

*God is a giving God, and his will is for you to reflect his nature in your giving. It is important to understand that God owns everything, and he does not need your money. The way you give is an indication of your maturity as a believer. Giving is an act of faith and worship, and it demonstrates your love for God and his mission. This lesson will help you to understand your responsibility in the stewardship of your life and your resources.*

**The key word of this lesson is:**

*CONTROL*

**The key question that this lesson answers:**

*What does it mean to give, and what are my responsibilities to give?*

**The key purpose of this lesson:**

*To help you understand the nature of New Testament giving.*

**The key point of this lesson:**

*True New Testament giving concerns turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ.*

**MEMORY VERSES:**

*“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” – **2 Corinthians 9:7***

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

# WHY DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?

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## THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Everything you are, and everything you have, already belongs to God. He does not “want” or “need” your money. God wants you! The focus of New Testament giving is on turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ. If God has control of your life, He will also have control of all your resources. The way that you give demonstrates how much you trust God to provide for your every need.

*“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;” – Acts 17:24-25*

*“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, how will ye commit to your trust the true riches?”  
– Luke 16:10-11*

### **A. Giving redirects your focus away from earthly things so that you may invest in eternal things.**

*“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”  
– Matthew 6:19-21*

### **B. Giving produces the fear of the Lord within you, because you are showing that your first priority is to honor God.**

*“And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.” – Deuteronomy 14:23*

### **C. Giving establishes your dependency upon God because you are trusting Him to supply your future provision.**

*“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”  
– Proverbs 3:9-10*

## **DISCUSSION:**

Do you have a need that you are trusting God for?

Have you ever chosen not to give to the Lord because it appeared that you could not afford to?

Have you ever chosen to be obedient and give to the Lord despite being in a position of great need? How did God provide for you?

## **WHERE DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?**

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### **A. Build your giving around the structure of your local church first.**

The primary focus of biblical giving is through the local church because God has chosen it to accomplish his mission in the world. It is important to understand that any giving outside of the local church should never hinder your normal giving to your local church. It is equally important to focus your giving on causes that will matter in eternity.

*1 Corinthians 16:1-2*

### **B. The leaders of your church are responsible to be wise stewards.**

The leaders of your local church are accountable to the people of the church, as well as to the Lord. As a member of your local church, you are able to see how resources are being used, and you should be able to trust the leadership to handle those resources with wisdom.

*2 Corinthians 8:20-22*

## **HOW DOES GOD WANT ME TO GIVE?**

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In his second letter to the Corinthian church, the apostle Paul used the churches in Macedonia as an example of what biblical giving should look like for New Testament believers. The testimony of how the Macedonian churches gave is a great lesson for all believers to learn from.

### **A. Your willingness to give to God's mission is more important than the amount that you are able to give.**

*2 Corinthians 8:1-3*

### **B. Your giving should begin by first giving yourself to the Lord and his people.**

*2 Corinthians 8:4-5*

**C. Giving develops an attitude of grace as you grow in your relationship with God.**

*2 Corinthians 8:6-7*

**D. Giving proves the sincerity of your love for God, his church, and his mission.**

*2 Corinthians 8:8-9*

**E. Your giving should be as God has prospered you. Do not compare the amount that you give with the amounts that others give.**

*2 Corinthians 8:10-12*

**DISCUSSION:**

Are you faithfully giving through your local church?

How has giving to the Lord changed how you view the importance of God's mission?

Have you ever allowed what another believer gives to affect what you give?

## **WHAT DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?**

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**A. There are three types of giving mentioned in the Old Testament Scripture.**

**1. Tithes**

The tithe is one-tenth of a person's income taken from the top. It was given to God as a reminder of who provided it, and to demonstrate that God always came first.

*Malachi 3:10; Deuteronomy 26:2, 10*

**2. Offerings**

In addition to the tithe, voluntary offerings were given by God's people to fund special needs as they arose within the congregation.

*Exodus 25:1-2*

**3. Sacrificial Giving**

This is a sacrificial gift that came at the giver's expense. It was a sacrifice that someone was willing to make as an investment in God's mission.

*2 Samuel 24:21-25*

**B. As a New Testament believer, your giving should be structured upon biblical principles as you establish the discipline of giving in your own life.**

*“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” – Romans 15:4*

**1. Give regularly to support the management of the local church.**

Just as God’s people brought a tithe to support God’s mission in the Old Testament, you should have a set amount of your choosing to give regularly. These gifts support operating expenses, the staff, and general ministry expenses.

***1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Timothy 5:17-18***

**2. Give generously to support the special projects and ministries of the local church.**

Just as God’s people brought offerings to support special needs, you should be ready to give as needs arise within your local church. These gifts help support the needs of members within the church who are unable to take care of themselves, and other special projects as determined by the leaders of your church.

***Acts 11:27-30; 1 Timothy 5:3, 9-10, 16***

**3. Give sacrificially to support missions.**

Just as God’s people gave sacrificially to invest in God’s mission, you should be ready to give to the support of the missionaries that your church sends out and approves of. These gifts support missionaries to go to places that you are unable to go.

***Philippians 4:15-19***

**C. God has not commanded you to give a specific amount.**

God allows you the freedom to give any amount. New Testament giving is more of an issue of growth and maturity in Christ, than it is about money. God wants all of you. The way that you give will reveal the depth of your spiritual walk with God. Below are some practical principles to consider as you decide on the amount that you will regularly give through your local church:

**1. Plan your time, service, and finances around your giving.**

Many believers have difficulty in giving regularly because they are not prepared to do so.

***2 Corinthians 9:1-4***

**2. Decide how much you will give before you arrive at church.**

Your giving should be between God and you alone. If you wait until you arrive, there is a potential that your giving could be influenced by the giving of others.

***2 Corinthians 9:5***

**3. Remember the law of sowing and reaping.**

You should not give with the expectation that you will receive personal gain in return. However, God does promise to bless faithful givers. As you prove yourself faithful with what God has given you, He may entrust you with more resources.

***2 Corinthians 9:6***

**4. Your giving should come from a heart that is ready and willing to give.**

Are you giving to the Lord because you are expected to, or because you desire to give back to God?

***2 Corinthians 9:7***

**5. God will provide for your needs.**

As you give to support the great commission of making disciples around the world, God will make sure that you will have enough resources to support the great commission through your local church.

***2 Corinthians 9:8***

**6. God will be glorified through your giving.**

God's essential nature is to give. He gave you the ultimate gift of salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you give according to biblical principles, you will reflect the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ in your life, and God will be glorified through you.

***2 Corinthians 9:9-15***

**DISCUSSION:**

Have you budgeted your time and finances so that you are free to give regularly?

Do you have a set amount that you give regularly?

Is God being glorified through your giving?

# REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. List three reasons why God wants you to be a giver.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why is it important for you to build your giving around the structure of your local church first?

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3. *2 Corinthians 8:1-2* teaches us that the Macedonian believers were committed givers. List five examples of their giving that you can learn from.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

4. List three biblical principles that you will begin to apply in your life as you develop the discipline of giving in your life.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does God give the New Testament believer a specific amount to give? Why?

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6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

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# PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

God called for the nation of Israel to bring offerings to help contribute to the building of the tabernacle while they were in the wilderness. Read *Exodus 35* and write down some of the ways that the people gave that did not include giving money. What does this passage say about the hearts of the people as they gave? What are some ways that you can give to God's mission that do not involve money?

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Read *Luke 6:38*, and list God's promises concerning your giving.

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In *Luke 21:1-4*, Jesus compares the amounts given by a poor widow and the rich men as they gave to the temple treasury. What did Jesus say about the woman's gift? What did Jesus say was the difference between how she and the rich men gave?

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In *Acts 2* we read about many people who had travelled long distances to be a part of the feast of Pentecost. After hearing the gospel, many of them accepted Christ as Savior. Instead of returning home, they chose to stay to be a part of the new church in Jerusalem. This caused a large problem within the local economy, and many in the new church were having difficulty providing enough resources to support their families. Read *Acts 4:34-37*. How committed were God's people to giving? Where did they take their gifts? Who was responsible for distributing the gifts that were brought?

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