

A Word In Due Season - December 2009

By Russ Gressett

Giving

Giving ... what a wild card of a word in today's church world, huh? We never know what we are going to hear when it comes to this wonderful word. Seems like this word provokes all kinds of responses from people depending on what flavor of church we attend and/or which side of the pulpit we stand. The reality is that giving is one of the most powerful but misunderstood ministries in all of scripture.

I used to get really upset when I would hear and observe ministers pull money from people with emotion and fear based methods centered around (1) people's desire to be rich (100 fold return approach), and/or (2) their fear of "I'm not going make it" (give or be cursed approach). Before that however, I used to respond to those same methods myself. Sooner or later though, as we continue pressing in for more of Him, we find out that God does not operate that way with His children in giving and provision, just like He doesn't operate that way in salvation. Giving is not something we do as a "work" to qualify for something else like being provided for by God. We must gain the understanding that there is much more to giving than the "it's for my benefit" base motive that permeates so much of the church.

Here is a truth for us to start out with (we'll prove it up as we go) ...

Giving, like every other ministry, is about God working through us toward others, not about our doing something that will benefit us and/or move God on our behalf. It's not about "sowing" for our own personal provision.

God moved on our behalf over 2000 years ago when He sent His Son. That sowing and reaping was more than enough to provide all our needs in every way. We do not have to re-sow and re-reap to tap into that original sowing and reaping. We access it by grace through faith, just like salvation. Paul said it plainly in Phillipians 4:19, "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory BY CHRIST JESUS".

God is not going to change and start supplying our needs by some other mechanism when He has already chosen to supply our needs BY CHRIST JESUS. When we attempt to insert other mechanisms and formulas in our lives to try and get God to respond to that which He has already finished doing, we get bewitched and we begin building on foundations that will not stand over time. I remember one time the Lord impressed upon my heart an exhortation that went something like this, "Son, as long as you think there is something else you have to "do" in order to get there ... wherever "there" is ... then you'll never get there." This is so true as it relates to giving if we look at it as something other than ministry. We'll work it and work it and work it, all the while continuing to build on the wrong foundation.

There are many people in the body of Christ who are gifted and called specifically to a ministry of giving. God has designed them and called them to be used mightily in this specific area. I think we would be surprised to realize just how many have this specific calling all over the world.

Romans 12

*⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; **he who gives, with liberality**; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

When we are born again, we are all blessed spiritually with a new nature from God that is generous at its core, not covetous. It's not a nature that needs a consequential law to motivate it toward acting a certain way that will please God. I heard a minister make a wonderful statement about giving one time and it describes an attribute of this generous nature we have from God that is very telling. He said this, **"Giving is the chief most expression of God's love. When God wanted to demonstrate His love for us in the chief most way, He gave (John 3:16)".** Think about that ... that makes giving one of the most powerful ministries and anointings on the planet. God gave because He loves us. Love was the motivator. Love was the "why". Love was the power. When we are motivated by love, we have a motivation that is everlasting because love is everlasting. This is the key to truly understanding giving from God's point of view. It displays how the nature of God we have on the inside will want us to give ... from a motive of love alone.

When we are born again, the nature of God comes and abides in us (2 Peter 1:2-4, among others). We have it. So the question relative to giving becomes, "what's all the hub-bub?" Why don't we all just give out of that generous nature and relationship that we now have with Him and from Him on the inside. Why don't we give from the same motive of love that He does and be done with all of this other stuff we hear? That's the million dollar question ... we should! But here's the deal, there is this little thing that gets in our way sometimes called "the flesh". You may have had a battle or two with it before, I know I have.

Our tendencies are to lose some battles to the flesh over time. We don't have to and shouldn't ... but let's be realistic, we tend to lose some. Those of you that haven't please let me know. Maybe you can pray for the rest of us. Anyway, one of the biggest areas we tend to lose some battles to the flesh in is in the area of money and finances. The enemy targets our flesh and our fears trying to draw our love toward money because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Sadly, the following passage displays what is at the heart of motivation for a lot of the giving that goes on in today's church world ... a desire to be rich.

1 Timothy 6

⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Have you ever thought about a desire to be rich motivating someone to give? It happens all the time ... just turn on your TV. So what is happening? The answer is that

there is a battle is being waged against our generous nature ... that divine nature we have abiding on the inside (Romans 8:5). The battle may focus on a desire to be rich or a fear of not making it ... anything that will cause us to operate apart from the true leading of the Holy Spirit in areas dealing with money. Who is impacted if we lose this battle? Well, besides ourselves, all kinds of people are impacted that God would have us be generous to (or not be generous to as the case may be sometimes). Now, we can win this battle every time if we want (Romans 8:1-2), but how do we win it? We win it just like Jesus did when He was on the earth. He did it with "It is written" The enemy received a good dose of "it is written" in the wilderness the moment he tried to play Jesus the same tune that he approaches us with now in this same area.

Like Jesus, we need to have God's Word in us so we can do the same in every situation, being strongly offensive with the sword that is the word of God. As it says in 2 Corinthians 10, we need to be ready to take every thought captive, to cast down every argument and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. It's no wonder the Holy Spirit inspired these words through Paul right on the heels of such a wonderful teaching on giving in 2 Corinthians 8 & 9.

It is important for us to know where we are really located in these areas. Have you ever noticed how God will "locate you" for yourself on occasion ... show you where you really are in the scheme of things? Well, as I mentioned, the truth is that we tend to lose some battles to the flesh and to emotions and fears in these areas relating to money, finances and giving. This is where we are. In many cases, the result is that when ministers start experiencing first hand their flock losing battles against their flesh in these areas, they feel it and the corporate church or ministry organization feels it in their own pocket book. Let's just be honest about it. In fact, many of the ministers, churches and church organizations are losing the same battle themselves. When this has happened, many of them have tended to motivate the people toward the actions of a generous nature, but apart from the proper love based motivation (the way God gives). Subsequently, they have seen the "consequential motive" approach be effective, so it has been perpetuated over time. They have basically pulled the same thing on the people that Paul observed happening in Galatia. The people are pulled back under the law so that consequences (good and bad) start motivating as opposed to love. They get bewitched. The key here however is to win the battle, not change the motivation to mask a defeat to the flesh and/or to the soul.

This is where a lot of the church is today as it relates to money and finances in the Kingdom. This has given rise to a lot of false and misleading doctrines that we hear consistently taught about "giving" and what we have to "do" in order to be blessed and provided for by God. It sure paints an ugly and unwarranted picture of our Father. That is why we really need to know what we believe about "giving" and why we believe it. Is it a ministry where God is working through us toward others, or is it an investment tool for our own personal provision? Is it a love motivated action or something we have to "do" to get God to move on our behalf? Is it a relationship flow or some formula for a heavenly slot machine? We need to know what we believe, have a conviction about it in our heart (not head), and live by it.

So let's take some time here to look at some scripture. Let's start by contrasting a

couple of familiar passages as follows:

Matthew 6

²⁴ *No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.* ²⁵ *“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”* ²⁶ *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”* ²⁷ *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?”* ²⁸ *“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;”* ²⁹ *and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.* ³⁰ *Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?”*

Contrasted to ...

2 Corinthians 9

⁶ *But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

I love the contrast in these two passages because it moves us to dig into the Word and become a student of the Holy Spirit's. In the first passage, Jesus is clearly addressing a concern the people have specifically about personal provision. He has clearly observed them worrying about food, clothes, etc... In the second passage, that is not the case. Overtime, I have come to realize this truth about these two passages (and their surrounding context) ... if we want to properly operate in 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, we must first walk and operate in Matthew 6 & 7. It's a line upon line thing ... a proper order of construction in our belief system.

In Matthew 6 and 7, there is first an understanding of the Father and of His care for us as a Father. We do not have to sow and reap for that fatherly love and care (provision). It's "birds and lilies" faith, if you will. He is our Father and He provides for us not because of what we do or don't do but simply because we are His ... He bought us with a precious price. Provision is our inheritance. Think about it for a minute. This Fatherly love and care revelation is the understanding that will truly "enable" us and "draw" us into serving Him as opposed to serving mammon. It is what "enables" us to live a life free of worry. It's what "enables" us to live a life motivated by love alone ... a rest in the understanding that He has a Father's heart and a Father's care toward us. It's a significant revelation that is fought hard by the enemy because there is much freedom and power in it.

We may not recognize this very often, if at all, but a lot of "Christian doctrines" and "traditions of man" that we have been taught actually cause us to worry because they teach us contrary to this "fatherly love and care" truth that is clearly displayed in Matthew 6 and 7. It is especially true in the area of money and finances. Here is a simple example relative to

giving which you can probably relate to that will produce worry and anxiety in your life. It goes something like this, “*I have to give this if I am going to expect that for myself*”. Ever entertained a thought like that (like during the spring telethon on your favorite Christian TV channel maybe)? Well, let me pose a question to you ... if we have to “give this” in order to “expect that for ourselves”, then what is the motive for “give this” that is being taught? The motive is to “get that for ourselves”... simple. Don’t try and candy coat it with some other flavor, that’s the motive. When we hear some pontification like, “*I sense in my spirit that there is something special about that perfect \$777 seed tonight*” and act on it, the motive of doing so is to “get that something special for ourselves”. We are basically looking at God as the type of father who requires that we prime His pump before He moves on our behalf.

Now, here’s the point in contrasting these two passages we are looking at ... the sowing that Paul was encouraging in 2 Corinthians 9:6 was not a “get that for ourselves” encouragement. It wasn’t for a harvest of personal provision. They were not being taught to do that for a resulting personal windfall. If he was approaching them from that motive, he would have taught it to them as a necessity ... something that must be done. On the contrary, he went out of his way to make sure they were not of that understanding. He even sent his guys out well beforehand to make sure they got the point across (2 Cor.9:5). Don’t believe a double tongued teaching that says, “You must sow if God is to act on your behalf” on one hand and then says, “Be cheerful, it’s not a necessity” on the other.

Let’s go a little further. In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, the context for the second passage above is laid out (I suggest reading both chapters together at least 10 or 15 times). Paul begins by explaining to these Corinthians what he witnessed first hand in a group of people in Macedonia that really blew him away. He observed something special in these people. What was it? He witnessed the grace of God on and in the lives of these people who were ministering to him and others in a way that was beyond their ability. He sensed something in their giving that was different. It really got his attention. I don’t believe they actually gave him more money than they physically had ... but there was something that was beyond their ability in their freedom, in their anointing, in their trust of their Father. He saw it on them and experienced it.

We find out this key point about these Macedonians right off the bat ... they had an abundance of joy (2 Cor. 8:2). Here is another truth for you ...

In the presence of true joy there is an absence of worry.

Go try and worry when you are full of joy like these Macedonians were. You can’t do it. Joy is to worry like light is to dark. Turn on the light and the darkness has to go. The two just do not walk together. It doesn’t mean there is not something in your life you could worry about if you wanted to (these Macedonians were in deep poverty). It means that true joy from the inside leaves no room for worry to have a place even in the midst of a difficult circumstance. These Macedonians had an abundance of joy, thus no worry ... none. It was evident in their actions as testified to and experienced by Paul himself.

OK big deal, they had no worry and a lot of joy, what does that tell us? Man, it tells us the mother load about the most famous givers in the bible! Namely, it tells us that these Macedonians were already walking in the truth of Matthew 6 and 7 when Paul observed

them. They were not worried about their lives ... what they would eat or wear or drive or fly or live in. They were not concerned with that which concerned the Gentiles. **Psalm 16:11 says that in His presence is fullness of joy, or we might say abundance of joy.** These Macedonians had been in His presence ... seeking His face ... seeking His kingdom. They had a Kingdom focus and a love motivation and as a result they saw very clearly how God wanted to work through them in ministry – so much so that the bible says that they implored Paul and his bunch with much urgency that they receive their ministry of giving. Yea, they viewed it as ministry. They did it exactly opposite of how it's done in the church world today, huh? Instead of them being urgently implored to give, they were the ones urgently imploring Paul and the saints to receive. Big, big difference there.

Paul makes another point about these people that, along with their abundance of joy, is very telling and paramount. He observed this about them:

2 Corinthian 8

*⁵And not only as we had hoped, but **they first** gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us **by the will of God.***

What did they do first? They first chose to give themselves all together to Him. This was a heart issue. Then, and that's a big "then", they gave to Paul by the will of God ... meaning by relationship. Again, they are walking in Matthew 6 and 7, seeking first the kingdom of God. They were not "sowing" for a pot of gold for themselves. They were ministering the will of God. And, because their motive was correct and their heart was right (freely willing), God was able to use them, to work and minister through them at a level that was beyond their own ability. Isn't that the way we have heard ministers speak about the anointing of God when they preach and minister, "It's not me, it's God!" It sounds like something that Jesus said Himself during His earthly ministry, ***"The Father who dwells in me, He does the works. John 14:10"*** This was exactly true of the Macedonians as well. Their ministry of giving was God in them doing the works. This is the context that Paul is coming at the Corinthians with when he gives them the "sow sparingly ... reap sparingly" exhortation in 2 Corinthians 9:6. It was a ministry approach that had the Kingdom in first position. The motive was not "me", but rather, it was a love for "them".

All ministers want to minister with a powerful anointing. Ask any of them. They can sense it and a lot of times tangibly feel it. They will tell you that ministry is a breeze in the anointing. What happens? The anointing (God's power) produces ministry that is beyond their ability. God works through them as they yield to Him. However, the flow of God's anointing is not about them or for them. It's about and for the people that are receiving ... to remove burdens and destroy yokes, to teach and edify the Body etc.... Any mature minister with a strong anointing on their life will relay that truth to you. In fact, they will tell you that the more they yield to the truth that it's about the people and not themselves, the stronger the anointing on their life becomes. The ministry of giving is no different. It just has a different function in the Body, but it is for the Body. It is God's way of moving provision in and around the Body. I call it the "artery calling". It's not a mechanism for a 100 fold return to our personal bank account so our soul can be at ease as the rich man alluded to when he contemplated tearing down his barns to build bigger ones (Luke 12).

There is a big difference in giving with anointing and giving without anointing. How do we give with anointing? First, like the Macedonians, we gain a proper view of it as ministry as opposed to something else. This puts us in a position to see it as God working through us with love being the motive. His power is working as opposed to our power working. We enter into this first by ridding ourselves of formula/mechanical giving. We begin to give out of relationship and actually setting aside time to listen to God in this area. It would be like the difference between a preacher mentally drumming up something to preach and teach in his own strength versus allowing his intimacy with God to bring forth the message for the people from an overflow of his relationship with God. If you are on the receiving end or the giving end, there is a huge difference. When we begin to enter into this way of ministry, regardless of what the ministry is, there is rest and peace and joy. This is what the Macedonians were full of in abundance. Along with that comes the absence of worry and anxiety and all the other things that accompany an incorrect vision of God as a hard task master, or an “earn your keep” type of Father.

Jesus himself said in our first passage above (Matthew 6) that, *“No one can serve two masters ... you cannot serve God and mammon”*. Of course we can try, and most of us do (although unadmittedly), but we’ll not be successful in doing so. Jesus went on to say in the very next verse, *“Therefore, I say to you, do not worry about your life ...”* In other words He said, “because it is not possible for you to successfully serve both God and mammon, this is my counsel to you ... don’t worry about your life”. Don’t miss this. God is our Father. We can truly let him do the worrying about our life. He’s got it covered. That’s why the scripture says to cast your cares over on Him because He cares for you! (1 Peter 5:7). If you saw your own child worried about whether they were going to have something to eat or wear, wouldn’t that tear you up as their father/mother? Sure it would. But why? Because it’s not something they should be worrying about, huh? Jesus is saying the same thing to us as God’s children ... “Your life is not something you should be worrying about. I’ve got you covered. Relax. It’s ok to do what I put on your heart.”

The truth follows that if we are worried about our life, we have some mixture in us of trying to serve two masters, at least on some level. The Macedonian bunch in 2 Corinthians 8 chose to serve God only. The result was that their joy was in abundance and worry was no where to be found. They have a place now reserved forever in the written word of God as true ministers of giving ... wonderful examples to the rest of us. What was their example again? First we give ourselves to God, then and only then, we give to others by the will of God out of relationship. We minister in giving. I think of it no differently than I would about preaching and teaching. “That’s crazy Russ! I can’t do that every time I give.” Sure you can. God designed us that way. It’s freedom! It’s relationship. I’ve been doing it that way for 13+ years now. It’s not even hard once you get passed worrying about what someone else will think. Just start with the commitment to always ask yourself a simple question of, “Why am I giving this?”, and be honest with yourself about the answer. You will begin noticing the ulterior motives at play real quick. Have you taken time to truly listen? You will notice a difference when you do, believe me.

Again, giving is not a sowing for our own personal provision ... Jesus was that for us. Accept that once and for all. Giving is a grand and wonderful ministry that is designed to be motivated by love alone and operated through relationship with the Father. We need to see giving in this light ... in its true color as a ministry operation ... a restoring

operation ... a burden removing, yoke destroying operation. I've never seen a preacher that wasn't a bit antsy to get the micro phone in his/her hand. Why? They have a calling to minister in that fashion. Same way in the ministry of giving. You'll want and desire to flow in that ministry from the heart. God will train us in that area just like He trains those with a preaching and teaching gift. Paul said that he had been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel (1 Thess. 2:4). He will approve us and cause us to flourish and be established in this ministry as well ... but it will be God giving through us ... not us giving to God. God doesn't need the gifts, His Body does. Do you ever hear the preacher say, "I am preaching to God?" No, he is allowing God to speak through him to the people. It is the same way in giving, we just have to get the proper view of ownership into our belief system.

Listen, it is written ... giving is ministry. It's time to start bashing the enemy with that truth when we hear the contrary. We may have to unlearn some things we have relied on for years and years, but it is time to do it. Honestly, I have shared this revelation on the ministry of giving with many people over time and, truth be told, precious few have really grasped what I have shared. I can tell just by what I hear them speaking later. I pray that God is breathing on these words in a way that makes it clear for you.

Once we get this understanding right in the heart and motive arenas, God will begin to flow His wisdom to us relating to real sowing and reaping such as business opportunities, invention ideas, investment wisdom, when to say "no" wisdom, etc... Do you think when Isaac sowed in famine and in the same year reaped a hundred fold (Genesis 26) that what he did to "sow" was take his money down to the local high priest and put it in the offering plate? No, what he did was plant an actual crop. He began a business enterprise. Giving comes after a sowing and reaping. We hear giving termed as "sowing" so much that we neglect seeing and expecting what real sowing opportunities God may send our way. We sow, we reap, we give ... all of it out of relationship.

It's time the church world started understanding this ministry of giving. The failure to do so will keep the church as an underground operation in the economic scheme of things. God wants us to mature in this area in this season. He wants His church to flourish in the economic arenas to the point of taking over, but He requires that it be done from the proper foundation and motive. God's wisdom will flow to those who walk in these truths and are not actually attempting to serve two masters. There is no hiding of motive and heart issues from God. We can fool man (including ourselves), but we can't fool God. Fear, worry and joy are indicators of where we stand on these truths, so think about it. Ask God to locate you for yourself.

"Well what am I suppose to do when the well is running dry and it looks like we are not going to make it?" The answer is in walking out Matthew 6 and 7. Build that foundation in your life by meditating the Word consistently in these areas until you see it and believe it. Jesus says in the same powerful sermon to pray this way ... *"Give us this day our daily bread"*. Notice He doesn't say, "Give us this year our yearly bread". He is all about daily fellowship, daily trust, daily relationship, daily, daily, daily. He goes on to say in the same sermon ... *Mth. 7 - ⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened"* (Now get this next part, we have to get this before we'll

ever walk in 2 Cor. 8 & 9) ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Ask!

“Have a need, sow a seed”? No!! **Ask** our Father!! Who says we have to sow a seed to meet our need? Not God! It’s a lie. What voice will we listen to? Build on the foundation of God’s fatherly love and care for you.

By asking, you will allow God to answer. Yea, that’s right. You will allow Him to answer. His word says we have not because we ask not. Ask! Don’t worry and fear ... but ask in the stream that believes. The water in that stream is over our head, but we have to trust Him and get off the bank. Don’t ask while doubting as James 1 alludes to. Asking with a persuaded expectation is followed by rest ... not sleeplessness and continued anxiety. Ask and then get yourself some sleep. God may well deploy some minister of giving your way that very hour ... seriously. He may send a word of wisdom to you that very second. He may send an opportunity to you the very next day that will immediately change everything. He may say “go catch a fish and get the gold coin out of its mouth”. Doesn’t matter, He’s our Father and He can do it any way He wants to. He might do it in a way that has never been recorded before in scripture or that has never dawned on any man’s lightning quick mind. Have some “Matthew 6 & 7 birds and lilies faith” and ask!

Once we have asked, don’t operate with pre-conceived notions of where the answer has to come from. Rest. Your job is not your source. Your ministry or church is not your source ... nor is your neighbor whom you know could help you if “he would just listen to God!!” Just ask and be free of worry and full of joy.

Think about it. Are we walking in Matthew 6 and 7? Really walking in it like the Macedonians were? If we are worried and full of anxiety, then we likely have a mixture operating in our lives of trying to serve God and mammon. It will never work. By worrying, we serve mammon because we are not operating in faith toward God and the truth of His word ... resting in it. By worrying we are likely to fall for the exhortations we hear to go back under the law ... to be bewitched like the Galatians. Don’t do it. Arrest yourself.

True giving of any kind operates from a foundation of love. The rest of it is meaningless and gains you nothing. Do you want to be a “giver” in the eyes of God? If so, there is only one motive and one foundation that you can operate from and build upon to do so and that is love.

1 Corinthians 13

³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love 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. (

There are a lot of subtleties in the midst of our flesh and soulish areas that can trip us up. For instance, as mentioned in Matthew 6, if we seek first the kingdom so that all these other things will be added to us ... we'll never truly be seeking first the Kingdom. We'll be seeking first the addition of all the other things! We'll be fooling ourselves. Jesus did not tell us to seek first the kingdom SO THAT all these other things would be added to us. He was simply giving a truth to us designed to bring freedom and rest to us so that we can operate solely from a foundation of love. He was not introducing to us the motive for seeking first the kingdom of God. We need to constantly check ourselves and our motives of "why". God will make these areas plain and simple to us just for the asking. He will answer those probing questions gladly and consistently.

It may take some time for you to start seeing the areas where false doctrine has made in roads to your thinking and believing in the area of giving. Believe me, there are a lot more "giving" scriptures to look at in the Word that will show similar contrasting as we have displayed in these familiar passages above. I'd have to write a book to go through them all (and I might). But, if you will take these understandings yourself and apply them, you'll see that they are supported in all the scriptures we commonly hear taught.

Friend, I do pray that there is not too much of an edge on this teaching for you. It's not my intent at all. In fact, too much of the time we wish for someone else to have to beg and plead forgiveness for teaching something different once we enter into revelation that truly sets us free. Don't fall into that trap. Apply the truth to your life and the proof of the pudding will be in the eating ... then let the testimony of your life do the talking. It will do it in a much more anointed way than your tongue will I promise. It's not my job or yours to bring conviction and change in someone's life. That mandate is wholly given to the mighty Holy Spirit.

I pray you have seen something about this word "giving" that excites you and causes you to press in for more understanding and revelation about this wonderful word and ministry. I am convinced that there are multitudes that are called and gifted in this area as I am. I can't think of a better Christmas season revelation than to gain understanding on the ministry of giving and what is at the heart of why God gave the most precious gift of all. He not only set us free by doing so, but He also detailed for us how and why we are to give as well. Matthew 6 & 7 tells us this ... our provision is by inheritance, available for the asking because we are His. We are free to give, free to obey, free to prosper off of that foundation in amazing ways with untold anointing from His throne. Few anointings set us free like giving does ... the chief most expression of His love. Amen.

Prayer:

Father I pray that You would plant these words deep into the spirits of all who read them and that those seeds would germinate and bear fruit in each life ... fruit that remains. Reveal to each one Your fatherly love and care and what it looks like in daily life on a practical and experiential basis. Reveal the real You that has not come to condemn us, but to bless us. Bring rest to the weary and enable each one to take authority over worry and to be filled with the abundance of joy just as those Macedonians were, and let the true ministry of giving flow in the Body of Christ, in Jesus name. Amen.