

## Why Givers Are So Blessed, Part 1 - Philippians 4:14-16 – April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019

- Today's teaching is part one of a series about those who give to God's work, and why it is that they are so blessed by the Lord.
- Before we jump into this, I think it would be good to provide a preface of sorts concerning the touchy topic of money and giving.
- This because, churches and pastors have rightly been accused of always talking about money making it the central focal point.

- In going through book-by-book, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse, we only talk about it when God's Word talks about it.
- Actually, God's Word has a lot to say about money, and one might be surprised to learn just how much the Bible speaks to this.
- What follows are what I will call fast facts about the topic of money in the Bible and specifically how much Jesus talked about it.

- Fact #1 – In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, approximately one out of every six verses deals in some way with money.
- Fact #2 – Sixteen of the twenty-nine parables, or over 55%, that Jesus taught deal with both our money and our possessions.
- Fact #3 – The Bible has approximately 500 verses on prayer less than 500 verses on faith but more than 2000 verses on money.
- Fact #4 – Jesus taught more about the topic of money and possessions than all of his teachings on heaven and hell combined.

- Enter our text today, where the Apostle Paul echo's the Savior's teachings, specifically as it relates to the blessing of giving.
- In the book of Acts the twentieth chapter, Paul quotes Jesus when he says that it is more blessed to give than it is to receive.
- Within this context Paul ends his letter by thanking them for their generosity, and reminding them of why givers are so blessed.

### 1. Givers are commended (Verse 14)

14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.

- Here, Paul tells them, it was good of them, to give, and in so doing they were also sharing in the many troubles that Paul had.
- The word for troubles is an interesting one in that it carries the idea of a crushing pressure on ones chest so they can't breath.
- It's important to understand it was the Christians in the Philippian church who supported Paul during his difficulties and trials.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 - 6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

### 2. Givers are rare (Verse 15)

15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;

- What Paul is saying here is that of all the churches he had planted none of them had financially supported him in his ministry.
- Sadly, nothing has changed since then when it comes to just how rare it is to find a Christian who gives, let alone generously.
- You might be surprised to know some of the statistics of the small percentages of those who give to the work of the kingdom.

According to a Gallup poll, of the 17% of Christians who say they tithe, only 3% actually do.

<https://www.gallup.com/home.aspx>

- Listen to the top five reasons, according to another survey, that what is arguably 97% of Christians don't tithe to their church:
- 38 percent said they could not afford to tithe
- 33 percent said they had too many debts
- 18 percent said the spouses did not agree on tithing
- 15 percent said they believed in proportionate giving
- 14 percent said their bookkeeping/finances were a mess

<http://www.ecfa.org/Documents/News/20-Truths-About-Tithers-Executive-Summary-eBook-Report.pdf>

### 3. Givers are appreciated (Verse 16)

16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.

- Here Paul is expressing his profound appreciation for their continued and even consistent giving when he was in Thessalonica.
- Paul went through tremendous difficulty and opposition in Thessalonica and yet his one memory is how the Philippians helped.
- In other words, it was the giving of the Philippians that were the greatest help to Paul, at a time of the greatest need for Paul.

Charles Spurgeon - "Probably the gift does not come to very much, if estimated in Roman coin; but he makes a great deal of it, and sits down to write a letter of thanks abounding in rich expressions like these."

Adam Clarke - "While laboring to plant the church there, he was supported partly by working with his hands, 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9; and partly by the contributions sent him from Philippi. Even the Thessalonians had contributed little to his maintenance: this is not spoken to their credit."

- In closing I would like to take this opportunity to express to all of you my profound appreciating for your giving to this ministry.
- Both to our church locally and to our online church globally, I cannot even being to thank you enough for your giving to the Lord.
- I would venture to say that none of us, myself included, have any idea how far reaching our financial support is for the Kingdom.