

COMMENTARY

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Giving & Receiving Go Together

Tis the Season!

Greetings to my forever Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus!

What an exciting time in history to be alive! The only other time in history that would be more exciting would be the early years, and I mean really early, like the year 0001! Jesus' birth goes down as the most exciting time in the history of the human race!

God saw an issue - sin, and sent His Son Jesus to reset "the sin problem".

Adam and Eve made the decision to disobey God's command to not eat from the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. We too, in this present time, have things God tells us to not eat from.

For my own walk, Father God has shown me places in my own life that I am not supposed to eat from, specifically music that is contrary to the word of God. When I do, I'm in direct disobedience. When I set my own wants and desires divergent to God's will, I will receive what I chose, my own harvest. God is looking for us to live and move and have our being in Him, rather than in our own knowledge and in our own planting/harvest. Even our own desires must come from Him! I want to plant the seeds that God gives me through His word, the Bible, because that seed-word harvest is much more valuable to me.

Here are a few scriptures that hit my heart.

Acts 20:35

"It is more blessed to give than to receive".

Meaning, more comes from our giving than our receiving. What is at the heart of that? Not just, "I will get more if I give," but that there is more value to everyone involved when the heart of giving is exalted.

After all, it is God's nature to give good gifts, so we must also have His nature, looking to give His word and His love to those we meet.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3 "Now concerning the money collected for [the relief of] the saints [in Jerusalem], ..."

Paul was explaining to the church in Corinth that they should set aside their first harvests/money of all that came in, to give to God. Christians through the ages are characterized by giving generously to provide for one another's material needs.

God has called us to give and receive all throughout the Word of God. Not money only, but of yourself and, quite significantly, of your time. If we give of ourselves, then all those things we hold precious will be given. However, we don't give like the rest of the world gives. As followers of Jesus, we can only give what He first gave us. Even our giving comes from Him.

Even the world around us without Jesus understands that giving works. The internet says this:

Interconnected: Receiving and giving are two sides of the same coin, like the flow of energy in a system.



Breaking: God Is With Us!

BETHLEHEM -

According to sources, the eternal Word of God has become flesh in the form of a newborn baby who was born this morning.

Some claim that this child is the human incarnation of the God of the Universe, who has come to reconcile a broken creation with its holy Creator, saving a wayward human race in a heroic rescue echoed in myths, legends, prophecies, and whispered hopes since the dawn of time.

If true, then God is with us, and things will never be the same again.

The Babylon Bee, 12/25/24

No one has ever become poor by giving,
Anne Frank

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others
Gandhi

Giving is better than receiving because giving starts the receiving process.
Jim Rohn

No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.

Aesop

Mutual benefit: When you give, you often receive something in return, whether tangible, or intangible (appreciation, connection, growth).

Balance: A healthy relationship requires both parties to be comfortable giving and receiving in appropriate measures.

This is what the world believes, it shows us that this is a law of earth. It's like gravity: what goes up, must come down. It's a rule with no deviation.

Giving and receiving is seen evidently in farming. When we plant seeds in the ground there are many factors that lead to growth, rather than just sowing it and waiting for it to do what it does. For it to grow to its fullest potential, planting is not the only factor - sunlight, watering, fertilizer, weather events, fences against grazing animals, and even bugs can affect the crop planted. God shows us that our job is to be obedient and give of ourselves when He leads us to. Unlike farming, we don't have to worry about everything being in the right place and the right time.

We are called to be led.

Boy, those last six words hit hard as I'm writing them! I Am Called to Be Led. How many times as a pastor do I sit with the Body of Christ in calamity, in worry, in complete chaos over their lives? In almost every single circumstance, there are similarities. The person going through the issue is receiving the harvest of what they have already planted.

Now, the height of their storm is not the time to tell someone they should have patched the roof, so I wait. I wait for the present issue to be over before I bring this up to the individual. But I bring it up to you in this letter: the biggest issue in your

life - is it the result of something you have planted?

Ultimately I want to sow better seeds. The only way I can do that is if I get the seeds from God. His Word has to be what I plant. If I am out of God's will with my wife, kids, finances, then I will harvest what I have planted. It is a law of this world.

So what is my message to you in the beautiful month of December? Give!! Not as the world gives, but give as Jesus gave. Jesus only gave mankind what He saw His father do. That is my heart for my own life and now I bring it to you. Here's what I need: I need to live, I need to move, and I need to have my being (everything that I am) come from God. How? By getting into the Bible everyday, multiple times a day. And not just scanning it with your eyes, but pondering it, try remembering a few key words, thinking upon words from it during your day, acting upon it!

It is the well from which we draw life.

Holy Spirit brings the Word into us and makes it alive in us. It produces a giant harvest from God Himself!

We receive what we plant.

Thank you for reading my heart today,
Merry Christmas!
With Love,

Aaron

The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.

Oscar Wilde

Giving is living. If you stop wanting to give, there's nothing more to live for.

Audrey Hepburn

You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

Amy Carmichael

Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.

Booker T. Washington.

Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.

Mohammed Ali

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.

Charles Dickens

To erase another's heartache is to forget our own.

Abraham Lincoln

Life's persistent and most urgent question is, "What are you doing for other others?"

Martin Luther King Jr.

Worship is simply giving God His breath back.

Lou Giglio.

Shout out to everyone who is trying to get their life together: working on yourself is the hardest part of life!

Keep going! It gets easier!

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If you truly love someone, you don't give up easily.

Unknown (or possibly you!)