



Bible Study

Give!

Matthew Kneisler

February 2006

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1.0 Introduction to Give!

Remember the feeling when you received a surprise gift? The excitement, the joy, the happiness of receiving something unexpected! It is wonderful to know someone has blessed you. When someone gives us a present it energizes us and strengthens our relationship with them and warms our soul.



When you review your life, you will see the many, many blessings that God has given to you. Do you remember the last breath you took, the place you slept, the food you ate, the friends you shared, your parents, your job, your salvation? God gave these blessings to you. And He is pleased to give us even more!

Luke 12:32 Do not be afraid, little flock, for **your Father has been pleased to give you** the kingdom.

God does not hold back or sparingly distribute small pieces. God is liberal, merciful and bountiful with His generosity. Notice that God does not desire to give us an acre or a couple of trees in the kingdom. He is giving us the kingdom!

God's is love and His love is reflected in how He deals with His children as we receive His gifts.

Notice also how God gives: it is through His good pleasure! He is pleased to give! God gives whole heartily in abundance and with joy!

Now let's turn the tables and reflect on how we give:

- When was the last time we gave to the least of our brothers: the sick, the poor, the fatherless, the hungry, or widows?
- When was the last time we gave our time to God and talked with Him, heart-to-heart in quiet time and then listened?
- When was the last time we gave some of our financial increase to God and His work?

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- When was the last time we died to self, were patient and let others go before us?
- When was the last time we used our God given spiritual gifts to bless others?

When we consider what to give, we need to think of more than just money. Many sermons are based upon tithing, but how many are based on the full meaning of giving?

In this study we will reference the booklet by Bill Bright entitled, *The Christian and Giving*. And during this time we will consider:

- Introduction to Giving
- Giving Our Time
- Giving Our Bodies
- Giving Our Gifts/Talents
- Giving Our Possessions
- Giving Our Finances

1.1 Giving

What does the Thesaurus and the Dictionary present on Giving?

1.1.1 Thesaurus Description: Give

Main Entry: give

Part of Speech: verb ¹

Definition: contribute

Synonyms: accord, administer, allow, ante up, award, bequeath, bestow, cede, come across, commit, confer, consign, convey, deed, deliver, dish out, dispense, dispose of, dole out, donate, endow, entrust, fork over, furnish, gift, grant, hand, hand over, heap upon, lavish upon, lay upon, lease, let have, make over, parcel out, part with, pass down, pass out, permit, pony up, present, provide, relinquish, remit, sell, shell out, subsidize, supply, throw in, tip, transfer, transmit, turn over, vouchsafe, will

Antonyms: [receive](#), [take](#), [withhold](#)

Source: *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*
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Main Entry: give

Part of Speech: verb ²

Definition: communicate

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Synonyms: air, announce, carry, deliver, emit, express, furnish, impart, issue, notify, present, pronounce, publish, put, read, render, state, supply, transfer, transmit, utter, vent, ventilate

Antonyms: [receive](#)

Source: *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*
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Main Entry: give

Part of Speech: verb³

Definition: demonstrate

Synonyms: administer, bestow, confer, dispense, display, evidence, extend, furnish, hold out, indicate, issue, manifest, minister, offer, pose, present, produce, proffer, provide, put on, render, return, set forth, show, tender, yield

Antonyms: [conceal](#), [hide](#), [keep](#), [retain](#)

Source: *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*
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Main Entry: give

Part of Speech: verb⁴

Definition: yield

Synonyms: allow, bend, bow to, break, cave, cede, collapse, concede, contract, crumble, crumple, devote, fail, fall, flex, fold, fold up, give way, go, grant, hand over, lend, open, recede, relax, relent, relinquish, retire, retreat, sag, shrink, sink, slacken, surrender, weaken

Antonyms: [hold on](#)

Source: *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*
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Main Entry: give

Part of Speech: verb⁵

Definition: do

Synonyms: address, apply, bend, buckle down, cause, devote, direct, do, engender, lead, make, occasion, produce, throw, turn

Antonyms: [withdraw](#), [withhold](#)

Source: *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*
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1.1.2 Dictionary Description: Give

give   [Pronunciation Key](#) (gĭv)

v. **gave**, (gāv) **giv-en**, (gĭv'ən) **giv-ing**, **gives**

v. *tr.*

1. To make a present of: *We gave her flowers for her birthday.*
2. To place in the hands of; pass: *Give me the scissors.*
3.
 - a. To deliver in exchange or recompense; pay: *gave five dollars for the book.*
 - b. To let go for a price; sell: *gave the used car away for two thousand dollars.*
4.
 - a. To administer: *give him some cough medicine.*
 - b. To convey by a physical action: *gave me a punch in the nose.*
 - c. To inflict as punishment: *gave the child a spanking; was given life imprisonment for the crime.*
 - d. Law. To accord by verdict: *A decision was given for the plaintiff.*
5.
 - a. To bestow, especially officially; confer: *The Bill of Rights gives us freedom of speech.*
 - b. To accord or tender to another: *Give him your confidence.*
 - c. To put temporarily at the disposal of: *gave them the cottage for a week.*
 - d. To entrust to another, usually for a specified reason: *gave me the keys for safekeeping.*
 - e. To convey or offer for conveyance: *Give him my best wishes.*
 - f. Law. To execute and deliver. Used especially in the phrase *give bond.*
6.
 - a. To endure the loss of; sacrifice: *gave her son to the war; gave her life for her country.*
 - b. To devote or apply completely: *gives herself to her work.*
 - c. To furnish or contribute: *gave their time to help others.*
 - d. To offer in good faith; pledge: *Give me your word.*
7.
 - a. To allot as a portion or share.
 - b. To bestow (a name, for example).
 - c. To attribute (blame, for example) to someone; assign.
 - d. To award as due: *gave us first prize.*
8. To emit or utter: *gave a groan; gave a muted response.*
9. To submit for consideration, acceptance, or use: *give an opinion; give an excuse.*
10.
 - a. To proffer to another: *gave the toddler my hand.*
 - b. To consent to engage (oneself) in sexual intercourse with a man.
11.
 - a. To perform for an audience: *give a recital.*

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12.
 - b. To present to view: *gave the sign to begin.*
13.
 - a. To offer as entertainment: *give a dinner party.*
 - b. To propose as a toast.
14.
 - a. To be a source of; afford: *His remark gave offense. Music gives her pleasure.*
 - b. To cause to catch or be subject to (a disease or bodily condition): *The draft gave me a cold.*
 - c. To guide or direct, as by persuasion or behavior. Used with an infinitive phrase: *You gave me to imagine you approved of my report.*
15.
 - a. To yield or produce: *Cows give milk.*
 - b. To bring forth or bear: *trees that give fruit.*
 - c. To produce as a result of calculation: *5 x 12 gives 60.*
16. To manifest or show: *gives promise of brilliance; gave evidence of tampering.*
17. To carry out (a physical movement): *give a wink; give a start.*
16. To permit one to have or take: *gave us an hour to finish.*
17. To take an interest to the extent of: "My dear, I don't give a damn" (Margaret Mitchell).

v. intr.

1. To make gifts or donations: *gives generously to charity.*
2.
 - a. To yield to physical force.
 - b. To collapse from force or pressure: *The roof gave under the weight of the snow.*
 - c. To yield to change: *Both sides will have to give on some issues.*
3. To afford access to or a view of; open: *The doors give onto a terrace.*
4. Slang. To be in progress; happen: *What gives?*

n.

1. Capacity or inclination to yield under pressure.
2. The quality or condition of resilience; springiness: "Fruits that have some give... will have more juice than hard ones" (Elizabeth Schneider).

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Phrasal Verbs:

give away

1. To make a gift of.
2. To present (a bride) to the bridegroom at a wedding ceremony.
3.
 - a. To reveal or make known, often accidentally.
 - b. To betray.

give back

To return: *gave me back my book.*

give in

1. To hand in; submit: *She gave in her report.*
2. To cease opposition; yield.

give of

To devote or contribute: *She really gave of her time to help. They give of themselves to improve the quality of education.*

give off

To send forth; emit: *chemical changes that give off energy.*

give out

1. To allow to be known; declare publicly: *gave out the bad news.*
2. To send forth; emit: *gave out a steady buzzing.*
3. To distribute: *gave out the surplus food.*
4. To stop functioning; fail.
5. To become used up or exhausted; run out: *Their determination finally gave out.*

give over

1. To hand over; entrust.
2.
 - a. To devote to a particular purpose or use: *gave the day over to merrymaking.*
 - b. To surrender (oneself) completely; abandon: *finally gave myself over to grief.*
3. To cause an activity to stop: *ordered the combatants to give over.*

give up

1.
 - a. To surrender: *The suspects gave themselves up.*

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- b. To devote (oneself) completely: *gave herself up to her work.*
2.
 - a. To cease to do or perform: *gave up their search.*
 - b. To desist from; stop: *gave up smoking.*
3. To part with; relinquish: *gave up the apartment; gave up all hope.*
4.
 - a. To lose hope for: *We had given the dog up as lost.*
 - b. To lose hope of seeing: *We'd given you up an hour ago.*
5. To admit defeat.
6. To abandon what one is doing or planning to do: *gave up on writing the novel.*

Idioms:

give a good account of (oneself)

To behave or perform creditably.

give birth to

1. To bear as offspring.
2. To be the origin of: *a hobby that gave birth to a successful business.*

give ground

To yield to a more powerful force; retreat.

give it to Informal

To punish or reprimand severely: *My parents really gave it to me for coming in late.*

give or take

Plus or minus a small specified amount: *The chalet is close to the road, give or take a few hundred yards.*

give rise to

To be the cause or origin of; bring about.

give (someone) a hard time

1. To make life difficult for; harass.
2. To make fun of; tease.

give (someone) the eye

To look at admiringly or invitingly.

give the lie to

1. To show to be inaccurate or untrue.
2. To accuse of lying.

give up the ghost

To cease living or functioning; die.

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give way

1.
 - a. To retreat or withdraw.
 - b. To yield the right of way: *gave way to an oncoming car.*
 - c. To relinquish ascendancy or position: *as day gives way slowly to night.*
2.
 - a. To collapse from or as if from physical pressure: *The ladder gave way.*
 - b. To yield to urging or demand; give in.
3. To abandon oneself: *give way to hysteria.*

[Middle English *given*, from Old English *giefan*, and Old Norse *gefa*; see *ghabh-* in Indo-European Roots.]

1.2 Survey of the Word of God

The word give is used several times in God’s word. Let’s see the words used to describe “Give” and the context. We will look at the Hebrew and Greek.

1.2.1 Biblical Word Usage

How is the word used in the bible? How was it intended to be used? How many times did it occur?

Give	880
Given	498
Giving	29
TOTAL	1407

Strong's #	Hb/Gk Word	Pronunciation	English Equivalent
Old Testament (Hebrew)			
0215	<i>'owr</i>	{ore}	light, shine, enlighten, break of day, fire, give, glorious, kindle
0238	<i>'azan</i>	{aw-zan'}	give ear, hearken, hear, perceived by the ear
01101	<i>balal</i>	{baw-lal'}	mingled, confound, anointed, mixed, give provender, tempered, non translated variant

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01262	<i>barah</i>	{baw-raw'}	eat, choose, give, cause to eat
01478	<i>gava`</i>	{gaw-vah'}	die, give up the ghost, dead, perish, dead
01984	<i>halal</i>	{haw-lal'}	praise, glory, boast, mad, shine, foolish, fools, commended, rage, celebrate, give, marriage, renowned
03029	<i>y@da' (Aramaic)</i>	{yed-aw'}	thank, give thanks
03034	<i>yadah</i>	{yaw-daw'}	praise, give thanks, confess, thank, make confession, thanksgiving, cast, cast out, shoot, thankful
03051	<i>yahab</i>	{yaw-hab'}	give, go to, Bring, ascribe, come on, give out, Set, take
03052	<i>y@hab (Aramaic)</i>	{yeh-hab'}	give, given, delivered, laid, paid, prolonged, yielded
03254	<i>yacaph</i>	{yaw-saf'}	more, again, add, increase, also, exceed, put, further, henceforth, can, continued, give, misc
03289	<i>ya`ats</i>	{yaw-ats'}	counsel, counsellor, consult, give, purposed, advice, determined, advise, deviseth, taken, misc
05068	<i>nadab</i>	{naw-dab'}	offered willingly, willingly offered, willing, offered, willing, offered freely, give willingly
05301	<i>naphach</i>	{naw-fakh'}	blow, breathe, seething, blown, lose, snuffed, give up
05414	<i>nathan</i>	{naw-than'}	give, put, deliver, made, set, up, lay, grant, suffer, yield, bring, cause, utter, laid, send, recompense, appoint, shew, mi
05415	<i>n@than (Aramaic)</i>	{neth-an'}	give, bestow, pay
05462	<i>cagar</i>	{saw-gar'}	shut, shut up, deliver, pure, deliver up, shut in, give up, gave over, inclosed, repaired, closed, shutting, stop, straitly, together, close up
05534	<i>caker</i>	{saw-kar'}	stopped, give over, impoverished
06030	<i>`anah</i>	{aw-naw'}	answer, hear, testify, speak, sing, bear, cry, witness, give, misc
06237	<i>`asar</i>	{aw-sar'}	tithe, take..tenth, give tenth, surly, truly
07311	<i>ruwm</i>	{room}	(lift, hold, etc..) up, exalt, high, offer, give, heave, extol, lofty, take, tall, higher, misc

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07665	<i>shabar</i>	{shaw-bar'}	break, destroy, break in pieces, break down, hurt, torn, give birth, crush, quench, misc
07760	<i>suwm</i>	{soom}	put, make, set, lay, appoint, give, set up, consider, turn, brought, ordain, place, take, shew, regard, mark, disposed, care, misc
07761	<i>suwm (Aramaic)</i>	{soom}	made, commanded, give, laid, have, named, misc
07980	<i>shalat</i>	{shaw-lat'}	rule, give power, dominion
New Testament (Greek)			
191	<i>akouo</i>	{ak-oo'-o}	hear, hearken, give audience, hearer, misc
373	<i>anapauo</i>	{an-ap-ow'-o}	rest, refresh, take rest, give rest, take ease
402	<i>anachoreo</i>	{an-akh-o-reh'-o}	depart, withdraw (one's) self, go aside, turn aside, give place
437	<i>anthomologeomai</i>	{anth-om-ol-og-eh'-om-ahee}	give thanks
586	<i>apodekatoo</i>	{ap-od-ek-at-o'-o}	pay tithe, tithe, give tithe, take tithe
591	<i>apodidomi</i>	{ap-od-eed'-o-mee}	pay, give, render, reward, sell, yield, misc
632	<i>aponemo</i>	{ap-on-em'-o}	give
837	<i>auxano</i>	{owx-an'-o}	grow, increase, give the increase, grow up
1061	<i>gamisko</i>	{gam-is'-ko}	give in marriage
1107	<i>gnorizo</i>	{gno-rid'-zo}	make known, declare, certify, give to understand, do to wit, wot
1239	<i>diadidomai</i>	{dee-ad-id'-o-mee}	distribute, make distribution, divide, give
1291	<i>diastellomai</i>	{dee-as-tel'-lom-ahee}	charge, give commandment, be commanded
1299	<i>diatasso</i>	{dee-at-as'-so}	command, appoint, ordain, set in order, give order
1325	<i>didomi</i>	{did'-o-mee}	give, grant, put, show, deliver, make, misc
1433	<i>doreomai</i>	{do-reh'-om-ahee}	give
1502	<i>eiko</i>	{i'-ko}	give place
1547	<i>ekgamizo</i>	{ek-gam-id'-zo}	give in marriage
1548	<i>ekgamisko</i>	{ek-gam-is'-ko}	give in marriage
1606	<i>ekpneo</i>	{ek-pneh'-o}	give up the ghost
1608	<i>ekporneuo</i>	{ek-porn-yoo'-o}	give (one's) self over to fornication

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1634	<i>ekpsucho</i>	{ek-psoo'-kho}	give up the ghost, yield up the ghost,
1781	<i>entellomai</i>	{en-tel'-lom-ahee}	command, give commandment, give charge, enjoin, charge
1907	<i>epecho</i>	{ep-ekh'-o}	mark, give heed unto, stay, hold forth, take heed unto
1929	<i>epididomi</i>	{ep-ee-did'-o-mee}	give, deliver, offer, let drive, deliver unto
1948	<i>epikrino</i>	{ep-ee-kree'-no}	give sentence
2010	<i>epitrepo</i>	{ep-ee-trep'-o}	suffer, permit, give leave, give liberty, give license, let
2014	<i>epiphaino</i>	{ep-ee-fah'-ee-no}	appear, give light
2017	<i>epiphausko</i>	{ep-ee-fows'-ko}	give light
2019	<i>epiphoneo</i>	{ep-ee-fo-neh'-o}	cry, give a shout, cry against
2168	<i>eucharisteo</i>	{yoo-khar-is-teh'-o}	give thanks, thank, be thankful
2227	<i>zoopoieo</i>	{dzo-op-oy-eh'-o}	quicken, give life, make alive
2337	<i>thelazo</i>	{thay-lad'-zo}	give suck, suck, suckling
2468	<i>isthi</i>	{is'-thee}	be thou, be, agree, give thyself wholly to, not tr
2664	<i>katapauo</i>	{kat-ap-ow'-o}	restrain, rest, give rest, cease
2702	<i>kataphero</i>	{kat-af-er'-o}	fall, sink down, give
2712	<i>kateidolos</i>	{kat-i'-do-los}	wholly give to idolatry
2753	<i>keleuo</i>	{kel-yoo'-o}	command, at (one's) command, give commandment, bid
2989	<i>lampo</i>	{lam'-po}	shine, give light
3140	<i>martureo</i>	{mar-too-reh'-o}	bear witness, testify, bear record, witness, be a witness, give testimony, have a good report, misc
3307	<i>merizo</i>	{mer-id'-zo}	divide, distribute, deal, be difference between, give part
3330	<i>metadidomi</i>	{met-ad-id'-o-mee}	impart, give
3670	<i>homologeoo</i>	{hom-ol-og-eh'-o}	confess, profess, promise, give thanks, confession is made, acknowledgeth
3853	<i>paraggello</i>	{par-ang-gel'-lo}	command, charge, give commandment, give charge, declare, give in charge
3860	<i>paradidomi</i>	{par-ad-id'-o-mee}	deliver, betray, deliver up, give, give up, give over, commit, recommend, misc
3923	<i>pareisphero</i>	{par-ice-fer'-o}	give
3930	<i>parecho</i>	{par-ekh'-o}	trouble, give, bring, show, do for, keep, minister, offer
4222	<i>potizo</i>	{pot-id'-zo}	give to drink, give drink, water, make to drink, watering, feed


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4337	<i>prosecho</i>	{pros-ekh'-o}	beware, give heed to, take heed to, give heed unto, take heed, take heed unto, take heed whereunto, misc
4342	<i>proskartereo</i>	{pros-kar-ter-eh'-o}	continue, continue instant, continue steadfastly, attend continually, give (one's) self continually, wait on, wait on continually
4369	<i>prostithemi</i>	{pros-tith'-ay-mee}	add, again send, give more, increase, proceed further, lay unto, speak to any more
4704	<i>spoudazo</i>	{spoo-dad'-zo}	endeavour, do diligence, be diligent, give diligence, be forward, labour, study
4823	<i>sumbouleuo</i>	{soom-bool-yoo'-o}	consult, counsel, take counsel, give counsel, take counsel together
4980	<i>scholazo</i>	{skhol-ad'-zo}	empty, give (one's) self to
5461	<i>photizo</i>	{fo-tid'-zo}	give light, bring to light, lighten, enlighten, light, illuminate, make to see
5483	<i>charizomai</i>	{khar-id'-zom-ahee}	forgive, give, freely give, deliver, grant, frankly forgive
5524	<i>choregeo</i>	{khor-ayg-eh'-o}	minister, give
Return to Top			

1.2.1.1 Detailed Usage

The following is a selected list of **most common** usage from the Old and New Testaments.

Strong's Number	Original	Pronunciation	Outline of biblical usage	Translation Count
Hebrew 5414		nathan {naw-than'}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to give, put, set <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. (Qal) 2) to give, bestow, grant, permit, ascribe, employ, devote, consecrate, dedicate, pay wages, sell, exchange, lend, commit, entrust, give over, deliver up, yield produce, occasion, produce, requite to, report, mention, utter, stretch out, extend 3) to put, set, put on, put upon, set, appoint, assign, designate 4) to make, constitute <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. (Niphal) 	AV - give 1078, put 191, deliver 174, made 107, set 99, up 26, lay 22, grant 21, suffer 18, yield 15, bring 15, cause 13, utter 12, laid 11, send 11, recompense

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Strong's Number	Original	Pronunciation	Outline of biblical usage	Translation Count
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) to be given, be bestowed, be provided, be entrusted to, be granted to, be permitted, be issued, be published, be uttered, be assigned 6) to be set, be put, be made, be inflicted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. (Hophal) 7) to be given, be bestowed, be given up, be delivered up 8) to be put upon 	11, appoint 10, shew 7, misc 167; 2008
Greek 1325	δίδω	didomi {did'-o-mee}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to give 2) to give something to someone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. of one's own accord to give one something, to his advantage 3) to bestow a gift <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to grant, give to one asking, let have b. to supply, furnish, necessary things c. to give over, deliver 4) to reach out, extend, present 5) of a writing 6) to give over to one's care, intrust, commit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. something to be administered b. to give or commit to some one something to be religiously observed c. to give what is due or obligatory, to pay: wages or reward d. to furnish, endue 7) to give <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to cause, profuse, give forth from one's self 8) to give, hand out lots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to appoint to an office b. to cause to come forth, i.e. as the sea, death and Hell are said to give up the dead who have been engulfed or received by them c. to give one to someone as his own 9) as an object of his saving care 	AV - give 365, grant 10, put 5, show 4, deliver 2, make 2, misc 25; 413

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Strong's Number	Original	Pronunciation	Outline of biblical usage	Translation Count
			10) to give one to someone, to follow him as a leader and master 11) to give one to someone to care for his interests 12) to give one to someone to whom he already belonged, to return 13) to grant or permit one a. to commission	

1.3 God Given Blessings

How many good things has God given to you? Count your blessings and consider all that God has given to you. List all these blessings below:

Item	Blessing
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Share and discuss some of your blessings with others.

Did you have enough room on the paper for all your blessings? If you can not think of more than 10 blessings from God, you need your spiritual eyes opened! Think on this and pray and you will see that EVERYTHING you have comes from God!

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Does God bless you even if you do not deserve it? Do you bless others even though they do not deserve to be blessed? Consider this:

Matthew 5:45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. **He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.**

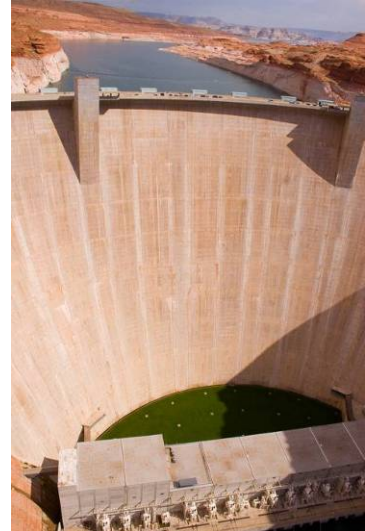
Romans 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

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1.4 Flowing River or Dam?

Do the blessings of God flow through you like a river or do they stop with you?



Think of all the blessings God has given to you. Now consider how you have shared those blessing with others. You will find that there is a cycle to the blessing. If you hold onto the blessing and do not share, then you are like a dam, holding onto all the wonderful blessings God gives.

At 1,270 feet below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth, and is a stopping point of the Jordan River. It contains no life and all living things that float into it will die. It is stagnant and lifeless and is called the sea of death. Consider this description from the website Dead Sea Jordan:

http://www.deadseajordan.com/inside/about_deadsea/index.htm

“For thousands of years, fresh water carrying its own natural salts drifted through the rocks, sand and soil, flowing south through the Jordan River Valley into the Dead Sea. This natural phenomenon created a historical site of legendary significance, where nature's minerals and salts converge to create beauty products.

Under cloudless skies, in-flowing water evaporates into the desiccated desert air, leaving the salts together with its sediments to accumulate, and then form the world famous Dead Sea, the globe's saltiest natural lake, with an average salinity of 280 grams per kilogram compared with the ocean's average of 35 grams.”



Galatians 6:7 Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest.

The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others--ignoring God!-⁸harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response

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to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life. [The Message]

Like the Dead Sea, are the blessings of God stagnant, lifeless and dead in your life? Is selfishness a part of your life? Are you really giving to God, all that He has given to you? How can you make the blessings of God come alive?

"The story is told about a miner who struck gold and carried his bag of nuggets with him everywhere. One day he died and went to heaven, still carrying his precious nuggets. When he arrived, an angel asked him why he was carrying asphalt. "This isn't asphalt," he explained, "it's gold." To which the angel replied, "On earth it's called gold, but here in heaven we use it to pave our streets." Granted, this is just a funny story. But it prompts us to think about what we consider valuable—and what is truly valuable to God. "

Revelation 21:21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

1.5 The Law of Reciprocity

So what is reciprocity and how does it fit into giving? When we give someone a gift, do them a favor, or help them, we feel good! We give a gift and receive goodness. It is a cycle!

It is refreshing to change the focus from ourselves to others and we are rewarded. Our problems, troubles and life difficulties disappear when we put our focus and energy on others.

Reciprocity: "A mutual or cooperative interchange of favors or privileges, especially the exchange of rights or privileges of trade between nations."

Notice what God says about ownership of the things in this world:

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

How many things do we claim ownership? Is that **your car**? Is that **your house**? Is that **your child**? If everything is the Lord's, then everything we possess was given to us by God! What right do we have to be greedy, hoard, and hold onto the blessings of God? Everything we have was meant to be shared!

Acts 20:35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you.

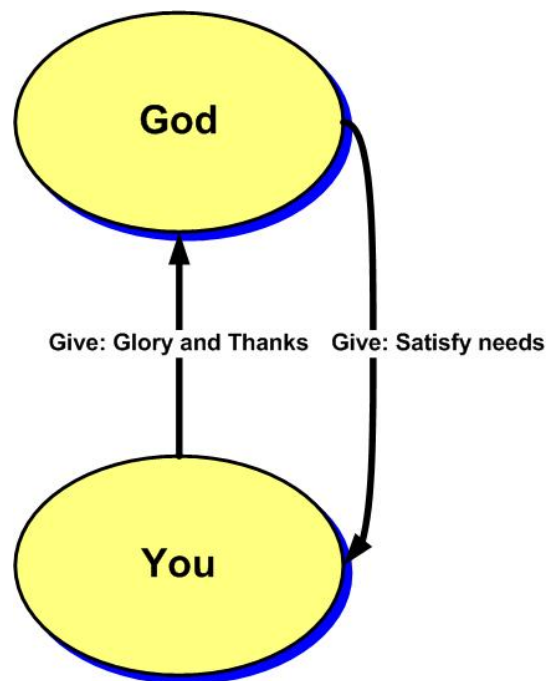
If God gives it to us, then we must in turn give and continue the cycle. In Luke 6, several "reciprocal" concepts are identified:

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- Luke 6:36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.
- Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged.
- Luke 6:37 Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned.
- Luke 6:37 Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
- Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you.

Whatever you give, it will be replaced by something else. Like a flowing river, you will be replenished God's continual blessings. The simplest illustration of reciprocity is when **God gives us a gift** which satisfies a need, **we give thanks to God**.



Psalm 30:1 **I will exalt you, O LORD**, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. ² O LORD my God, **I called to you for help and you healed me.** ³ O LORD, you brought me up from the grave ^[b]; you spared me from going down into the pit. ⁴ Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name.

Consider the man who took the blessings of God, stored them up for his own use:

Luke 12:13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." ¹⁴ Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" ¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." ¹⁶ And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'" ¹⁸ Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." ²⁰ But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you

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have prepared for yourself?' ²¹"**This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.**"

Luke 12:48 ^{But} the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. **From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded;** and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

1.6 Flowing Blessings

Why would someone give? Is it the goodness of their heart? A strange as it sounds, God commands us to give so that we will receive a reward: more blessings for ourselves, our family, other people and for Him!

Proverb 11:24 **One man gives freely, yet gains even more;** another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

Proverb 11:25 **A generous man will prosper;** he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Psalms 115:14 May the LORD make you increase, **both you and your children.**

2 Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." [a] ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹**You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.**

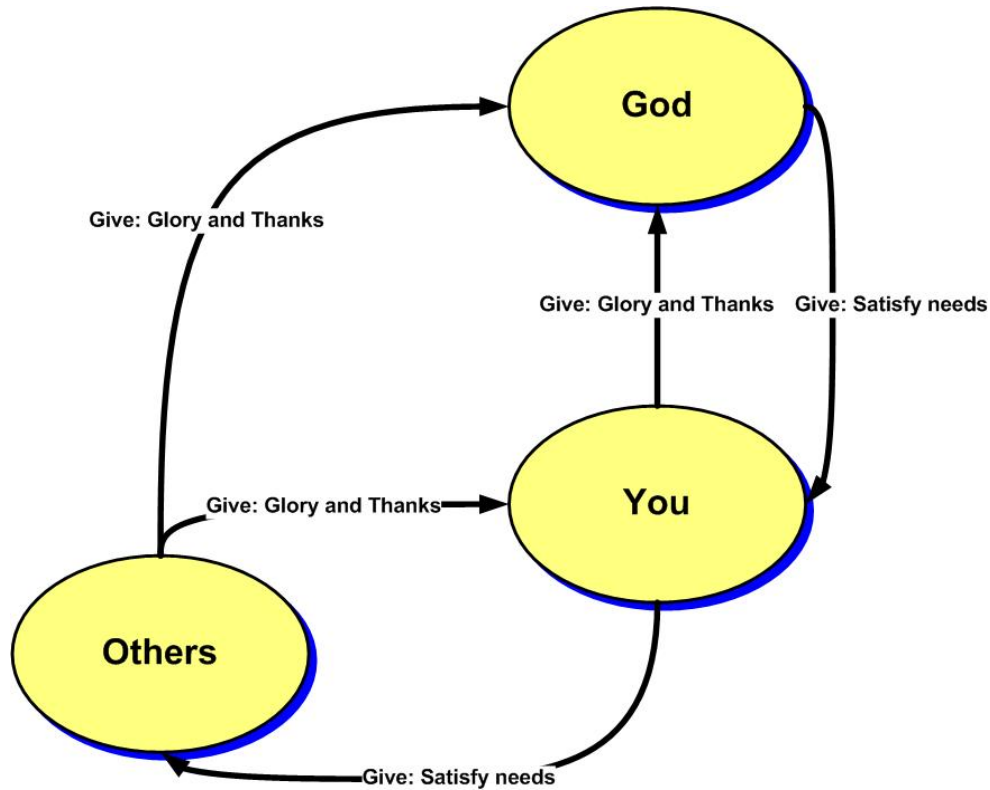
Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap.** For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Matthew 13:8 ^{Still} other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Mark 4:8 ^{Still} other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."

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1.7 Questions

1. What was the best gift you received?
2. What is the best gift God gave you?
3. What is the best gift you gave someone?
4. What is the best gift you gave to God?
5. What Hebrew or Greek word for “give” stood out to you? Explain.
6. When it comes to God’s blessings, are you more like a flowing river or a dam? Why?
7. Do you have a story to share that illustrates “reciprocity”? Why was it significant?

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2.0 Giving Your Time

Many people think that God and His angels do nothing but sit on clouds! Consider how many things God has done for us. Now consider how God spends His time giving!



- Remember the last colorful sunset?
- Remember the last good night's sleep?
- Remember the fun you had with your friends?
- Remember the success you had the other day?
- Remember the last time you were healed?
- Remember when you were saved?

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.**

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that **he gave his one and only Son,**[f] that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Many people brush this off as coincidence or just lucky. But you know that God is in control.

Acts 17:28 '**For in him we live and move and have our being.**' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

Colossians 1:16 'For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

¹⁷**He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

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We are commanded by God to spend our time seeking Him first above all other things. Think about your time last week. How much of it was spent seeking God? How much of your time did you use to seek God?

Matthew 6:31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³**But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness**, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Consider James 4, when we plan our time, is it for our personal glory and satisfaction? Or is it for God's glory?

James 4:14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

Here is another thought to consider when we are reviewing how we spend time throughout our life:

Psalms 90:12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalms 90:12 Teach us to make the most of our time, so that we may grow in wisdom. [NLT]

John 9:4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

Romans 3:17 Don't know the first thing about living with others.¹⁸**They never give God the time of day.** [The Message]

2.1 Give Time to God

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Stop for a moment and think again of how God has blessed you. Did God spend some of His time to give you several wonderful things? Remember the list we filled out in the previous chapter? Here is what God's word says:

Psalm 40:5 **Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount** to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

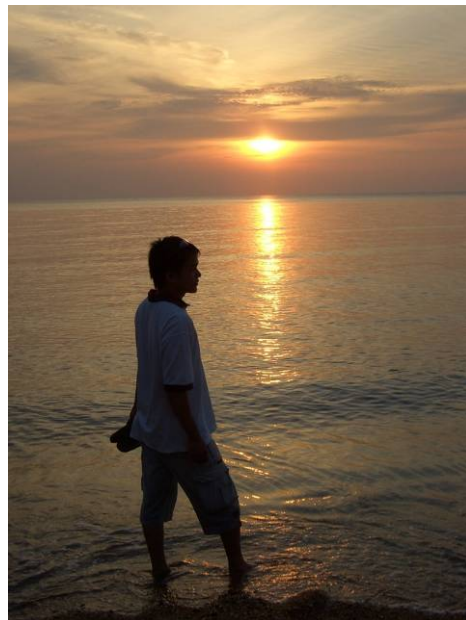
Have you “done something” or “planned something” for someone? Most likely you have. And it took “time” to do these things.

God spent His precious time to give us great, awesome and wonderful things! What have we done for God? Let's look at some ways to give our time to God. Remember as we give, it will be returned back to us many times over! What do we have to loose?

2.1.1 Pray to the Lord

It is important to spend time in prayer with God. If Jesus is our leader and example, then we will see how he gave His time to the Father.

Isaiah 26:9 My soul yearns for you in the night; in the morning my spirit longs for you. When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.



Psalm 90:14 Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

Mark 1:35 **Very early in the morning, while it was still dark**, Jesus got up, left the house and **went off to a solitary place**, where he prayed. ³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!”

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Luke 5:16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Luke 6:12 One of those days Jesus **went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying** to God. ¹³When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: ¹⁴Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Luke 9:18 Once when Jesus was **praying in private** and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

2.1.2 Wait on the Lord

Waiting takes time. Remember the last time you had a doctor's appointment? Did you have to wait? Did it take a "long time" for his staff to call you to the?

Psalms 40:1 **I waited and waited and waited for GOD.** At last he looked; finally he listened.
[Message]



Acts 1:4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, **but wait for the gift** my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

Romans 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, **we wait for it patiently.**

2.1.3 Twenty-four Seven

When we hear someone mention 24-7, this means "all the time". God requests that we honor, trust and love Him, 24-7! We must give Him our time and attention all the time.

Psalms 62:8 **Trust in him at all times,** O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.
Selah

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Mark 13:33³³Be on guard! Be alert!^{f1} **You do not know when that time will come.** ³⁴It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Ephesians 5:15¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶**making the most of every opportunity**, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, **but understand what the Lord's will is.**

2.1.4 Tell Others

Have you ever been in a conversation and you said, “Look at what time it is!” It takes time to talk. It takes time to describe things. It takes time to let others know the Kingdom of God. God gave us a command to spend time talking, preaching the plan of salvation to others. How much time have you spent telling others the plan of salvation?

Mark 16:15¹⁵He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach** the good news to all creation.

Ephesians 5:15¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶**making the most of every opportunity**, because the days are evil.



Others are blessed when you follow God's command. When you give of your time and follow God's direction, people are saved from eternal death!

Proverbs 11:30³⁰ The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.

Mark 8:36³⁶What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?

Luke 15:10¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

2.2 Give Time to Your Family

Think back to special times in your past. Think of birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, or other exciting and memorable times. Now consider these memories. Do you remember

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the gifts, the food or is it the time spent with your family? Do you remember the laughs, the stories, or maybe the joy of time spent together in celebration?

Proverbs 15:17 Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.

Proverbs 17:1 Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, ^[a] with strife.

Giving time to your family promotes unity and gives you a chance to listen. Have you heard the expression, “Give time, not toys!” When you spend time with a child coloring, painting, or constructing it bonds you together. The same is true when you share your time with family.

How can you give to your family?

- Teach them
- Give them full attention
- Listen to them
- Help them
- Hold them

These things take time and in a fast paced world, they often get left behind. Spending time with your family or friends help to establish God’s righteousness and joy:

Proverbs 22:6 **Train** ^[a] **a child** in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.



Deuteronomy 11:18 Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ¹⁹ **Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.** ²⁰ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

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Ephesians 2:10 **For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,** which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Luke 15:20 **So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.**

2.3 Give Time to Church Family

The church family is very important to our growth in Christ. From the church we receive weekly messages from God; we participate in the fellowship of believers; we share in the comradery of those who are suffering for Christ which gives us power and strength in times of need. God commands that we meet and that we give our time to our spiritual brothers and sisters.

Acts 4:32 **All the believers were one in heart and mind.** No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. ³⁴There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

1 Corinthians 16:20 **All the brothers here send you greetings.** Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Galatians 6:10 **Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**

Hebrews 10:24 **And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,** ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. [NKJV]

2.4 Give Time to Others

It seems easy to give our time our family, to God, or the church. But when we think of strangers or those we barely know they often do not make our list of important tasks. We are too busy and we must get to our destination. "Not now, I have things to do!" However, other people who enter our lives can be there for a reason. Most likely, you have been positively affected by those you barely knew. You have been affected by those who did not know you.

Matthew 12:11 **He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out?" ¹²How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."**

It takes time to do good deeds. It takes time to go out of our busy schedule and help those in need. But Christ exhorts us, He commands us to help others.

Luke 10:29 **But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"**

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³⁰In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³²So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴**He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.** ³⁵The next day he took out two silver coins[e] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, **I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.**' ³⁶"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" ³⁷The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." **Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."**

Think for a moment about a few people.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

Not many of us remember the best of the best, the great people, and the headliners of yesterday. Awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten, accolades fade, and certificates are buried with their owners.

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that gave their time to help you.

2.5 Questions

1. What are some ways that God has given His time to you?
2. What are some ways that you have given your time to God?
3. How do you wait on the Lord? What do you know that can help others while they wait?
4. God has commanded us to tell others about His Good News. Have you done it lately? Why or why not?
5. Consider your family; what have you given them lately?
6. How have you given time to others? Explain.

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2.6 Please Come Back

Please Come Back Michelle Tumes

I can't breathe
It's agony
Wondering where you are

Picture me on my knees
Have you run too far?

Can you hear
Can you hear the sound of my heart break
With each step you take
Can you feel
Can you feel me when I say

Please come back to me
I miss you, will you come to your senses
Please come back to me
I await the day when I prepare the feast
And I embrace you running to me

All I am
All I have
Is yours to find
You hide and seek
You think you're free
But you're wasting time

I can hear
I can hear the sound of footsteps pounding
Regret resounding
I believe
I believe the hour is near

What would you give for a ransomed heart
Would it cost too much
I'm telling you now, if you run to me
You will be free

You'll be running, you'll be running back to me

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3.0 Giving Your Body

Who owns your body? If you read the popular magazines, watch the talk shows, you will know that you own your body! Your body is yours. It is your choice to do what you want. No one can tell you different! You are free to do what you want, when you want.

3.1 *Worldly Perspective: Your Body*

The following sections relate various ways that we use and look at our bodies. Although captured from other writers, these have been edited to fit the purpose of our study.

3.1.1 Women's Perspective: My Body, My Choice

Jeremiah 1:5 "**Before I formed you in the womb I knew [a] you**, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

Author Unknown

Why is it that everywhere I went there were these pro-lifers? Why can't they just leave us pro-choice people alone? **It's our body, our choice.** Why do they have to show these pictures of babies at eight weeks that are supposed to be blobs of tissues? Why are the sonograms of my own children at eight weeks showing them as babies? God was hitting me really hard on this issue. I knew I was doing the wrong thing but I was lying to myself that it didn't matter. I tried to push God aside and doubted His existence. I didn't want my guilt to show on my face nor did I want anyone to tell me of my guilt. But I kept struggling and thinking of these babies of mine that I literally threw away. If I had them they would be this many years old. Would it have been a girl or would it have been a boy? I had prided myself in being a good mother to my two young boys, but yet how good of a mother was I if I made the choice to kill my own children?



I finally got down on my knees and asked God to help me. I needed His counsel. I didn't know anything about God except what I learned the few times I went to church. If He loved me why were all these things happening to me? I demanded God to show His power if He really was God.

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He can change things for me if He truly was God. I didn't expect any answers. I was just screaming in the air. God would not love me anyway after what I had done. My "unpardonable sin." Why would He?

3.1.2 Men's Perspective: Polygamy

2 Samuel 11:2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof **he saw a woman bathing**. The woman was very beautiful,

Ephesians 5:28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

1 Corinthians 7:4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.

Steven Farrar, Finishing Strong

"It's not uncommon to meet a Christian man who is polygamous. His first wife is Sarah, his second is pornography, his third is soft porn movies when he's traveling, and his fourth is calling sexually explicit 900 numbers.

We don't think of those activities as "other wives," but that's what they are. Kings would collect wives like toys. And it's still happening thousands of years later.

You see, David couldn't buy a pornographic magazine or watch a late night, soft porn movie on HBO or Showtime. So in order to get some sexual kicks, he would marry another woman to get illicit sexual thrills. These "other women" are waiting in full-color magazines, in videos, and on cable. You can even download them off the Internet."

3.1.3 Everyone's Perspective: Yelling Screaming Kicking Fighting

Debra Whitledge

Yelling. Screaming. Kicking. Fighting.

What a day it has been at our house. You might think the above verbs apply to what my children were doing all day long, but you might be surprised to find out that you're wrong. Adults have their moments, too.

Yelling. I yelled at my child when she unrolled the whole roll of Charmin, by the cat litter box. Ewwwww....I don't even want to go into the ramifications of the location where it was unrolled, as I'm sure most of you are intelligent enough to figure it out. Most upsetting was that she had unrolled a DOUBLE ROLL of Charmin. Charmin is quality stuff. And sometimes, you have to pay the extra for quality. So, being that it's the end of the month, and my grocery budget is about on empty, I can't afford to go and buy more toilet paper! If I have to go and replenish after this little fiasco, then it will be Scott brand, baby, 35 cents a roll, in all of its luxuriant one-ply glory. So yes, I yelled. Loudly. It was satisfying I'll admit, but I had to realize the error of my ways when my "angel" of a two year old wrapped her arms around me and said, "I'm sorry, mommy." Uh oh, it was the "I'm sorry" card, uttered by a cute little person with sorrowful, chocolate brown eyes.

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Nothing gets to me faster. As a Christian and a mother who is guilted into remorse easily, I had to forgive her. It's that whole WWJD thing, you know?

Screaming. Ok, I didn't actually scream, but there were a few times I wanted to. Early today I found the little one destroying a perfectly innocent DVD cover. It was Care Bears, her favorite, and she was attacking it in a way that reminded me of people attacking the last bit of General Tao's chicken at the Chinese buffet. That's a story for another day, and another blog, but I've seen it happen. Center stage, a few bites of chicken left and about 4 people all eyeing it. The next guy in line for it does what I call the snap and skulk, quickly snapping up what's left in the tray, and then skulking off, avoiding the eyes of everyone else who wanted that chicken.

Today, my littlest one executed the "destroy and skulk", creeping quietly away to her bed after being given "the look" and "the lecture" about not tearing things up. I think she's been watching the hungry and overfed at the Chinese buffet.



Kicking. I kicked so many toys out of my path today, that it's not even funny. It is funny though, because all of you mothers know what I'm talking about. You are faced with mission diaper change, but there are obstacles in your path. You can't set the toddler down to pick up the toys in your way, because if she sits, there might be a mess to contend with, since her diaper is somewhere between full and overload. So with your feet, you kick toys out of the way, clearing the way to where you have stashed the diapers and wipes. In our house, it's in a high place, to keep the little imp from getting them all out and using them as room decor. Finally, a path emerges and you make it to destination diaper change. A few swipes here and there and you are able to declare, "mission accomplished."

Fighting. I had a fight today with my toddler's hair. Her dad's nickname for her is Crystal Gayle, because it's so long. I don't know why I let her hair grow so long. Maybe it's a curiosity that needs satisfying. I mean, how long can one person's hair grow? I must admit I'm intrigued by the possibilities. Then, there's the other possible reason I have yet to cut it. She could grow her hair long enough to donate to Locks of Love, an organization that makes wigs for people with cancer. Of course, the mashed potatoes might have to come out before they'd consider a donation, but

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it's a noble idea, anyway. At any rate, every day I fight with my toddler's hair. Some days I think the squirrels have snuck in at night and built their nests in her hair. I know the proper term is "rat's nest" but I prefer to think about squirrels, as they're much cuter than a rat. Guess I should quit calling her "rat".

A Mother's Prayer

Dear Lord, help me be patient with the mess on the rug.
She only gave the potty chair one little tug.

I'm so happy she went in her new potty chair,
so I can't yell or scream, I have to play fair.

Lord, help me as I'm cleaning on my hands and knees.
There's something else on the rug! Did she barf or sneeze?

It's been such a day, and my head is about to split,
she doesn't like her pull-up and is throwing a fit!

Help me be strong, and guide her along through this day.
Sometimes I just wish there were an easier way.

Sprinkle me liberally with tolerance,
and fill my heart with love,
for this precious girl, sent to me from above.

This prayer came out of my experiences today, as I dealt with what all mothers deal with,
cleaning the inevitable messes that happen on the carpet.

3.1.4 World's Perspective: 6th Commandment

The art of using our bodies to kill others has been occurring since the beginning of man. Here are some very interesting numbers that relate to the death of the physical body.

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." [d] And while they were in the field, **Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.**

Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder.

This information is taken from Matthew White's website [<http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/warstat0.htm>]

Rank	Atrocity	Million Deaths	Time Frame
1	Second World War	55.0	20th Century
2	Mao Zedong (mostly famine)	40.0	20th Century
3	Mongol Conquests	40.0	13C
4	An Lushan Revolt	36.0	8C

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Rank	Atrocity	Million Deaths	Time Frame
5	Fall of the Ming Dynasty	25.0	17C
6	Taiping Rebellion	20.0	19C
7	Annihilation of the American Indians	20.0	15C-19C
8	Iosif Stalin	20.0	20th Century
9	Mideast Slave Trade	19.0	7C-19C
10	Atlantic Slave Trade	18.0	15C-19C
11	Timur Lenk	17.0	14C-15C
12	British India (mostly famine)	17.0	19C
13	First World War	15.0	20th Century
14	Russian Civil War	9.0	20th Century
15	Thuggee	9.0	13C-19C
16	Fall of Rome	8.0	3C-5C
17	Congo Free State	8.0	19C-20C
18	Thirty Years War	7.0	17C
19	Russia's Time of Troubles	5.0	16C-17C
20	Napoleonic Wars	4.0	19C
21	Chinese Civil War	3.0	20th Century
22	French Wars of Religion	3.0	16C
	Total	398.0	
1	Abortion Worldwide	771.0	1920-2000
2	Smallpox	300.0	20th Century
3	Smoking	71.0	1930-1999
4	Influenza	70.0	1918-1919
5	Abortion US	29.0	1970-1995
6	AIDS	12.0	1981-1998
7	Homicide	8.5	1900-1999
8	Natural Disaster	3.5	20th Century
9	Racism	3.3	1900-1970
	Total	1268.3	

3.2 Godly Perspective: Your Body

We are not free to use our bodies as we choose. Our flesh chooses poorly! If you read the bible you will find that someone else claims ownership of your body:

Psalm 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and **all who live in it;**

¹ Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? **You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.**

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Okay, so how did Christ view His body?

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will, **we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ** once for all.



1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since **Christ suffered in his body**, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. ²As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God**—this is your spiritual^[a] act of worship.

Our bodies should be offered as:

- A Living Sacrifice
- Holy
- Pleasing

3.2.1 Your Bodily Offering

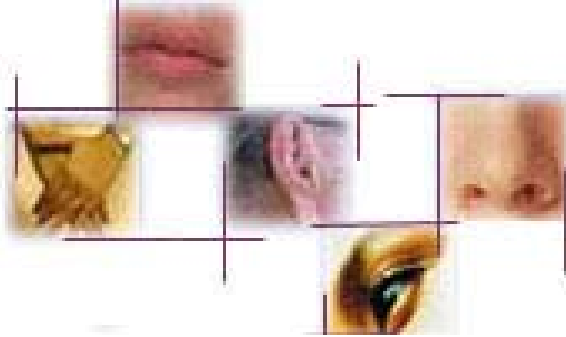
Our senses: Sight, Hearing, Touch, Taste, Smell.

What is it about your senses that draws you in and takes you away from God? When our unholy desires take us away from God, “lust” of the flesh is born. Lust of the flesh is part of our sinful nature.

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¹ John 2:¹⁶ For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, **the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.** ¹⁷The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.



Galatians 5:¹⁶ So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷For **the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit**, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

Romans 6:¹² Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.**

A living sacrifice, what does this mean? We put aside our earthly, worldly desires and replace them with godly, holy desires.

How do I remove the lust of the flesh and replace it with something good?

1 Corinthians 9:²⁷ But **I discipline my body and bring it into subjection**, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. [NKJV]

1 Corinthians 9:²⁷ No, **I beat my body and make it my slave** so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

2 Corinthians 10:⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and **we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

3.3 Give Your Body to God

The bible is full of illustration of the correct and incorrect use of our bodies. The bible shows us how we are to give our bodies to God.

James 3:² We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to **keep his whole body in check.**

3.3.1 Give Your Tongue

James 3:³ When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds,

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they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵Likewise **the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts**. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶**The tongue also is a fire**, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

⁷All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, ⁸but **no man can tame the tongue**. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

⁹**With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.** ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹¹Can both fresh water and salt^[a] water flow from the same spring? ¹²My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Matthew 12:36 **But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.** ³⁷For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Ephesians 4:29 **Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths**, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Proverbs 21:23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity.

Psalms 39:1 I said, "I will watch my ways and **keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth** as long as the wicked are in my presence."

Proverbs 4:24 Put away perversity from your mouth; keep corrupt talk far from your lips.

3.3.2 Give Your Heart

In a previous bible study we found that the word heart and the word mind are often the same Greek or Hebrew word in the bible. But sometimes the word for heart means the deepest parts of our mind and the way we think. What does the bible say about our heart?

Jeremiah 17:9 **The heart is deceitful above all things** and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are ^[c] a broken spirit; **a broken and contrite heart**, O God, you will not despise.

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose **hearts are fully committed to him**. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war."

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Matthew 5:8 **Blessed are the pure in heart**, for they will see God.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 **May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love** and Christ's perseverance.

Psalms 15:1 **LORD**, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? ² He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart ³ and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman,

3.3.3 Give Your Mind

1 Peter 1:13 **Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled**; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."^[a]

Galatians 5:22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is** love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and **self-control**. Against such things there is no law.

Philippians 2:5 **Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:**

1 Corinthians 2:12 **We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God**, that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.^[c] ¹⁴The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: ¹⁶"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?"^[d] **But we have the mind of Christ.**

Isaiah 26:3 **You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast**, because he trusts in you.

Philippians 4:6 **Do not be anxious about anything**, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

Deuteronomy 11:18 **Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds**; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

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3.3.4 Give Your Hands

Proverbs 14:14 From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things as surely **as the work of his hands rewards him.**

Proverbs 14:24 **Diligent hands will rule**, but laziness ends in slave labor.

Acts 20:34 You yourselves know that **these hands of mine have supplied my own needs** and the needs of my companions. ³⁵In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

1 Thessalonians 4:11 ¹Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and **to work with your hands**, just as we told you, ¹²so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Proverbs 31:20 She opens her arms to the poor and **extends her hands to the needy.**

Deuteronomy 15:10 Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your **God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.** ¹¹ There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 **Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might**, for in the grave, ^[c] where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

3.3.5 Give Your Feet

Isaiah 59:7 **Their feet rush into sin**; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways.

Romans 3:15ⁿ "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

Isaiah 52:7 **How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news**, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Psalms 119:101 I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word.

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Psalms 56:13 For you have delivered me ^[c] from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life. ^[d]

Romans 10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"^[g]

Ephesians 6:15 ⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

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3.3.6 Give Your Eyes

Matthew 6:22²² **The eye is the lamp of the body.** If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Proverbs 21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!

Jeremiah 22:17 "But your eyes and your heart are set only on dishonest gain, on shedding innocent blood and on oppression and extortion."

Proverbs 27:20 Death and Destruction ^[a] are never satisfied, and **neither are the eyes of man.**

Matthew 5:28²⁸ But I tell you that **anyone who looks at a woman lustfully** has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

¹ John 2:16¹⁶ For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, **the lust of his eyes** and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

¹ John 1:1¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which **we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at** and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; **we have seen it** and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³**We proclaim to you what we have seen** and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴We write this to make our ^[a] joy complete.

Psalms 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, **giving light to the eyes.**

Psalms 119:37³⁷ **Turn my eyes away from worthless things;** preserve my life according to your word. ^[b]

Psalms 121:1¹ **I lift up my eyes to the hills**—where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalms 123:1¹ **I lift up my eyes to you,** to you whose throne is in heaven. ² As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so **our eyes look to the LORD our God,** till he shows us his mercy.

3.3.7 Give Your Ears

Proverbs 21:13¹³ If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.

² Timothy 4:3³ For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say **what their itching ears want to hear.** ⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

Romans 10:17¹⁷ Consequently, **faith comes from hearing the message,** and the message is heard through the word of Christ. ¹⁸But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."^[i]

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John 5:24¹¹ I tell you the truth, **whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life** and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when **the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.**

James 1:19¹⁹ My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be **quick to listen, slow to speak** and slow to become angry, ²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. ²²**Do not merely listen to the word,** and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says.**

3.3.8 Give Your Sexual Expression

God's design for sexual expression is fully within marriage. Anything outside of this holy union is sin. The following words are added to supply definitions for commonly used words.

a-dul-ter-y   [Pronunciation Key](#) (ə-dŭl'tɛ-rē, -trē)
n. pl. a-dul-ter-ies

Voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner other than the lawful spouse.

for-ni-ca-tion   [Pronunciation Key](#) (fôr'nī-kā'shən)
n.

Sexual intercourse between partners who are not married to each other.

1 Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: **Neither the sexually immoral** nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders

1 Corinthians 6: 9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. **Neither fornicators,** nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals,^[a] nor sodomites, [NKJV]

1 Corinthians 6:13 "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food"—but God will destroy them both. **The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.** ¹⁴By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. ¹⁵Do you not know that **your bodies are members of Christ himself?** Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."^[b] ¹⁷But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. ¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but **he who sins sexually sins against his own body.**

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² Samuel 11:26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. ²⁷ After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.

3.4 God's Help

God loves all of His children. He is ready and eager to help us “give our bodies” for His holy purpose.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—**think about such things.**

Psalms 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, **he will also provide a way out** so that you can stand up under it.

Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and **offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body^[a] in a way that is holy and honorable,

1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: ⁴ That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; [KJV]

Psalms 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

sanc-ti-fy   [Pronunciation Key](#) (săngk' tē-fī)
tr.v. **sanc-ti-fied, sanc-ti-fy-ing, sanc-ti-fies**

1. To set apart for sacred use; consecrate.
2. To make holy; purify.
3. To give religious sanction to, as with an oath or vow: *sanctify a marriage.*
4. To give social or moral sanction to.
5. To make productive of holiness or spiritual blessing.

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3.5 Questions

1. Considering the worldly perspective, what about your body do you not want to give to God?
2. Considering the godly perspective, what have you given to God?
3. Which part of your body is the most difficult to give to God?
4. When sacrifice is mentioned, how are you a living sacrifice?
5. One of the fruits of God's Spirit is Self Control. Think of your body, do you bear the fruit of Self Control?
6. Is your body set apart for a holy purpose? Is it sanctified?

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4.0 Finding Your Gifts

The apostle Paul wrote about a Christian's spiritual gifts. These are free gifts given by God to His children. Although many hear about spiritual gifts, they do not know which ones they possess!

It is the purpose of this section to help you identify which spiritual gifts you possess. This is done through a Spiritual Gifts Survey.



Finding your Spiritual Gift is like getting flowers!
1st Use of this picture in Chapter 4

There are several Spiritual Gift Survey tests. Some are very limited and do not illustrate all the gifts possible. It is good to try several tests and compare the results. From these results see if there is a common gift between all tests. This should help you in your self-discovery!

Although reformatted, the following test was written by Neal Boese and Patricia Haller, Produced by the Division for Congregational Ministries, ELCA.

<http://www.elca.org/evangelism/print/spiritgifts.html>

4.1 Biblical Definition of Gifts

#	Gift	Description	Bible Reference
1	Administration	The gift that enables a believer to formulate, direct, and carry out plans necessary to fulfill a purpose.	I Corinthians 12:28, Acts 14:23
2	Artistry	The gift that gives the believer the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration.	Exodus 31:1-11, Psalm 149:3a
3	Discernment	The gift that motivates a believer to seek God's will and purpose and apply that understanding to individual and congregational situations.	John 16:6-15, Romans 9:1, I Corinthians 2:9-16

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#	Gift	Description	Bible Reference
4	Evangelism	The gift that moves believers to reach nonbelievers in such a way that they are baptized and become active members of the Christian community.	Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11- 16, Acts 2:36-40
5	Exhortation	The gift that moves the believer to reach out with Christian love and presence to people in personal conflict of facing a spiritual void.	John 14:1, II Timothy 1:16-18, III John 5-8
6	Faith	The gift that gives a believer the eyes to see the Spirit at work and the ability to trust the Spirit's leading without indication of where it all might lead.	Genesis 12:1-4a, Mark 5:25-34, I Thessalonians 1:8-10
7	Giving	The gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure).	II Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21:1-4
8	Hospitality	The gift that causes a believer to joyfully welcome and receive guests and those in need of food and lodging.	Romans 12:13, Romans 16:23a, Luke 10:38
9	Intercession	The gift that enables a believer to pray with the certainty that prayer is heard and when requests are made, answers will come.	Matthew 6:6-15, Luke 11:1-10, Ephesians 6:18
10	Knowledge	The gift that drives a person to learn, analyze and uncover new insights with regard to the Bible and faith.	I Corinthians 12:8; I Corinthians 14:6, Romans 12:2
11	Leadership	The gift that gives a believer the confidence to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task.	Romans 12:8, John 21:15-17, II Timothy 4:1-5
12	Mercy	The gift that motivates a believer to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then act to meet that need.	Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:34-36
13	Music--Vocal	The gift that gives a believer the capability and opportunity to present personal witness and inspiration to others through singing.	Psalm 96:1-9, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:1-2
14	Music--Instrumental	The gift that inspires a believer to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument.	Psalm 33:1-5, Psalm 150, I Samuel 16:14-23
15	Pastoring (Shepherding)	The gift that gives a believer the confidence, capability and compassion to provide spiritual leadership and direction for individuals or groups of believers.	I Timothy 4:12-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, II Timothy 4:1-2
16	Service (Helps)	The gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled.	Luke 23:50-54, Romans 16:1-16, Philippians 2:19-23
17	Skilled Craft	The gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church.	Exodus 30:1-6, Exodus 31:3-5, Ezekiel 27:4-11
18	Teaching	The gift that enables a believer to communicate a personal understanding of the Bible and faith in such a way that it becomes clear and understood by others.	I Corinthians 12:28, Matthew 5:1-12, Acts 18:24-48
19	Wisdom	The gift that allows the believer to sort through opinions, facts and thoughts in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers.	I Corinthians 2:6-13, James 3:13-18, II Chronicles 1:7-11
20	Writing	The gift that gives a believer the ability to express truth in a written form; a form that can edify, instruct and strengthen the community of believers.	I John 2:1-6, 12-14, I Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 3.

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4.2 Self-Assessment Inventory

For each of the 60 questions which follow, circle the number in the **Selection** column that corresponds with the response that most closely matches how you perceive yourself. Categories are presented diagonally, across the top of the inventory.

- 0 - Rarely True
- 1 - Infrequently True
- 2 - Occasionally True
- 3 - Frequently True
- 4 - Consistently True

You might also ask a person who is close to you to score the inventory with, and for, you. Their perception of your strengths may be useful in identifying the gifts with which you have been truly blessed.

#	Question	Selection
1	When presented a goal, I immediately think of steps that need to be taken in order to achieve the desired results.	0 1 2 3 4
2	I express myself through artistic means.	0 1 2 3 4
3	My faith requires me to seek out God's will and purpose in all circumstances that arise in my life.	0 1 2 3 4
4	I am able to convey the Gospel message to non-believers in ways that they are able to easily understand.	0 1 2 3 4
5	I am moved by those who through conflict or sorrow are wavering in faith.	0 1 2 3 4
6	I am certain of the spirit's presence in my life and the lives of others.	0 1 2 3 4
7	I am blessed by God each day and gladly respond to these blessings by giving liberally of my time and money.	0 1 2 3 4
8	I enjoy meeting new people and becoming acquainted with them.	0 1 2 3 4
9	I know that God hears and responds to my daily prayers.	0 1 2 3 4
10	I feel compelled to learn as much as I can about the Bible and faith.	0 1 2 3 4
11	I am a take charge person. When others follow my direction, the goal or task will be completed.	0 1 2 3 4
12	When I see a person in need, I am moved to assist them.	0 1 2 3 4
13	I love to sing and enjoy inspiring others through song.	0 1 2 3 4
14	I find joy and express myself by playing a musical instrument.	0 1 2 3 4
15	I am motivated to provide spiritual leadership to those who are on a faith journey.	0 1 2 3 4
16	I like working behind the scenes to ensure projects are successful.	0 1 2 3 4
17	I enjoy working with my hands in a trade or skill that required considerable experience to perfect.	0 1 2 3 4
18	My great joy is to communicate biblical truth in such a way that it becomes real and understood by others.	0 1 2 3 4
19	When a challenge is presented, I am usually able to identify an appropriate solution.	0 1 2 3 4
20	I am able to take a thought or idea and put it into a clear and inspiring written form.	0 1 2 3 4
21	I enjoy organizing thoughts, ideas, hopes and dreams into a specific plan of action.	0 1 2 3 4
22	I can translate into artistic form what I first see in my imagination.	0 1 2 3 4

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#	Question	Selection
23	I have assisted others as they sought to discern whether or not their personal decisions were helpful and in accord with God's will for their lives.	0 1 2 3 4
24	I enjoy being with non-believers and like having the opportunity to encourage them to faith and commitment.	0 1 2 3 4
25	When I know someone is facing a crisis, I feel compelled to provide support and care.	0 1 2 3 4
26	My trust in the Spirit's presence, when I encounter times of personal crisis, is a source of strength for others.	0 1 2 3 4
27	I manage my time and money so that I am able to give much of it to the work of the church or other organizations.	0 1 2 3 4
28	I am often asked to open my home for small group gatherings or social occasions.	0 1 2 3 4
29	I often become so absorbed in my prayer life that the door bell or phone can ring and I will not hear it.	0 1 2 3 4
30	Not one day would be complete without biblical study and thought.	0 1 2 3 4
31	When I am in a group, others will often look to me for direction.	0 1 2 3 4
32	I feel an urgency to provide housing for the homeless, food for the starving, comfort for those in distress.	0 1 2 3 4
33	I have sung before groups and felt a real sense of God's presence.	0 1 2 3 4
34	By my playing a musical instrument, inspiration has been provided for both myself and others.	0 1 2 3 4
35	I have responsibility for providing spiritual guidance to an individual believer or group of believers.	0 1 2 3 4
36	People tell me that without my willingness to do the unnoticed jobs, their work would be more difficult.	0 1 2 3 4
37	I am good at building, repairing, or restoring things and find satisfaction in doing so.	0 1 2 3 4
38	I want to express my faith by assisting others to discover the truths contained in the Bible.	0 1 2 3 4
39	People come to me for help in applying Christian faith and values to personal situations.	0 1 2 3 4
40	I often feel moved to write about my thoughts and feelings so others may benefit from them.	0 1 2 3 4
41	I have been successful in organizing, directing and motivating people to achieve a goal.	0 1 2 3 4
42	My artistic work has given spiritual strength to both believer and non-believer.	0 1 2 3 4
43	In the congregation, I am often asked if a direction being discussed is in accord with God's will and purpose.	0 1 2 3 4
44	I do not find it difficult to share what Jesus means to me with non-believers.	0 1 2 3 4
45	Those who are struggling with life questions have come to me for guidance and help.	0 1 2 3 4
46	I can see great things happening in my congregation and am not derailed by the pessimism of others.	0 1 2 3 4
47	When I receive money unexpectedly, one of my first thoughts is to share this gift through the church.	0 1 2 3 4
48	I enjoy welcoming guests and helping them to feel at ease.	0 1 2 3 4
49	Believers have asked me to pray for healing in their lives, and have evidenced God's healing power.	0 1 2 3 4
50	My study of the Bible has proven helpful to others in their faith journey.	0 1 2 3 4
51	People have said they like to work with me because the task will be successfully completed.	0 1 2 3 4

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#	Question	Selection
52	People have been surprised by how at ease I am while working with those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit.	0 1 2 3 4
53	I am grateful and humbled that my singing has provided inspiration and hope for others on their faith journey.	0 1 2 3 4
54	Others have told me they were moved by my playing a musical instrument.	0 1 2 3 4
55	People have come to me for spiritual help and it has developed into a long-term relationship.	0 1 2 3 4
56	When I turn out the lights, take tables down, work in the kitchen or put chairs away, I feel that I have served the Lord.	0 1 2 3 4
57	My knowledge of building, maintenance or repair has been a special value to the church and others.	0 1 2 3 4
58	Students have told me that I can take the most difficult idea or concept and make it understandable.	0 1 2 3 4
59	When direction is needed at work or in the congregation, I am generally asked for my opinion.	0 1 2 3 4
60	My written work has been helpful to others in understanding life's truths.	0 1 2 3 4

4.3 Scoring Grid

In the scoring grid below, enter the values from the Self-Assessment Inventory above.

1. For each gift below, identify your Selections for each of the three questions.
2. Write the value of these Selections in the Scratch Pad.
3. Add the three values together.
4. Circle the value in the Total column

For example, consider the category of Administration:

1. Questions 1, 21 and 41 correspond to the Selections 2, 4 and 3.
2. Enter 2+4+3 in the scratch pad
3. Add the numbers. (Hint: This totals 9.)
4. Circle the 9.

Notice that the higher the number the stronger the corresponding gift.

The strongest gifts will generally have a total score of 7 or more. If you have more than one gift with a total of seven or more, then all of these gifts can be referred to as your "gift cluster." Notice how each gift within the cluster has the potential to compliment and support another. The gifts within the cluster will need to be further explored to determine which ones you have truly been blessed with.

This inventory is designed to begin your journey toward spiritual gifts discovery. Keep in mind that it is not a scientific instrument. Your perceptions will be validated by others and confirmed through prayer and by their use over time. Identify your spiritual gift cluster, and then list the gifts in the gifts cluster.

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#	Gift	Questions	Scratch Pad	Total
1	Administration	1, 21, 41		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
2	Artistry	2, 22, 42		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
3	Discernment	3, 23, 43		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
4	Evangelism	4, 24, 44		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
5	Exhortation	5, 25, 45		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
6	Faith	6, 26, 46		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
7	Giving	7, 27, 47		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
8	Hospitality	8, 28, 48		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
9	Intercession	9, 29, 49		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
10	Knowledge	10, 30, 50		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
11	Leadership	11, 31, 51		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
12	Mercy	12, 32, 52		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13	Music--Vocal	13, 33, 53		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
14	Music--Instrumental	14, 34, 54		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
15	Pastoring (Shepherding)	15, 35, 55		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
16	Service (Helps)	16, 36, 56		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
17	Skilled Craft	17, 37, 57		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
18	Teaching	18, 38, 58		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
19	Wisdom	19, 39, 59		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
20	Writing	20, 40, 60		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4.4 Spiritual Gift Cluster

From the scoring grid, identify any gift with a score of seven or more. List those items below:

Gift	Score

In the grid above, circle the gift with the highest score.

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4.5 Self Reflection on Your Gifts

Which gifts have you truly been blessed with? Discovering the answer to that question requires the following:

1. **Prayer:** Seek the Holy Spirit's guidance while evaluating your gifts.
2. **Study:** Become familiar with the scripture references, definitions, and how each gift functions within the Body of Christ. This will provide you with a solid foundation from which to further evaluate your gifts.
3. **Self-Examination:** Explore your feelings about each of the spiritual gifts in your cluster. Examples of how each gift may be utilized in the church are provided below. As you read these examples, ask yourself how you feel about the types of ministry activity identified for the gifts in your cluster. You may expect to feel fulfilled through the use of your gifts.
4. **Track Your Results:** As you use your spiritual gifts, pay close attention to the results produced through your efforts. You can expect to experience positive results from the use of your gifts.
5. **Listen For Affirmation:** As you use your spiritual gifts, listen for affirmation from other Christians. They will recognize and confirm your spiritual gifts, through genuine expressions of approval and thankfulness for a job well done!
6. **Putting Your Gifts to Use:** All Christians are to work together, supporting one another. However, our gifts make us better prepared and equipped to perform in some areas of ministry over others. A person, who is working within a ministry area they are gifted for, will be more effective in that ministry than one they not gifted for.

4.6 Life Application of Gifts

What types of ministry will you be most effective in? A brief list of ministry examples follows. These examples have been provided merely as thought starters and should not be considered an exhaustive list. Use them as a starting point in exploring the possibilities for putting your gifts to use within your congregation and in your community.

Gift	Life Application
Administration	Congregation Council Finance Staff Sunday School Superintendent Vacation Bible School Coordinator Business Manager
Artistry	Banner Making Drama Club/Clown Ministry/Puppetry Film/Photography Work Crafts/Handicrafts Decorating Team Set/Props Design Team
Discernment	Congregation Council Long Range Planning Team Social Ministry Team Peer Counseling Support Group Facilitator
Evangelism	Prospective Member Visitation Evangelism Team Advertising and Marketing New Member Sponsor Community Visitation:

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Gift	Life Application
Exhortation	Mutual Ministry Team Hospital/Home/Institution Visitation Telecare Ministry Peer Counseling Small Group Leader
Faith	Congregational President Stewardship Team Long Range Planning Team Teacher, Bible study leader
Giving	Capital Campaign Steering Team Stewardship Team Volunteer Coordination Giving Personal Testimony
Hospitality	Greeter/Usher New Member Sponsor In-Home Bible Study Host Visitor Welcome/Information Center Banquet Server Fellowship Hour Host/Server
Intercession	Prayer Chain Prayer Partner Prayer Families/Prayer Circles
Knowledge	Parish Resource-Library Coordinator Nominating Team Long Range Planning Team Congregation Council
Leadership	Sunday School Superintendent Committee Chairperson (all types) Fellowship Activity Coordinator Vacation Bible School Coordinator Congregational President Speaker: Special Events
Mercy	Home/Hospital/Institution Visitation Transportation to Worship/Bible Study Social Ministry Team Support Group Leader Telecare Minister
Music-Instrumental	Band Leader/Members Choir Pianist Special Event Music Substitute Organist Vacation Bible School-Music Program
Music-Vocal	Church Choir Vocal Ensemble Sunday School Song Leader Vacation Bible School Song Leader
Pastoring (Shepherding)	Adult In-Home Bible Study Leader New Member Sponsor Young-Adult Counselor Small Group Leader Telecare Minister
Service (Helps)	Computer Programmer/Data Entry Newsletter Collation P.A./Sound System Technician Tape Recording Worship Services Child Care Building/Grounds Upkeep Kitchen Cleaning Team Providing Transportation
Skilled Crafts	Building Maintenance/Upkeep Electrical/Masonry/Plumbing/Roofing Mechanical Repair/Maintenance Audio/Visual Operator and Repair Computer Maintenance, Web-Page Developer:
Teaching	Adult Bible Class Teacher Sunday School Teacher Teen Bible Class Teacher Vacation Bible School Teacher Conference/Seminar Leader
Wisdom	Long Range Planning Team Congregation Council Peer Counselor Support Group Leader Mutual Ministry Team
Writing	Newsletter Article Writer Newsletter Editor Public Relations/Publicity Committee Letter Writing

Your Spiritual Gifts do not appear and disappear as you pass through the doors of your church! The special gifts God has given you are with you always. They are meant to also be used in your daily life to bring glory to God and serve the needs of others. In the spaces below, identify some of the ways your gifts may be used for these purposes. Specific contexts have been provided as thought starters.

4.7 Questions

1. Did this study help you see your spiritual gifts? Why?
2. As revealed in this survey, were you surprised with your spiritual gifts?
3. What gifts did you “think” that you had?
4. What gifts do others “think” that you have?
5. What gifts did you “want” to have?

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6. How many gifts are in your gift cluster?
7. What was your strongest gift?

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5.0 Giving Your Gifts and Talents

Consider the talents of others. Consider what they have given to you.

Think about:

- The time you heard an incredible song, melody, or lyrics that touched your soul.
- The time you ate a phenomenal meal that tasted incredible, satisfied fully, and filled you completely.
- A picture or painting that made you stop in your tracks and ponder the deeper meaning of life.
- A building, its size, shape or architecture that made your jaw drop with its beauty and design.
- A sports event and how the player ran, jumped, leaped, drove, flipped, or swam with amazing intensity and power.
- A letter or book that touched your heart and made you laugh out loud or bring a tear to your eye.



God has bestowed talents and gifts to each of us. Only when we give our gifts, do we bless others. God desires to give continually. Do we?

In the last lesson we learned more about the gifts that God gave us. Now that we know what our gifts are, we need to consider how we can give our talents and bless others!

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5.1 How God Gives

When we think about giving gifts, we need to consider the gift giver. Who gives more gifts than any one else? Here are some thoughts from Max Lucado in his book, “He Chose the Nails”:

“Have you ever wondered why God gives so much? We could exist on far less. He could have left the world flat and gray; we wouldn’t have known the difference. But he didn’t.

He splashed orange in the sunrise
And cast the sky blue.
And if you love to see geese as they gather,
Chances are you’ll see that too.

Did he have to make the squirrel’s tail furry?
Was he obliged to make the birds sing?
And the funny way that chickens scurry
Or the majesty of thunder when it rings?

Why give a flower fragrance? Why give food its taste?
Could it be
He loves to see
That look on your face?

If we give gifts to show our love, how much more would he?



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Exodus 16:4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "**I will rain down bread** from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

Exodus 16:11 The LORD said to Moses, ¹² "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.' " ¹³ **That evening quail came and covered the camp**, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. **I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.** [NKJV]

Romans 5:15 **But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!**

Romans 15:13 **May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

2 Corinthians 8:7 **But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.** [NKJV]

2 Corinthians 9:8 **And God is able to make all grace abound to you**, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, **you will abound in every good work.** ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." [a] ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and **increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.** ¹¹**You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.**

Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, **according to the riches of His grace** ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

Ephesians 3:20 **Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,** according to his power that is at work within us,

5.2 How We Give

God commands us to give!

Now that we know some of our spiritual gifts and are aware of some of our God given talents, we can start to understand what God expects of us. He expects us to use our gifts and talents for others! He expects great things from us:

John 17:4 **I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.** ⁵And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Ephesians 2:10 **For we are God's workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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Matthew 25:14" Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. 15To one he gave five talents^[a] of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. 18But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19" After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' 21" His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 22" The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' 23" His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 24" Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26" His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. 28" 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. 29For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 30And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Talents	Increase	Total	Results
5	5	11	'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
2	2	4	'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
1	0	0	'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. 29For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 30And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

5.3 The Law of Use

Remember in grade school when you were taught numbers? First you learned to count from one through five. Then you could count to ten, twenty and finally one hundred!

Soon you learned what money was and the value of a penny, a nickel, a dime and a quarter.

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You began to buy and maybe sell! Was your first purchase was a piece of candy?

Then you were then taught how to add, then subtract, then multiple, then divide, etc. You learned fractions.

As time progressed, you learned more and more about numbers. Your talent with numbers increased. With proficiency, you could then move from paper to mental arithmetic. Each step deepened your knowledge of numbers. Soon you could use the numbers to benefit others. You could remember a phone number to call your parents, your friends.



As time went on, it became easier to use numbers. You could remember addresses, bank accounts, passwords. Maybe, just maybe you could read equations, balance a checkbook, or pronounce numbers in another language! Your capacity for numbers grew, and grew and grew!

Prior to schooling, your knowledge of numbers was nothing then with time, grew into something useful.

Matthew 13:31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³²Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows,

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it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

As you used numbers your power and ability of number grew. Your use of numbers allowed you to deepen your knowledge to bless yourself and bless others.

In a similar manner, your spiritual gifts and talents can be developed. However, you must:

- Know your gifts and talents: Understand
- Use your gifts and talents: Mature
- Share your gifts and talents: Give

You will find that the more you use your gifts and bless others, the more your gifts, talents and abilities will grow.

Consider this inspiring story about George Washington Carver and the use of his talents:

Years ago I went into my laboratory and said, "Dear Mr. Creator, please tell me what the universe was made for?"

The Great Creator answered, "You want to know too much for that little mind of yours. Ask for something more your size, little man."

Then I asked. "Please, Mr. Creator, tell me what man was made for?"

Again the Great Creator replied, "You are still asking too much. Cut down of the extent and improve the intent."

So then I asked, "Please, Mr. Creator, will you tell me why the peanut was made?"

"That's better, but even then it's infinite. What do you want to know about the peanut?"

"Mr. Creator, can I make milk out of the peanut?"

"What kind of milk do you want? Good Jersey milk of just plain boarding house milk?"

"Good Jersey milk."

And then the Great Creator taught me to take the peanut apart and put it together again. And out of the process have come forth all these products! [1920, in speaking at Blue Ridge, North Carolina to the Young Men's Christian Association]

Through Mr. Carver's determination and direction from the Lord, we are blessed with many things. Through the use of his talents, Mr. Carver discovered:

- 32 different kinds of milk from the peanut

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- 300 different products from the peanut
- 300 products from clay
- Over 100 products from the sweet potato.

Mark 4:26 He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground.
27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, **the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.** 28 All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."



Through due diligence, seeking first the kingdom of God, give, we will be blessed. God responds and His blessings are not stingy, or small. God blesses liberally.

Deuteronomy 15:10 **Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.** 11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.

1 Chronicles 29:14 "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? **Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.**

Psalms 37:21 The wicked borrow and do not repay, but **the righteous give generously;**

Acts 10:1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. 2 He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; **he gave generously to those in need** and prayed to God regularly.

2 Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and **whoever sows generously will also reap generously.** 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to

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make all grace abound to you, **so that in all things at all times, having all that you need**, you will abound in every good work.

Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap.** For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom **he poured out on us generously** through Jesus Christ our Savior,

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, **who gives to all liberally** and without reproach, and it will be given to him. [NKJV]

5.4 Different Gifts, One Body

How are we using the good gifts and talents that God has given to us? God gives good gifts to all of us. Do we use them in a worldly way or in a spiritual way? Do we bless ourselves or others?

God blesses all men with talents, gifts, and abilities. Each of us has special gifts that God has given to us. God gives all men, the good and the bad, He gives them good things! But what each of us does with the gifts, talents and abilities is another story.

Matthew 5:45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; **for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**

- **Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens)** talent: writer – “During many ages there were witches. The Bible said so. The Bible commanded that they should not be allowed to live. Therefore the Church, after doing its duty in but a lazy and indolent way for 800 years, gathered up its halters, thumbscrews, and firebrands, and set about its holy work in earnest. She worked hard at it night and day during nine centuries and imprisoned, tortured, hanged, and burned whole hordes and armies of witches, and washed the Christian world clean with their foul blood. Then it was discovered that there was no such thing as witches, and never had been. One does not know whether to laugh or to cry.” [Europe and Elsewhere]
- **Adolph Hitler** talent: evangelism, leadership – “Between 1939 and 1945 the SS, assisted by [collaborationist](#) governments and recruits from [occupied](#) countries, systematically killed about 11 million people, (about 5-6 million of whom are believed to have been Jews^[6]) in [concentration camps](#), [ghettos](#) and mass [executions](#), or through less systematic methods elsewhere. Besides being gassed to death, many also died of [starvation](#) and [disease](#) while working as [slave labourers](#). Along with Jews, non-Jewish [Poles](#) (over 3 million of whom died), alleged [communists](#) or political opposition, members of resistance groups, [homosexuals](#), [dissenting Roman Catholics](#) and [Protestants](#), [Roma](#), the physically [handicapped](#) and mentally [retarded](#), [Soviet prisoners of war](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), anti-Nazi [clergy](#), [trade unionists](#), and [psychiatric patients](#) were killed. This industrial-scale [genocide](#) in Europe is referred to as the [Holocaust](#)” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hitler]
- **Kenneth Lay** talent: administration, evangelism, leadership – “From 1983 until his resignation in 2002, Kenneth Lay hosted the orgy of greed that was Enron. His amoral record of carnage is incredible. Five thousand employees were fired. Individual accounts

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in the Enron 401K retirement plan were left virtually worthless after Enron's stock fell to penny stock levels. Millions of other private pension plans suffered horrendous losses. Overall, the losses may amount to 60 billion dollars." [http://www.quarterly-report.com/energy/enron.html]

- **Elton John** talent: music - vocal, music - instrumental – “Elton John is getting married – to long time boyfriend David Furnish. After 11 years together, the couple will finally legally be able to wed when the UK allows same-sex civil unions after December 5th.” [http://weddings.about.com/b/a/165448.htm]

¹ 1 Corinthians 3:1 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. ²I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³**You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?** Are you not acting like mere men?

Paul clearly illustrates the where our gifts originate and their intended purpose:

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for **the edifying of the body of Christ**, [NKJV]

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:4 **There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.** ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:12 **The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body.** So it is with Christ.

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

We are part of one body. One body of believers and our gifts should be shared and be a blessing to the body of Christ! And best of all, God has placed us where He wants us.

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

But what is the essential part which makes the gifts work? What makes the Christian different from the worldly man?

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames,^[b] but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹²Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror;

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then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. **But the greatest of these is love.**

Where does love come from?

¹ John 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. **God is love.** Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Galatians 5:22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love,** joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

5.5 Questions

1. What talents in others do you admire?
2. What are some of the gifts God has given to you today?
3. Consider the man who “hid his talent”. What does this mean to you as a Christian?
4. Consider the Law of Use and the “number” illustration. What other things can you think of that illustrates the Law of Use?
5. How does the term “use it or lose it”, fit into the Law of Use?
6. Do we generously give of our gifts and talents or do we hide them from others?
7. Are you using your gifts for a worldly or godly purpose?

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6.0 Giving Your Possessions

In 2005 the United States Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was \$ 12,370,000,000,000. Of that number consumer spending was 2/3 or \$8.25 trillion for “possessions” in the United States. That’s a lot of stuff!

If we have a job, if we have a credit card, we are buying tons and tons of things. Cars, houses, clothing, food, whatever it is, we are buying lots of it. As typical Americans we often have surplus items. We have garage sales or take our excess to consignment shops where we can get some of the value back in our pocket.

Think for a moment about your Christian giving..... Think of your possessions, your finances. Are these really yours?

Psalm 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Job 1:20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship²¹ and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. [c] The **LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.**"

And think on this,

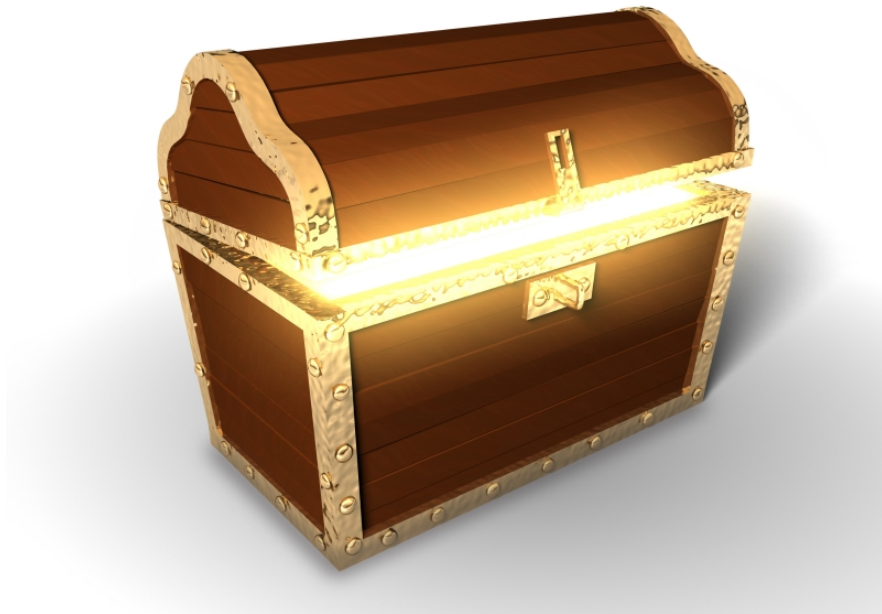
Deuteronomy 8:10 When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.¹¹ **Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God**, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.¹² Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,¹³ and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,¹⁴ then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.¹⁵ He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.¹⁶ He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you.¹⁷ You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."¹⁸ **But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth**, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Matthew 6:31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ **But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness**, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:19 **Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.²⁰ **But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ For **where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

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So, what is your heavenly bank account balance? How are your heavenly investments doing? Is a tithe commanded of Christians?

6.1 Earthly Possessions

What does the bible say about earthly possessions?

Genesis 3:19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; **for dust you are and to dust you will return.**"

Isaiah 38:17 Indeed it was for my own peace That I had great bitterness; But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the **pit of corruption**, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back. [NKJV]

Psalms 53:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." **They are corrupt**, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does good.² God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.³ **Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt**; there is no one who does good, not even one.

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Matthew 7:17 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Matthew 6:19ⁿ **Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For **where your treasure is, there your heart will be also**.

Luke 12:15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; **a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**"

Romans 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹ because the **creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption** into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. [NKJV]

Like each of our lives, our possessions will one day disappear. They will be gone!

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

2 Peter 2:12 But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

6.2 Giving Statistics

This information comes from the National Philanthropic Trust

[\[http://www.nptrust.org/philanthropy/philanthropy_stats.asp\]](http://www.nptrust.org/philanthropy/philanthropy_stats.asp)

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Charitable Giving

89 percent of households give.¹

The average annual contribution for contributors is \$1,620.¹

Total giving reached an estimated \$248.52 billion in 2004, an increase of 5% from 2003.²

Total giving has increased in 39 out of the last 40 years.²

Charitable giving accounted for 2.1% of gross domestic product.²

It is estimated that between \$6.6 trillion to \$27.4 trillion in charitable bequests will be made between 1998-2052.³

It is estimated total charitable contributions will total between \$21.2 to \$55.4 trillion in between 1998-2052.³

Charitable Organizations

There are approximately 1,010,400 charitable organizations in the United States.⁴

There are approximately 355,000 religious congregations.⁴

The largest sources of nonprofits revenue and support are comprised of: Dues, fees and charges (37.5%); Government Support (31.3%); Private Contributions (19.9%); and Miscellaneous revenue (11.4%).⁴

The nonprofit sector employs 10.2 million people, accounting for 6.9% of the total U.S workforce.⁵

Volunteering (Individuals)

55 percent of Americans volunteer.⁶

83.9 million American adults volunteer, representing the equivalent of over 9 million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion.¹

Donor Advised Funds

Donor advised funds are the fastest growing charitable giving vehicle:

More than 90,165 account holders (second only to charitable remainder trusts).⁷

New accounts increasing 9.6% per year.⁷

Approximately \$16 billion in assets.⁷

Annual contributions into donor advised funds are \$2.9 billion annually an increase of 19.1% from 2003.⁷

Average account size is over \$164,645.⁷

Supporting Organizations

There are more than 45,000 Supporting Organizations operating in the United States.⁸

Total assets of \$76-billion.⁸

Other Charitable Giving Vehicles

According to an analysis of the Internal Revenue Service:

There are 93,329 Charitable Remainder Unitrusts with total assets of \$77.4 billion.

There are 22,626 Charitable Remainder Annuity Trusts with total assets of \$9.5 billion.

There are 5,658 Charitable Lead Trusts with total assets of \$12.3 billion.

There are 1,591 Pooled Income Funds with total assets of \$1.7 billion.

May 2005: The 5 Largest Private Foundations

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1. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (\$26.8 billion)
2. The Ford Foundation (\$10.6 billion)
3. J. Paul Getty Trust (\$9.1 billion)
4. Lilly Endowment (\$8.6 billion)
5. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (\$7.9 billion)

(Source: [Foundation Center](#), based on total assets)

June 2005: The 5 Largest Corporate Grantmakers

1. Wal-Mart Foundation (\$119.8 million)
2. Aventis Pharmaceutical Health Care Foundation (\$102.5 million)
3. Ford Motor Company Fund (\$77.5 million)
4. Bank of America Foundation (\$76.5 million)
5. Verizon Foundation (\$57.8 million)

(Source: [Foundation Center](#), based on total amount given)

July 2005: The 5 Largest Nonprofit Organizations

1. YMCAs in the United States (\$4.7 billion)
2. American Red Cross (\$3.0 billion)
3. Catholic Charities USA (\$2.9 billion)
4. Salvation Army (\$2.8 billion)
5. United Jewish Communities (\$2.3 billion)

(Source: [The NonProfit Times](#), based on total amount given)

August 2005: The 5 Most Popular Causes Americans Give To

1. Religious/Faith-Based (\$88.3 billion)
2. Education (\$33.8 billion)
3. Health (\$22.0 billion)
4. Human Services (\$19.2 billion)
5. Arts, Culture & Humanities (\$14.0 billion)

(Source: [Giving USA 2005](#), published by American Association of Fundraising Counsel. Americans gave a total of \$249 billion to charity in 2004)

September 2005: The 5 Most Generous States

1. California (\$18.4 billion)
2. New York (\$12.4 billion)
3. Texas (\$8.3 billion)
4. Florida (\$7.4 billion)
5. Illinois (\$6.2 billion)

(Source: [The Nonprofit Almanac](#), published by Independent Sector and the National Center for Charitable Statistics)

October 2005: 5 Largest Gifts to Charity

1. Bill and Melinda Gates (\$3 billion to the Gates Foundation)
2. Susan Buffett (Through her estate she donated \$2.4 billion to the Buffett Foundation)
3. Joan B. Kroc (Through her estate she donated \$1.5 billion to the Salvation Army)

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4. W. Jerome Frautschi (\$205 million to the Overture Center for the Arts)
5. Leo and Kay Drey (\$180 million to the L-A-D Foundation, a gift in-kind of 146,000 forest acres in Missouri)

(Source: [Giving USA 2005](#), published by American Association of Fundraising Counsel. These are gifts that occurred in 2004, the most recent year statistics are available.)

November 2005: Top Sources of Nonprofit Revenue

A common misperception is that nonprofit organizations receive the majority of their funding from contributions. As seen below, almost 70% of nonprofit revenue is self-generated and from support from federal, state and local government grants and contracts.

1. Dues, Fees and Charges (38%)
2. Government (31%)
3. Private Contributions (19%)
4. Other Sources (11%)

Other sources include income from investments, interest, dividends, etc.

Source: [The Nonprofit Almanac](#), published by Independent Sector and the National Center for Charitable Statistics)

December 2005: Top 5 Reasons Why People Give

1. Because they are asked, or presented a giving opportunity
2. Compassion for those in need
3. Personally believe in the cause
4. Affected by the cause
5. To give back to their community

The above is based on an analysis of research in the field of philanthropy -- including [Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy](#), [Independent Sector](#), [University of Pittsburgh](#), and others.

¹ Corinthians 15:50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." [g] ⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" [h]

6.3 Heavenly Possessions

Heavenly possessions are things we can not see. Obviously the glamour and glitter of this world are not to be compared to the next. We are to focus on the heavenly treasures.

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¹ Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the **LORD looks at the heart.**"

Revelation 4:10, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. **They lay their crowns before the throne** and say: ¹¹"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Heavenly treasures consist of crowns, rewards, and responsibilities given to believers at the judgment seat of Christ for faithful stewardship.

Luke 12:33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. **Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted,** where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

Luke 19:16ⁿ "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' ¹⁷" 'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. **'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'**

¹ Corinthians 3:12ⁿ If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴**If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.** ¹⁵If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

¹ Corinthians 9:24ⁿ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but **we do it to get a crown that will last forever.** ²⁶Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. ²⁷No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, **I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.**

¹ Thessalonians 2:19ⁿ For what is our hope, our joy, or **the crown in which we will glory** in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

Matthew 6:19ⁿ **Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,** where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves **treasures in heaven,** where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Colossians 3:1ⁿ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²**Set your minds on things above,** not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your[a] life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

6.4 Giving Possessions

In the United States, we are blessed with many good things. Often we have excess of good things. Some children in 3rd world countries cling to old plastic milk jug to haul

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water over great distances. Yet, here at home we regularly throw these items in the trash and cause our landfills to brim with wastes.

Proverbs 28:27 He who **gives to the poor** will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.

Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

6.4.1 Give Hospitality

hos-pi-tal-i-ty   [Pronunciation Key](#) (hŏs'pĭ-tāl'ĭ-tē)
n. pl. hos-pi-tal-i-ties

1. Cordial and generous reception of or disposition toward guests.
2. An instance of cordial and generous treatment of guests.

Leviticus 19:33 "When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. ³⁴ The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. **Love him as yourself**, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Romans 13:10 **Love does no harm to its neighbor.** Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.



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Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature[a]; rather, serve one another in love. ¹⁴The entire law is summed up in a single command: "**Love your neighbor as yourself.**"[b]

Hebrews 13:2 **Do not forget to entertain strangers**, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. ³Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

¹ Peter 2:9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Titus 1:7 Since an overseer[b] is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸Rather **he must be hospitable**, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to **look after orphans and widows in their distress** and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

6.4.2 Give Food and Drink

Genesis 18:3 He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, [a] do not pass your servant by. ⁴ Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. ⁵ **Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed** and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say." ⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs [b] of fine flour and knead it and bake some bread." ⁷ Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. ⁸ He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

Deuteronomy 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. ¹⁸ He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, **giving him food** and clothing. ¹⁹ And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.



Proverbs 11:25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. [KJV]

Proverbs 22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for **he shares his food with the poor.**

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Matthew 10:42 And if anyone **gives even a cup of cold water** to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Matthew 25:35 **For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink**, I was a stranger and you invited me in,

Romans 12:20 On the contrary: "**If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink**. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."^[e] ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

6.4.3 Give Clothing

Deuteronomy 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. ¹⁸ He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, **giving him food and clothing**. ¹⁹ And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.

Matthew 25:36 **I needed clothes and you clothed me**, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Luke 6:29 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

6.5 Questions

1. What are you most prized items on this earth? Could you give them away?
2. Have you ever considered that your "possessions" have a life span? How would this affect your giving of these items?
3. What statistic stood out in the summary above?
4. What bible verse stood out in the discussion above?
5. Have you considered your heavenly possessions?
6. What is easier opening your home to others or giving food or clothing?
7. When you give, do you see Christ in the recipient?

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7.0 Giving Your Finances

Everyone wants to be on the ground floor of an amazing opportunity. Everyone wants to make it big!

Consider the stock market and an invitation from some of the world's richest men to purchase potentially booming stocks. This situation is repeated several times each week through a process called Initial Public Offering (IPO).

Private companies wanting the financial backing of the investment world create shares of stock and offer them to the buying public. However, the average person with a couple thousand dollars can not buy these shares. Your small bank accounts are not wanted or invited. If you have a lot of money, if you know someone, if you are invited, then you will be plugged into the financial system!

On July 18, 1998, Broadcast.com went public as BCST, priced at 18 dollars a share. It closed at \$62.75, a gain of almost 250 percent, which at the time was the largest one day rise of a new offering in the history of the stock market. [Mark Cuban, Dallas, Texas, January 2004]



Worldly greed consumes some people. They want the good things in this life and want to be blessed with quick financial gains. The world wants to invest and make great rewards in this life.

Matthew 19:22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.
23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, **it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

2 Kings 4:1 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves." 2 Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" "Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a little oil." 3 Elisha said, "**Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few.**" 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side." 5 She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. 6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "**There is not a jar left. Then the oil stopped flowing.**"

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⁷ She went and told the man of God, and he said, "**Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.**"

Limiting God or not trusting God will limit you and your future. He asks us to give and some day, He will even pay us back! However, we often give sparingly. Like the woman and the empty jars. God told her, "Don't ask for just a few."

Malachi 3:8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

Haggai 2:8 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and Money.**

Hebrews 13:5 **Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have,** because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."^[a] ⁶So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"^l

Our Great God owns the universe and He has invited you to invest in His kingdom! This is better than any kind of Wall Street deal! He promises amazing blessings and much better things in His kingdom. He promises true investments that hold true value. But it starts with our heart and how we give of our finances!

7.1 Old Testament Giving

The Old Testament contains several examples of financial giving. The first and foremost is the tithe. What is the tithe and when was it started?

7.1.1 Pre-Law

Genesis 14:17 After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem ^[d] brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator ^[e] of heaven and earth. ²⁰ And blessed be ^[f] God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then **Abram gave him a tenth of everything.** ²¹ The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself."

Genesis 28:20 Then **Jacob made a vow**, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear ²¹ so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD [g] will be my God ²² and [h] this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me **I will give you a tenth.**"

7.1.2 Offerings

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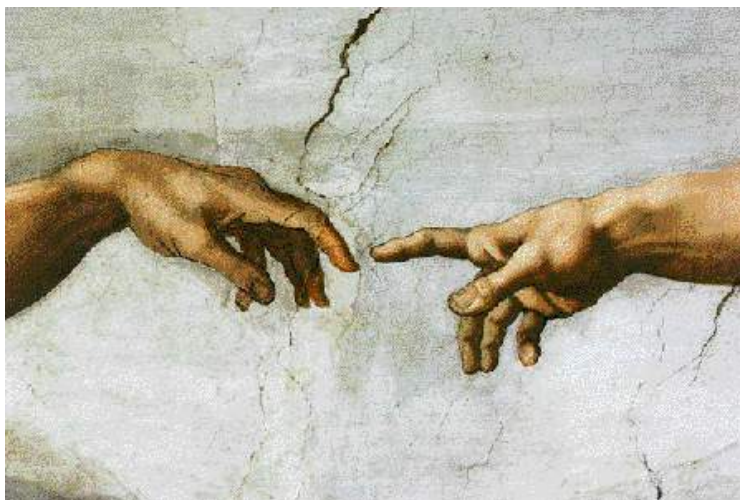
Part of the religious requirements set down in Leviticus is the giving of certain offerings to God, through the Levites and priests. The offerings are designed to bridge the gap between a holy God and sinful man. The first few chapters of the book are instructions for these Levites. There were five main offerings to be made to God.

Offering	Purpose	Verse
Burnt	Unintentional sin	Leviticus 1; 6: 8-13; 8: 18-21; 16: 24
Grain	Voluntary worship and thanks	Leviticus 2; 6: 14-23
Fellowship	A voluntary act of worship, thanks and fellowship	Leviticus 3: 7: 11-34
Sin	Mandatory for specific sins	Leviticus 4: 1-5; 13; 6: 24-30; 8: 14-17; 16: 3-22
Guilt	Mandatory for unintentional sin requiring restitution	Leviticus 5:14 – 6:7; 7: 1-6

7.1.3 Tithes

Tobit or Tobias is a book from the Apocrypha. There are 7 books in the Apocrypha that are not part of the Protestant bible; however, they are included in the Catholic bible. This is an interesting story from the book of Tobit which describes the tithes of the Old Testament.

⁴ I, for my part, would often make the pilgrimage alone to Jerusalem for the festivals, as is prescribed for all Israel by perpetual decree. Bringing with me the first fruits of the field and the firstlings of the flock, together with a tenth of my income and the first shearings of the sheep, I would hasten to Jerusalem ⁷ and present them to the priests, Aaron's sons, at the altar. **To the Levites who were doing service in Jerusalem I would give the tithe** of grain, wine, olive oil, pomegranates, figs, and other fruits. And except for sabbatical years, I used to **give a second tithe in money, which each year I would go and disburse in Jerusalem.** ⁸ The **third tithe I gave to orphans and widows, and to converts** who were living with the Israelites. Every third year I would bring them this offering, and we ate it in keeping with the decree of the Mosaic law and the commands of Deborah, the mother of my father Tobiel; for when my father died, he left me an orphan. ⁹ When I reached manhood, I married Anna, a woman of our own lineage. By her I had a son whom I named Tobiah. [NAB]



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7.1.3.1 First Tithe: God

God commands that the 1st tithe is for Him.

Leviticus 27:30 " **A tithe of everything** from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, **belongs to the LORD**; it is holy to the LORD. ³¹ If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth of the value to it. ³² The entire tithe of the herd and flock—every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod—will be holy to the LORD. ³³ He must not pick out the good from the bad or make any substitution. If he does make a substitution, both the animal and its substitute become holy and cannot be redeemed.' "

Numbers 18:21 "I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting. ²² From now on the Israelites must not go near the Tent of Meeting, or they will bear the consequences of their sin and will die. ²³ It is the Levites who are to do the work at the Tent of Meeting and bear the responsibility for offenses against it. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. They will receive no inheritance among the Israelites. ²⁴ Instead, **I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes** that the Israelites present as an offering to the LORD. That is why I said concerning them: 'They will have no inheritance among the Israelites.' "

7.1.3.2 Second Tithe: Feast

There are several feasts of God mentioned in the bible: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Tabernacles, Last Great Day. God commands that the 2nd tithe be used to celebrate these feasts!

Deuteronomy 12:11 Then to **the place the LORD your God will choose** as a dwelling for his Name—there you are to bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, **your tithes** and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the LORD. ¹² And there **rejoice before the LORD your God, you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, and the Levites** from your towns, who have no allotment or inheritance of their own.



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Deuteronomy 14:22 Be sure to **set aside a tenth** of all that your fields produce each year. ²³ **Eat the tithe** of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always. ²⁴ But if that place is too distant and you have been blessed by the LORD your God and cannot carry your tithe (because the place where the LORD will choose to put his Name is so far away), ²⁵ then **exchange your tithe for silver**, and take the silver with you and go to the place the LORD your God will choose. ²⁶ Use the silver to buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish. Then you and your household shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God and rejoice. ²⁷ And do not neglect the Levites living in your towns, for they have no allotment or inheritance of their own.

7.1.3.3 Third Tithe: Widows and Fatherless

God commands that we are not to forget the widow and fatherless. The 3rd tithe is to support them.



Deuteronomy 14:28 **At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes** of that year's produce and store it in your towns, ²⁹ so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the aliens, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

7.2 Heart of Giving

When considering how much to give God, people often ask, “Do I tithe on net or gross?” The response is, “Asking the question reflects your giving heart!”

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Consider this: A man wanting to spoil his wife will get the finest for her. His heart leads him to buy the best quality gift that he can afford. He desires to get her something wonderful because he knows she will be thrilled and joyful from his effort. He wants to please her. All of this comes from a deep desire, cheerful desire, a “heart’s desire”, to please her!

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each man should **give what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver**.

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How has God blessed you? What is it that you desire to give to God, to thank Him, to praise Him, to worship Him? When your heart leads you to give, you will want to lavish, not withhold, or not restrain your giving. You will want to give God the most you can possibly give. Like the dotting husband, you desire to give God your best. This is the true heart of a giver! But yet, you will be humble.

Luke 18:9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹**The Pharisee stood up and prayed about^[a] himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'** ¹³But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For **everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**"

Deuteronomy 8:18 But remember the LORD your God, for it is **he who gives you the ability to produce wealth**, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

7.2.1 Give Faithfully – Even When The Outlook Is Financially Bad

Matthew 23:23 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! **You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness.** You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.



Galatians 3:23 **Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law**, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁴So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ^[h] that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

Ephesians 4:28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Psalms 62:5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.

7.2.2 Give Sacrificially – It Might Hurt

Mark 12:41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴²But a

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poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins,^[i] worth only a fraction of a penny.^[k]
⁴³Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴They all gave out of their wealth; but **she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.**"

2 Corinthians 8:2²Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and **their extreme poverty** welled up in rich generosity.

7.2.3 Give Generously – More than You Might Normally Give

Proverbs 22:9 **A generous man** will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.

2 Corinthians 9:6⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever **sows generously** will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." [a] ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way **so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity** will result in thanksgiving to God.

1 Timothy 6:18¹⁸Command them to do good, to **be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.** ¹⁹In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

7.2.4 Be Rewarded – For What You Did in This Life

Proverbs 11:25²⁵The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth **shall be watered also himself.** [KJV]

Proverbs 22:9 **A generous man will himself be blessed,** for he shares his food with the poor.

Proverbs 19:17¹⁷ He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and **he will reward him** for what he has done.



Matthew 6:19¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where

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moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and **you will have treasure in heaven**. Then come, follow me."

Luke 12:33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. **Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven** that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

2 Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also **reap generously**. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." [a] ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹**You will be made rich in every way** so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

1 Timothy 6:18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way **they will lay up treasure** for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

7.3 Christian and Giving

How do we respond to giving as Christians? We must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees!

Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! **You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness.** You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you that **unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.**

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Jesus shows us that the Pharisees would tithe, but did not observe the “weightier part of the Law”. Christ brought us a better way. Through His sacrifice, he brought us “unmerited pardon” or grace. As a result, Christians are not under the Law.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you **are not under law, but under grace.**

Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "**Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.**"

Our righteousness does not come from keeping the law; it comes from the sacrifice of Christ.

Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for **if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.**"

Galatians 3:13 **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law** by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."



Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the **many will be made righteous.**

God commands us to give, but He does not command us to give a precise amount!

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2 Corinthians 9:7 **Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

7.3.1 Robert LeTourneau

Robert LeTourneau was blessed incredibly by God. He returned the favor with a giving program unmatched by others. Here is his interesting story as written by Ken Durham

[Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "LETOURNEAU, ROBERT GILMOUR,"
<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/LL/fle36.html> (accessed April 10, 2006).]

LETOURNEAU, ROBERT GILMOUR (1888-1969). Robert Gilmour LeTourneau, philanthropist, was born on November 30, 1888, in Richford, Vermont, the son of Caleb T. and Elizabeth (Lorimer) LeTourneau. After his primary education he learned mechanics and engineering through correspondence courses. In his late teens he was living in San Francisco at the time of the great earthquake. During the rebuilding he was introduced to the welding torch, which became his favorite tool. Later he was one of the first industrialists to make welding a universally accepted process. Throughout his career he was recognized as one of the pioneers in constructing machines entirely by welding rather than with rivets.

In 1909, at age twenty-one, R. G. moved to Stockton, California, where he began a dirt-moving business and built his own scrapers. He built the first all-welded scraper with electric motors to adjust the blade, and he invented the bulldozer blade that attached to the front of a caterpillar tractor. In 1932 he used rubber tires instead of steel wheels for the first time on heavy equipment when a customer complained that the steel wheels sank in the sand. In 1935 he moved his plant to Peoria, Illinois, to be near the Caterpillar Tractor Company since contractors used Cats to pull R. G.'s scrapers. Here he established his first technical education courses for his employees who lacked the skills to do their jobs well. The instruction included mathematics, technical courses, and business courses.

In 1937, while recovering from an automobile accident, LeTourneau designed a four-wheeled, self-propelled scraper (the Tournapull/Carryall) powered by his revolutionary electric wheel. When Caterpillar refused to build the front component, the two-wheeled tractor (Tournapull), LeTourneau built it himself, putting himself in direct competition with Caterpillar. Within twenty years Caterpillar and all of his other competitors had adopted a similar design. The development of the self-propelled, scraper-earthmover in the late 1930s placed R. G. LeTourneau Inc. in the forefront of the earth-moving and heavy equipment industry just as World War II was beginning. During the war LeTourneau Inc. produced 70 percent of the earth-moving equipment (8,000 scrapers, 14,000 dozer blades, and other items) used by the Allies. The LeTourneau equipment enabled the Allied forces to build roads and airstrips rapidly, giving Allied forces an advantage that shortened the war. During the war LeTourneau constructed a new plant at Vicksburg, Mississippi, to handle his large volume of government contracts for earthmoving equipment and war materials.

In 1946 he moved his operations to Longview, Texas, where he constructed a steel mill to supply his assembly plants. In 1953 he sold his earth-moving business to Westinghouse Air Brake Corporation; thereafter his plants constructed logging, construction, road, mining, and oilwell-drilling equipment. Most notably, LeTourneau built mobile platforms for offshore drilling. **He was referred to often as "God's Businessman" because he dedicated 90 percent of his company stock to the LeTourneau Foundation, which sponsored Christian missions in South America and Africa and financed LeTourneau Technical Institute from its founding**

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in 1946 until 1961. He also was a pioneer in establishing an industrial chaplaincy for his employees, and he traveled each weekend to speak to large audiences about applying Christian principles in everyday life.

LeTourneau devoted much of his time and wealth to private education. He founded LeTourneau Technical Institute (now LeTourneau University); he was also a trustee of John Brown University, Siloam Springs, Arkansas, and a member of the board of reference of Wheaton College in Illinois. He was active in the Christian Business Men's Committee International, in which he served a term as president. LeTourneau died on June 1, 1969, in Longview and was survived by his wife, Mary Evelyn Peterson LeTourneau, and their five children.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: *East Texas* (publication of the East Texas Chamber of Commerce), August 1946. *Texas Parade*, December 1952, June 1954. Vertical Files, Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas at Austin.

7.4 Questions

1. How does your financial giving fit with what you have learned? Does anything need to change?
2. What offerings do you give today?
3. How many tithes were you aware of before this study? When did you learn about them?
4. What was the purpose of the 3rd tithe? How is this reflected in the New Testament?
5. Is a tithe required of Christians? Why or why not?
6. How much money should we give to the Lord?
7. When you enter God's kingdom, what kind of treasure do you expect to see? A lot, a little?