

ARE YOU A LIBERAL?

By Keith Greer

Many times when the word liberal is used we think of it in a bad sense. What does the word mean? "Generous; not stingy." While we must strive to be conservative in regards to one's respect of Bible authority, can he be liberal in other areas?

Hospitality? "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:9) The Hebrew writer encourages us to be "lovers of strangers," Hebrews 13:1,2. When is the last time you invited a visiting preacher during a gospel meeting into your home? One of your brethren? When is the last time you just opened your home to encourage another person? Can't remember? Sadly, this is a lost art with many. God blessed us with our homes. Does He expect us to use them in service to Him?

Giving. "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Corinthians 9:6) How would you rate your giving on the first day of the week? Do you give with purpose and a cheerful heart? Do you give as you have been blessed? Do you ever worry about giving too much? Do you spend more on the things you want and leave less for the work of the Lord?

Forgiveness. "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." {Matthew 6:14,15} Do you forgive others in the same way you desire God to forgive you? Can I forgive too often or too easily? Could others call you a "forgiving person"?

Kindness. "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32) Kindness shown toward another shows the goodness that is within the heart of the person. How much time or cost is involved in practicing kindness? Do we desire others to extend kindness to us? Do we practice it first toward others?

Now, let us go back to where we began. **Are you a liberal?** Hope so! ***