherance of the gospel. Barnabas no doubt possessed the gift of giving along with the gift of encouragement (Acts 4:34-37).
- B. The gift of giving was also evidenced by others in the local churches later on. We find the Philippian church giving repeatedly to the ministry of the Apostle Paul to aid him financially (Phil. 4:15-18). There were no doubt individuals in the churches of Macedonia with this gift for they were led to help the poor, persecuted saints at

Jerusalem (II Cor. 8:1,2).

EXTENT

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALS IN OUR DAY

- A. Notice first of all that a believer without the gift of giving is no more exempt from giving than a believer is from witnessing without the gift of evangelism. We are all to give and have a part in the Lord's work (II Cor. 8:7; Luke 6:38; Heb. 13:16; I Cor. 16:2).
- B. Notice also that a tithe or 10 percent was required for all Israel under the law and failure to meet this requirement resulted in God withholding His blessing an indictment of robbing God (Mal. 3: 8-10).
- C. It should be noted also that tithing is not legalistic or putting oneself under the law. Tithing is a way we can honor the Lord and show our obedience to Him (Prov. 3:9). Both Abraham and Jacob paid tithes hundreds of years before the law was given (Gen. 14:20; 28:22).
- D. We notice that tithing was the way God ordained for those who ministered in His service in the O.T. (Num. 18:8-31) and He has ordained the same thing for those who minister in the New Testament (I Cor. 9:13,14). Those who do not tithe are unfaithful stewards in the Lord's work and are not involved as they should be.
- E. The gift of giving differs from one's usual responsibility in giving to the Lord's work. Those with this gift far surpass giving a tithe. They will rather find great personal delight in giving in a variety of ways to the Lord's work. It may be financially to individuals in the Lord's service, to some need among believers, to a church, Christian school or others. It may take a variety of forms: it may be a jar of beans, a side of beef, special offering in church or to meet any number of needs.
- F. The gift of giving will be recognized as one goes about giving in the Lord's work. One with this gift will delight

in giving and he will find a principle illustrated by the example of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. The more you give, if you have the gift of giving, the more you will have the means to give.

ERROR

IV. HOW THIS GIFT MAY BE MISAPPLIED OR MISUSED

- A. People who are blessed materially oftentimes go about trying to manipulate others and control them or even attempt to control the ministry of a church. They see money as power and they use it to get their own way.
- B. Sometimes people with this gift can develop a proud heart over their ability to give and fail to acknowledge that they are mere channels for the Lord.
- C. Persons with this gift can also become critical of others, feeling that they are doing more than others.
- D. Sometimes people misquote I Timothy 6:10 as "money is the root of all evil." The correct reading is, "the love of money is the root of all (kinds of) evil." When a man loves money he will do anything to get it. When a man has the gift of giving he will see the real value of money is using it for the Lord's work.