

Bible Text: Proverbs 3:9-10; Proverbs 19:17
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Covenant of Grace Protestant Reformed
PO Box 10138
Spokane, WA 99209

Website: www.reformedspokane.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/cgprf

Tonight we are going to talk about the Christian duty of giving and I want us to begin by reading from 2 Corinthians chapter eight.

2 Corinthians chapters eight and nine are probably the two leading chapters in the Bible on the subject of giving. So 2 Corinthians chapter eight. I am just going to read the first nine verses and then read a few verses from chapter nine.

2 Corinthians chapter eight beginning at verse one.

Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.¹

You notice he says that in their poverty they were liberal.

For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.²

And what Paul is saying there is that they had a gift and they urged the apostle to take it because they wanted to be a part of serving the saints.

And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the

¹ 2 Corinthians 8:1-2.

² 2 Corinthians 8:3-4.

forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.³

And then in chapter nine I want to read from verse six.

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.⁴

And then, especially, verse 13.

“Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men.”⁵

Let’s open with a word of prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven, we pray that as we open the Scriptures tonight to look at the important Christian duty of giving, that thou wilt open our eyes and our ears and our hearts to receive the things written in the Scripture with meekness and godly fear, that we may live these things in gratitude unto thee for thy great gift to us. Pardon, Lord, our sins. Keep us from sinning this evening. We ask it for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Tonight’s speech I have entitled, “Giving for the Poor and the Kingdom.” And I want to begin just by defining those two things. There are two areas. There are kingdom causes and the care of the poor that require giving of us.

Kingdom causes refers primarily to the work of the Church in the preaching of the gospel and in missions. But then also, in a sense, to all the spiritual needs that we have as believers in this world. The care of the poor refers to the work of the Church and of the individual believer to care for those who have less than what they need.

Now this part of stewardship, giving, is very important. It is very important for us also to teach to our children. And it is a very important responsibility for every one of us, for

³ 2 Corinthians 8:5-9.

⁴ 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.

⁵ 2 Corinthians 9:13.

those who have much as well as those who have little. We can look at the subject of giving and we might make excuses. Very easily say, “Well, other people will meet that need.” Or say, “Well, there are the rich and they will take care of this.”

Sometimes our lack of care for the poor is blamed on the poor themselves. We say, “Well, it is their fault that they are poor. So they have got to dig themselves out of this situation.”

Or other times we maybe have a lack of knowledge of the poor. We don’t know any poor. We don’t know the situation of those who are in need and so we are not giving as we should.

Of course, this is a very confidential area of our life. The Scriptures teach, “Let not the right hand know what the left hand giveth.” And there is a confidentiality in this aspect of our stewardship. But, again, the Bible comes into the private areas of our life and God lays down the law of Christ as King and Lord also in the private areas of our life.

As we have looked at Christian stewardship there has been one outstanding principle and that is the principle of the sovereignty of God. And that stands before us tonight again as we look at the Christian duty of giving. It begins with this, that God is the owner of everything. And so our responsibility to give is not giving of what we have, first of all, but it is giving of what God has given to us. How can we be selfish with the things that we have when, really, they are not ours? They belong to the Lord. And so that lies behind this first of all.

And then in the second place, related to the sovereignty of God, Christian giving is a response of the believer to the sovereign grace of God in salvation. We read that in 2 Corinthians chapter eight and verse nine.

The apostle Paul in this chapter is talking about the liberality of the Church in Macedonia, is holding that up for an example to the Church in Corinth and telling the Church in Corinth that he sent Titus to them as one to exhort them especially in this area that they be more liberal, that they give, because the Church at Macedonia had done this even when, in a sense, they couldn’t afford to do it. They did it and they urged their gift on the apostle Paul for the Churches at Jerusalem.

And Paul says in verse nine, 2 Corinthians eight verse nine, “Ye know...” And this is the reason that they ought to give, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”⁶

And Paul is saying this. There is a parallel between what happens in the gospel and salvation and the Christian duty of giving and caring for those in need. This is the parallel. From a spiritual point of view every one of us is empty and poor. And there is

⁶ 2 Corinthians 8:9.

only one that can meet the need of our poverty and that is Christ who was rich, Paul says here.

“Yet for your sakes he became poor.”⁷

He emptied himself. He became a man. He came in human flesh. He became a servant. He went to the death of the cross that you might partake in his riches. And Paul is saying this. “If you know the grace of God, this is one way that you display the grace of God in giving.” And this is a response to the sovereign grace of God.

And that means that the believer will give not because he is compelled to do it, not out of constraint, but because the grace of God works in him and works this in him as a response to the gospel. And we read that in the second chapter that we read, 2 Corinthians chapter nine verse seven.

Paul says, “Let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”⁸

This is how the one who knows the grace of God will give, not because he is compelled to do it, not because there is no other option, not grudgingly, not sparingly, but with joy, willingly and voluntarily and cheerfully and readily and giving as Christ also gave himself for us.

And that is what is so amazing about what happened in Macedonia. This poor church, poor group of believers out of their poverty showed themselves to be rich, says the apostle Paul. Not rich so much in what they gave, but in their liberality and their attitude, in what was in their heart as stewards of the things that God had given to them.

Well, tonight we want to look at giving and I want to just look at two texts with you from the book of Proverbs that, I think, lay out for us some of the main principles that have to do with giving. The first is in Proverbs chapter three verses nine and 10.

And, you know, this follows the earlier verses five and six:

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.⁹

And then down in verses nine and 10 Solomon says:

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.¹⁰

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 2 Corinthians 9:7.

⁹ Proverbs 3:5-6.

And you notice what he says there, the word he uses, “substance” and “first fruits.”

There are three main principles, I think, that we can draw from these verses. And the first is the purpose of giving. What is the purpose of giving? And the purpose of giving is to honor the Lord, the glory of God. That is why we give. That is the purpose. God has given us things. We have received them from him so that we may glorify him with those things.

And when he says, “honor,” he means that word literally is to give weight to, to give God his proper value and worth with the things that you have.

“Honour the LORD with thy substance.”¹¹

And the word “Lord,” think about that word, that name of God means. It is not only his covenant name, but it refers to his eternal, unchangeable omnipotent and transcendent being.

How do we honor him? How do we give him proper weight? Well, we give him our all. And that means with respect to my material things I am obligated, no matter how much or how little I have to promote the name of God with what I have.

And the idea of first fruits in the text here is important. It lays before us a principle that is there both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

If you would think of that word “first fruits,” what do you think of?

Well, the first fruits were the part of what the Israelites had, their income or their possessions that they set aside for the Lord. Now what was it set aside for? It didn't just go into a container. It didn't just go into a bank account, but it had a purpose. What was it given for? And it was given for the support of the spiritual life of the nation. They brought it to the temple and it became the food and the income of those who labored in spiritual things. They priests, this is where the priests derived their income from.

And so it was the first fruits were given for, not just God first, but God first in this respect that spiritual life of the nation was supported by the first fruits. And today in the New Testament the parallel is, of course, the support of the preaching of the gospel. We find that in the book of Galatians chapter six verse six.

The apostle Paul says, “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”¹²

In 1 Timothy five verses 17 and 18:

¹⁰ Proverbs 3:9-10.

¹¹ Proverbs 3:9.

¹² Galatians 6:6.

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.¹³

And it is the same principle, The support of the work of the Church and the preaching of the gospel. This is what we mean by the kingdom cause. And that is the purpose of our giving, for the promotion of the name and the honor and the kingdom of God in the earth in the preaching of the gospel and work of the Church.

So that is the first principle. We have here the purpose of giving.

In the second place you have in this verse the priority of giving. And it is there again in the word “first fruits.” The idea is this is first. This is set aside first.

In Deuteronomy chapter 26 God explains what he means by the first fruits in verses one and two. He says:

And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.¹⁴

God is saying, “This has to be set aside first.”

And take into the tabernacle or the temple, the place were God chooses to set his name. Why does God say that? Later on in chapter 26 of Deuteronomy verses 10 and 11.

This is what you should say as you bring the offering.

And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God: And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.¹⁵

You notice those last two things, the Levite and the stranger. This is for the care of the Levites, an acknowledgement that everything that we have is from God and we return it unto him. You see that principle in the Old Testament also in this that they had to redeem some of the first born. God gave them children. Well, God is saying, “The first

¹³ 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

¹⁴ Deuteronomy 26:1-2.

¹⁵ Deuteronomy 26:10-11.

belongs to me, but you can redeem it. You can buy it back by giving something in its place, because first what you have must be used for the Lord.”

So you have the purpose of giving. You have the priority of giving. And then in the third place you have here in this text the idea of proportionate giving.

“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.”¹⁶

And so on.

How do I calculate what I should give to the Lord? That is the question that is really answered here.

“The first fruits of all your increase.”¹⁷

That means proportionate to what the Lord has given you, you give to him.

Every time God gives you an increase you increase your giving. That is the idea here in the text. That is very straightforward in the Old Testament tithe. They were required to give a tenth. Now it was a tenth, but there were other things besides that they had to give. But it was very straightforward, a proportion.

And maybe that doesn't hold today, that Old Testament law, but the same principle is there, the principle that we must give as God has given to us and the Spirit of the tithe remains. It is there in the New Testament in two passages, 1 Corinthians 16 verses one and two.

The apostle says, “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”¹⁸

So according to what God has given you, you lay aside in store for the kingdom and for the care of the poor.

In Acts chapter 11 verses 28 and 29 there was a famine and the saints in verse 29 we read, “Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea.”¹⁹

“According to his ability.”²⁰

¹⁶ Proverbs 3:9.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

¹⁹ Acts 11:29.

²⁰ Ibid.

So some had a greater ability and some had a lesser ability and the principle there is proportionate giving. And it is laid down so that the burden, laid down that way in the Scripture so that the burden of giving may be placed on everybody, not just on some.

2 Corinthians eight verse 13, the apostle Paul says, “ I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened.”²¹

As he exhorts the Church in Corinth to give he is saying, “I am not asking you to give so that others don’t have to, that they be eased, but you all. You all must give for the cause of the kingdom.

And that means everyone. And then it means this as well, that those who are given more have a greater responsibility.

1 Timothy six.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.²²

Rather than trusting in riches, use it, says the apostle, to give.

And the other text that I wanted to look at is in chapter 19 and this focuses more especially on the care of the poor. And it is one of the most surprising verses in all of the Scriptures, Proverbs 19 and verse 17.

“He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.”²³

And I say it is one of the most surprising verses in all the Scripture because how can it be said that we lend to the Lord and that he will pay us back? Isn’t everything his in the first place? And the original idea in the last part of the verse, “...that which he hath given will he pay him again,”²⁴ the original idea is that he feels the obligation and he pays back the obligation.

So when you lend to somebody that person becomes obligated to you and God is saying, “Here, as you give to the poor, I will put myself under obligation to you.”

How can God say that if he is the sovereign God?

²¹ 2 Corinthians 8:13.

²² 1 Timothy 6:17-18.

²³ Proverbs 19:17.

²⁴ Ibid.

Well, first of all as we lend to the poor or give to the poor that is a kindness that we show not only to the poor, but also to God himself.

Jesus says in Matthew 25, “As much as you give a cup of cold water to this one in my name you have done it unto me.”

And so giving for the poor is a kindness that we show to God. But then, second, this help us to understand what true stewardship is, that what we have we return to the Lord. There is only one other place in the Scripture that gives the idea of lending to the Lord. And that is in 1 Samuel 1:27 and 28. Hannah prayed for a son and God gave her a son, Samuel. And she brought him back to the tabernacle and she said, “I have leant him to the Lord.” And she did that because she understood that this child wasn’t first hers, but God’s.

Psalm 127 verse three. “Children are an heritage of the LORD.”²⁵

It is because she understood that that she brought her son and she said, “I have leant him to the Lord.”

We show that we believe that God is the owner of all things and the things that he has given to us by giving them for the care of the poor.

And then, third, this demonstrates the greatness of this obligation to lend to the Lord.

Much like our children, just as the children that we have must be returned to the Lord and raised in the fear of his name and that responsibility rests on us, so with everything that we have God has given us wealth not for ourselves, but that we may use it and give it for the care of others.

Now as we look at the subject of giving to the poor there are two important underlying principles or questions, really, that we must see. And the first principle is the mercy of God towards others. Why is it important as we give that we know the mercy of God towards us?

Well, it says, as I pointed out, in 2 Corinthians eight verse nine, our giving is simply a reflection of the grace and the mercy that God has shown to us. And the Scriptures, when they describe to us the mercy of God use the figure of giving to the poor and caring for the poor more than anything else to describe the mercy of God. God’s mercy is put in terms of his pity on the poor because that is who we are spiritually, poor.

Psalm nine verse 18.

“The needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.”²⁶

²⁵ Psalm 127:3.

²⁶ Psalm 9:18.

God remembers the poor.

Psalm 69 verse 33.

“For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.”²⁷

God hears the poor.

Psalm 140 verse 12.

“I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.”²⁸

God delivers the poor, maintains the right of the poor.

Psalm 113 verses seven and eight.

“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes.”²⁹

God has respect unto and he elevates the poor from their situation. He protects the poor. He is a refuge for the poor. He provides for the poor. These are all things that the Scriptures say God does. And those are explanations of the mercy of God towards poor sinners. And as you believe the gospel, as you know the mercy of God, you will show that to others.

Jesus came, Isaiah 61, to preach deliverance to the poor. And that is the gospel. It comes to us in the poverty of our sin. And the foundation for Christian giving is that we know the mercy of God towards us poor sinners.

God has a heart of mercy and God has an attitude of pity towards us. And so we will towards others.

And then the other thing here that we need to understand in giving for the poor is the cause of poverty. I said earlier very often we want to blame the poor. We know that there are millions and even billions of people in this world that are poor. Some by some of their own fault, their laziness or their waste or their bad company or their drunkenness. But many others, if you consider the numbers of the poor in this world, are not poor by their doing. It is by accident or illness or economic situations or civic situations or because of refugee status or things beyond their control. They are born into this situation.

²⁷ Psalm 69:33.

²⁸ Psalm 140:12.

²⁹ Psalm 113:7-8.

Why are they poor? Well, it is not their doing. And the cause we have to see. The cause, at bottom, for human poverty is sin. And not just the sin of the individual, well, not primarily the sin of the individual, but the sin that we are corporately responsible for in the human race at bottom is the sin of the human race, of Adam and Eve and our fall into sin and the curse of God on us all.

And the important thing for us to remember so that we have a heart of sympathy is that we don't have what we have because we ourselves deserve it. There is no reason in you that you were born in this country and that you have had opportunities and education and that you are who you are. That is not your doing.

What makes you to differ? What do you have that you didn't first receive? 1 Corinthians four and verse seven.

And so we have to understand that what God has done for us in our poverty, the poverty of our sin, is showing mercy. And we need to show mercy as well.

Now what is this duty? Well, first of all it is a Christian duty. We mean by that not only that the Christian is one who must hear and should care for others, but that we give as an evidence of the gospel in our lives.

Some people want to separate the gospel and benevolence from one another. On the one hand they want to make the gospel a social thing, that this is what the gospel is. It is to bring help to those who are in poverty and to do those kinds of things so that the Church is simply a social organization to help poor people and so on and that Christians are in this world to improve the social standing and status of others. That is one danger.

But on the other side is to say, "Well, the Christian really doesn't need to care at all about the situation that others are in so long as people hear the gospel."

But we shouldn't separate the two. They go together. As we... it is not either or, but as we bring the gospel the work of mercy follows and is displayed in our attitude and our work with those to whom we bring the gospel. We show that the mercy of the gospel is something that has taken a hold of our hearts and that we want to display also to others.

Someone has said this. The world isn't going to care how much we know till they know how much we care. There is some truth to that.

And so it is a Christian duty.

And then in the second place it is not only a corporate duty, but it is an individual duty. And by corporate I mean it is something that belongs to the Church. It is something that belongs to organizations. But it is not only something that is corporate. It is, first, something that is personal and individual.

There is an individual responsibility. You and I have to show pity for the poor and care for the poor.

And if you look at all the passages in Scripture that talk about caring for the poor, most often they are in the singular. They are directed at the individual.

Here in Proverbs 19 verse 16. He that pitieth the poor. That is the singular, the person that pities the poor.

You have the duty to care for the poor. You can't pass it off on others. You can't say, "Well, there is a deacon fund at church that will care for them or there are others, organizations or government or others that will care for the poor."

We have a duty as God has given us ability to care for the poor in our lives.

And it is a duty, in the third place, that we have towards all beginning with our own family and those of the household of faith.

Galatians chapter six verse 10, the apostle says, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."³⁰

Notice the words "to all men." He means by that, that we shouldn't be limited in our giving. It is important to see that there is an order in this text, especially to those of the household of faith, but there is not an exclusion in the text as though we may only give for the care of someone who is a Christian.

The determining factor in giving to others is not whether the person is a believer or not, but the opportunity that is set before us and the opportunity is going to be more evident in one's family and more in front of us in the life of the Church with other believers. But there are other opportunities that we ought to use to give to the poor. The spirit of mercy comes from the gospel and is displayed with the gospel also to unbelievers.

And then also this. Even though we all ought to care for the poor as we have opportunity, it is a duty—and I am repeating something I said already—but it is a duty that is laid especially on the wealthy.

1 Timothy six God says this to the rich that they do good, that they be ready to distribute, rich in good works, willing to communicate or to give to others.

But here is a good question for us tonight. Who are the wealthy? And the biblical definition, if you look at the words very carefully, to define rich and poor, the idea of one who is poor in the Scriptures is one who has to beg. That is the poor.

In both the Hebrew Old Testament word and the Greek New Testament word the word for poor comes from the root "beggar." And if we are not beggars, and this is what the

³⁰ Galatians 6:10.

Scripture is saying, we have wealth. And the poorest people in this country have wealth. We can't deny that.

You look at what has gone on recently, for example, in the Philippines and these people live in cardboard shacks and tin huts and it has all been washed away. That is poverty. And it is taken from them, the little bit that they had. And what do we have?

And so we have to give, all of us. There is a temptation for those who are rich to despise the poor. The Scriptures warn against that. And so we have to give and we have to fight against that temptation. And the Bible gives us some marvelous examples of those who are rich who gave to the poor.

Think of these examples. Abraham. He was wealthy, but he gave. Boaz, Job, Abigail, the wife of Nabal, Barzillai, the friend of David, Zacchaeus, Cornelius, the churches at Macedonia. Great examples of generosity in the Scriptures, one who is rich, one who has has to understand why God has given him more than he needs.

Ephesians four puts it this way.

“ Let him that stole steal no more.”³¹

And it is envisioning somebody who is stealing because he doesn't have what he needs. And this is the way he thinks he can get what he needs by stealing.

So Paul says, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good.”³²

Why? Not just so he can have to eat for himself, but, Ephesians four verse 28, “ Let him labour... [in] the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”³³

And the reason that God gives to us is that we may give to others.

We lend to the Lord by giving to the poor. And there is promise, great beautiful promise to the child of God who is generous, who gives. There is a curse on those who afflict the poor in the Scriptures.

Exodus chapter 22:

Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.³⁴

³¹ Ephesians 4:28.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Exodus 22:22-24.

And God is saying this. “Don’t touch the poor. Don’t hurt the poor.”

And you see how strongly he expresses it here. You are going to get the ire of God against you if you oppress the poor.

But there are wonderful promises as well.

In Proverbs 19, “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.”³⁵

In Proverbs three verse 10, “So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”³⁶

In Proverbs 11 verse 25, “The liberal soul shall be made fat.”³⁷

Now how are we to understand those promises? Does it mean that God is going to return to us two fold or 10 fold in material things what we have given to others?

It can’t mean that. You know generous people who have made themselves poor through their generosity. But this is what it means.

Giving to the poor is, in a sense, an investment that brings us the return of the blessing of God in our life and joy and happiness and peace in our life as believers. We give to the poor but they can’t pay us back. And we don’t expect that they will pay us back, but God says, “I will stand as surety for them and I will put myself under obligation to you.”

What a blessing.

Jesus in Matthew 19 verse 21 puts it this way. “And thou shalt have treasure in heaven.”³⁸

It isn’t that we will get back material wealth, but the blessings are heavenly and spiritual, riches in heaven. And the begin here in this life.

Let me just finish by pointing out three spiritual blessings and benefits of generosity.

The Bible says, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”³⁹

First of all, there is a spiritual enrichment for us. That is, as we are generous we grow in the fruit of the Spirit and in spiritual graces. All of these fruits of the Spirit go together,

³⁵ Proverbs 19:17.

³⁶ Proverbs 3:10.

³⁷ Proverbs 11:25.

³⁸ Matthew 19:21.

³⁹ Acts 20:35.

“Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance,”⁴⁰ they all go together.

And as we are merciful and as we shall pity, we increase in our kindness, in our love, all these things. There is an enriching of the spiritual life as we express our pity to the poor.

Second, we will grow in our understanding of the gospel of grace. As we give to the poor we are expressing, we are showing the grace and the mercy that God has shown to us. And as we show mercy towards others, the greater will be our experience of the mercy of God towards us and our understanding as we grow in knowledge of God’s mercy and grow as a result of that an expression of mercy there will be a corresponding growth again in the knowledge of God’s mercy towards us.

Jesus teaches us to pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”⁴¹

And then also this. Generosity deepens our friendship with other believers and with the Lord.

The return is not material, but it is an enriching of relationship with fellow believer and with the Lord. That is what comes from giving to the poor.

God says that which we lend to the poor he will return to us. He will pay again. And these are the ways in which he does it.

Well, thanks, again, for your attention and that is what I have tonight on the subject of giving.

⁴⁰ Galatians 5:22-23.

⁴¹ Matthew 6:12.

Biblical Principles for Personal Finances: Study # 3
“Giving for the Poor and the Kingdom”

Introductory Comments

- A. The Importance of Giving
 - B. The relation of Giving to the Sovereignty of God
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- I. Giving for the Kingdom (Proverbs 3:9-10)
 - A. The Purpose of Giving
 - B. The Priority of Giving
 - C. Proportionate Giving
 - II. Giving for the care of the poor (Proverbs 19:17)
 - A. This Proverb uses astonishing language
 - B. Two underlying things we must have clearly before our mind
 - 1. The Mercy of God
 - 2. The Cause of Poverty
 - C. The duty described.
 - 1. It is a Christian Duty
 - 2. It is not only a corporate duty, but also an individual duty
 - 3. It is a duty we have toward all, beginning with our own family and the household of faith
 - 4. It is a duty especially laid on the wealthy
 - III. The promises made to the generous