

“FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER...” (1)

By Keith Greer

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” {John 3:16} “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” {Romans 5:8}

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth, he commended the churches of Macedonia. "Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God." {2 Corinthians 8:1-5}

If we, like the Macedonians, first give our own selves to the Lord, giving will not be a problem for us. We will not look upon it as something we have to do, but rather, something we want to do.

Under the new law, we are not commanded to give a tenth or even told how much we are to contribute. We are, however, told to give liberally. "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." {2 Corinthians 9:6,7}

God gave the best He had for us do we just give Him what things are left over, if there is any left over?

The Macedonians "first gave themselves to the Lord." How much do you give the Lord in TIME, EFFORT, and WILLINGNESS, to do His work?

What do others SEE in YOU? Do they see someone who would never miss a worship service, but will "backbite" other Christians whenever they have the opportunity? Do they see hatred or do they see the love of God in YOU?

If we truly give ourselves to the Lord, it will be manifested in every area of our lives- every day of our lives. We will joyously look forward to each Lord's Day when we have the opportunity to sing, pray, partake of the Lord's Supper, give of our means, and learn from God's word- all with those of like precious faith who are striving to go to heaven.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” {James 1:17}

“I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD." {Psalm 122:1}

When one is reading closely and studying the history of the children of Israel, one lesson is crystal clear to the honest heart – God’s children of old never fully appreciated His love, care, provisions and blessings. How do we know? How did they receive His blessings?

Sadly, they went after the idols of the lands, failed to keep His law and statutes, and finally even tried to short change their offerings. “A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' You offer defiled food on My altar. But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.’ {Malachi 1:6,7} Let us strive not to follow that pattern in our “giving!” ***