

**THE FEAST OF ST. CHARLES, KING AND MARTYR**  
**For the Festival of the Tennessee Chapter of the Society of King**  
**Charles the Martyr**  
**2 February 2019**

:: King Charles the Martyr :: 02.02.19  
Ps 116: 10-11 [BCP 759] [Part 1]

From the appointed Psalm for King Charles: “**How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things He has done for me?**”

The other day I was pondering how often this question about how **best** to **repay** the LORD for **ALL the good things He has done for me** – how often that **specific question** has come up in my own life, with the clear intention of me acting on it? I am embarrassed to confess, “Not nearly as often as it should!!!” Today I would like to explore this verse with you, and seek to make some applications to our own lives concerning repaying the LORD...

In this beautiful Ps 116, the psalmist resolves to respond gratefully to God for the deliverance he has received. Commentators note that we are not told the circumstances that precipitated the psalmist's prayers to be spared from death – nor is that really necessary. Suffice it to say that the need and consequent “rescue” were quite compelling, and that the psalmist intended to respond to God's goodness in a visible, significant way. The psalmist's love for God grew, out of the realization that God had **saved** his life, that this was the clear result of God's doing, and that his proper response to God would entail a life-long, heartfelt, commitment. He intended to give something very pleasing to God in return.

The psalmist's question here “How shall I repay the LORD?” is also **OUR question, too**, for we have each been greatly blessed throughout our lives as well – in big and in small ways; and we know it is always meet and right to give God our heartfelt thanks and praise – “*not only with our lips but in our lives*”. Therefore, we should personally reflect on, and deal with, the all-important matter of how we ARE responding to God's working in our lives. How we HAVE responded. And how we WILL respond for all God's benefits toward us.

Pastor, theologian, and author John Piper is quick to point out, however, that the language of “repaying” God [BCP Psalms] for anything can be dangerous, even tho it is very instinctive of us to want to “pay back” what we owe to others.

It is dangerous because it can easily convey the notion that we have it within ourselves to pay God back for “all the good He has done for us” – as if that were even possible! We can NEVER “even up” the score, even by rendering unto God most hearty thanks for “the innumerable benefits procured unto us” by our Almighty God! Our desire to “pay God back” is actually “putting the gospel in reverse”. For even our desire to thank God is itself pure grace, a gift straight from the hand of God. Piper writes: “...you can't give anything to God or do anything for God that He hasn't first given to you and done for you.” Like it or not, we are forever in Jesus' debt.

One preacher wrote: “When we serve Christ, we are not giving Him something; He is giving US something. Like when you visit a friend from church who is sick, and take her some groceries and stay to clean her house and make supper for her kids, you are serving her and serving Christ. But you are not giving something to Him. Sure, you are using your time, effort and money to serve your friend but this is because of what Christ has already given to you. I invite you to recall here the beautiful Offertory Sentence we Anglicans use “All things come of you, O LORD, and of Thine own have we given Thee.” God gave us gifts and abilities in the first place, and now we are making a return of them to Him.

1 Chronicles 29:14 [King David, speaking to God] says “But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to You? Everything we have comes from You, and we give You only what You first gave us!”

A blog I read makes this vastly misunderstood matter very clear: “the basic truth that animates all Christian giving is this: All that we are and all that we have comes from God. Every single thing we call our own is in truth a gift. **Nothing is earned. Everything is given.**

Your life is a gift Your talents are a gift  
Your career is a gift. Your intelligence is a gift  
Your health is a gift. Your personality is a gift  
Your children are a gift. Your friendships are a gift  
Your possessions are a gift . Your wealth is a gift.  
Your accomplishments are a gift.

The fact of the matter is: **You own nothing!!!**

Everything you have is on loan from God. He gives it to you for a while and

says, "Take care of it for me. There will come a day when you will have to give Me a reckoning for everything I gave you in this life." Our Patron, King Charles, freely gave his life back to God as his final and ultimate sacrifice!!

Friends, let's find ways to delight in the "outrageous extravagance" of God toward us, but rest content in knowing that we owe Jesus everything.

And then let's faithfully serve Him Who rules our heart by taking the gospel joyfully to others, all the while acknowledging that the only way we can come close to repaying the LORD is by frequently saying to Him

"**ALL** things come of Thee O LORD, and of **Thine own** have we given Thee." Amen!!

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