

# PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL GIVING

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Turn with me to first Chronicles 29.

I'd like to look at a concept that is brought out here that I think needs to be a foundation upon which we build the message this afternoon. We are going to look at a concept upon which all the rest of the principles need to rest.

I'm going to begin reading at first Chronicles 29 verse 10

## **1 Chronicles 29:11-18**

“Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. <sup>12</sup>Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all. <sup>13</sup>Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. <sup>14</sup>But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding. <sup>16</sup>O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own. <sup>17</sup>I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. <sup>18</sup>O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:”

What is the concept that we see here?

The concept that is plain here is the fact that there is nothing that we have that we can really call our own. Everything that we have and possess belongs to the Lord and David saw that clearly and he asked that the Lord might keep that thought constantly before his people so that they might prepare their heart unto God. That is the concept that needs to be before us as we think about principles of biblical giving.

You know Peter told Ananias in Acts chapter 5 he said in relation to his possession: **Acts 5:4** <sup>4</sup> Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

When God gives to us these things He puts them in our hands as stewards of them. God did not demand of Ananias that he would give to Him the price of the land neither did God stipulate that there was some certain percentage that he needed to give, although in the Old Testament many times a tithe was used but it doesn't seem to be in effect at this point in time. Ananias was a man who wanted the blessing of the Lord, he wanted the blessing that comes with giving all but without the pain or the sacrifice that goes along with it.

Now let us consider the Principles of Biblical Giving.  
Principle Number 1.

Let's turn to second Corinthians 9:7. Second Corinthians 8 and second Corinthians 9 these two chapters are probably the longest discourse that the scripture gives in direction to how we are to give, we could, but I am not going to take the time to read these chapters this afternoon, but we are going to look at a number of principles out of these chapters as well as a few that we gather elsewhere.

### **2 Corinthians 9:7**

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

The first principle I would like to point out to us is that biblical giving is voluntary, it is voluntary, it is not by demand it is voluntary, it

is what will we give, what are we willing to give. Voluntarily giving is giving according to our responsibility. The scripture says that God gave direction in [Acts 1:8](#) where He says as far as sharing the gospel is concerned that they were to preach it first in Jerusalem and then in Judaea and in Samaria and then to the uttermost parts of the world. I don't think I am taking that too far out of context to say that that was a part of scriptural biblical giving.

The first place of our responsibility is at Jerusalem or at home we could say, that is the first place we have the responsibility to give. Next we have the responsibility as we have opportunity beyond that in Judea and Samaria, our neighbourhood etc. and finally to the uttermost parts of the world, there are to needs all around us today. There are needs wherever we look, there are some needs that we can fill and there are many others that someone else will need to fill. We need to establish our responsibility and fill the needs where we can fill them.

As we think about that there shouldn't be any reason why our deacon brother should need to dig into his pocket to pay the electricity bill for the church. Now when back in history to the days known as the Great Depression, there are very few here this afternoon, if anybody, who has knowledge of that, a few can probably remember at least the tail end of it, but my Grandfather talks about it some times when the offering on Sunday morning amounted to three or four dollars because that is all that anyone had to give, we don't know anything about that today. And there were some times back in those days when the deacon brother needed to dig into his own pocket to meet the expenses of the electricity bill and some things like that, although not all churches may have had electricity in those days.

There shouldn't be any reason why our school treasurer should need to ask the school teachers to wait a couple weeks for their cheque because there is not enough money in the fund to pay them.

When the deacon announces a material need offering we may need to forego that purchase that we intended to make next week and wait

several weeks until there is money for us to do that so that we can give out of our means to meet the needs at home.

Now we can sit back and say, Well let someone else do it, someone whom we think is richer than we are, someone whom we think has more means than we have, let them do it. If we have any thoughts like that welling up within our hearts or in our minds then our conscience ought to be correcting us.

I said that it is voluntary but there are responsibilities that we ought to feel and we out of the goodness of our heart ought to be willing and ready to give and that brings us to the second principle.

### Principle Number 2.

I see here in the same verse where it says: “ God loveth a cheerful giver”

That we give cheerfully, not because we have to, not because we think that we got to do it because everybody else is doing it, that is not the reason for which we give and that is not being a cheerful giver.

I can remember as a boy that, I am thinking a certain man of I don't know how much he gave, I don't want to know how much he gave, but I do know that I remember as a boy hearing him more than once say that he felt that he had given more than his share to help meet the needs.

Well I'm not sure how much blessing he got out of giving because it didn't seem to me like he was giving out of a voluntary spirit, he was not giving out of a cheerful spirit, I'm not sure what all his motivation was that motivated him to give what he did give, and wasn't that a part of Ananias's problem there in Acts chapter 5?

Paul says in Acts chapter 4 says that there were a number of persons in the congregation who had sold their land and brought the price of it and laid it at the Apostles' feet. Somehow it seems that Ananias felt that because others were doing he needed to do it too. But the problem that really came out was that he didn't want to do it and he really didn't do what he was pretending to do and that is why he is

brought into, condemnation and why he needed to give his life because he actually lied in the process.

To be giving cheerfully we give not because we have to but because want to. I remember on several occasions hearing Brother Jesse Neuenschwander saying this is about the matter of giving he said: "Sometimes people say well they don't feel like giving because they don't think that a certain person needs it very much." Brother Jesse said: I told them they don't need to give if they don't want to but they will miss the blessing, they will miss a blessing.

Cheerfully is the second principle that we are looking at. The scripture tells us that Jesus was rich beyond measure, yet made Himself poor so that ye might be rich. (2 Corinthians 8:9) Well that was the reward that came along with it but He made Himself poor so that we might be rich.

Jesus gave up His riches and made Himself poor so that we might be rich, was it because He had to? Of course not. It wasn't because He had to but because He wanted to. When we sing the song "More like the Master I would ever be" we say it but do we mean it? Are we willing to give as He gave, are we willing to make ourselves poor that others might be rich?

Principle number three found here in second Corinthians 8 verse 12.

Principle Number 3, According to ability: **2 Corinthians 8:12**

"For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not."

The Lord does not ask us to give that which we do not have, He doesn't ask us to give more than we are able, but according to that a man hath not according to that he hath not. According to ability. There are various directions given in scripture in relation to this, turning back to the Old Testament in Deuteronomy, we have some Old Testament direction in relation to giving according to ability.

**Deuteronomy 16:16**

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened

bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:" Now notice in verse 17:

### **Deuteronomy 16:17**

"Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee."

In the book of Ezra chapter 2 verse 69 we have an example of the Old Testament saints following this direction,

**Ezra 2:69:** "They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments."

They gave each of them after their ability.

Moving on now to the New Testament in Acts chapter 11 verse 29 it also speaks about this matter of ability. The church discovered that there was a dearth or severe shortage taking place in parts of the world and it says in: **Acts 11:29**

"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:"

It seemed that the dearth was having a special burden on the brethren there and they felt the responsibility to share of their ability, of that which was given them to share with the brethren there in Judaea.

Jesus had occasion to sit by the Temple Treasury one day and in Luke chapter 21 this story is recorded, and as He sat there watching money being cast into the Treasury this is what he saw:

### **Luke 21:1-4**

"And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. <sup>2</sup>And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. <sup>3</sup>And he said, **Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: <sup>4</sup>For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."**

There are some lessons, some serious lessons for us to learn from that little story that is told there.

We can say with certainty that those two mites as far as monetary value were concerned did not exceed or equal what was put in by the rich men, but Jesus was looking further than the monetary value. He saw the purpose of heart, He saw what was behind the giving, He saw what attitudes were being expressed by these people and He said in God's eyes this woman has cast in more than all of these rich man. According to ability.

Principle Number 4 is giving with equality.

Second Corinthians 8, look at a few more verses here in this chapter, let's begin reading at verse 13:

### **2 Cor. 8:13-15**

“For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: <sup>14</sup>But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want: that there may be equality: <sup>15</sup>As it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.”

That is referring back to the story of the manna in the wilderness and as they gathered that manna they each had enough for the day, none of them lacked, none of them had more than what they needed. I mentioned the fact that sometimes we are tempted to look at someone else and say, Well they are rich, they are rich, they have enough, they don't need my help.

And it is true that in a brotherhood, in a congregation, there are those who may have more than others and there are those who likely could meet their needs without any help from anyone else. The scripture says that if we have food and raiment we should therewith be content. **[1Timothy 6:8]**

I looked around a little this afternoon and I didn't see anyone here that has the appearance of having any lack as far as food and raiment is concerned and so by that scriptural definition this afternoon there is no one here that cannot say that they are rich.

Many of us have much more than food and raiment, I think I know you well enough for that. We also know the scripture says, and we

know it by our own understanding, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. [\[Acts 20:35\]](#)

As we mentioned we miss a blessing when we refuse or refrain from sharing with someone else. But I believe that there is something to be gained in a brotherhood when those who are, if I may put it in quotes "rich" need to accept a gift from those who are in quotes "poor" I believe that there is a blessing that can be gained that can't be gained in any other way because all of us like to be and all of us have a tendency to be independent.

Let's look at it this way; some brother in the congregation has an accident or a fire or a hospital experience that costs lets say \$25,000, let's use a figure so that we don't need to think in abstract, that \$25,000 bill is going to be paid out of the resources of this congregation.

Whether that man pays it himself or whether we share it out among us it is going to come out of the resources of the congregation, so we can let him pay for it by himself because he has the ability to do so, we can let him do that but he is likely going to have to scale back on his giving and so when the offering for the church Treasury is given he can only put in a quarter of what he put in before.

When the school offering is given maybe he can only put in a third, when a mission offering is given why maybe he only has a 10th to put in of what he could before.

Or we can share the cost of it out through the congregation and maybe there are 10 or 20 or more families to share it out among and if each of us gives somewhere between 200 and a thousand dollars, or a little more, we are going to be able to share it out among us and most of us will be able to give that without scaling back our other giving, and everyone will be benefited.

Either way the bill was paid out of the resources of the congregation but which way contributed the best to building brotherhood? Do I need to answer that? I don't think so, I think we know the answer.

I am troubled sometimes by the independent spirit that sometimes evidences itself among us. And some people don't want to be helped because they don't want to be dependent upon their brother, they don't want to owe them any thing and that's not part of brotherhood, in a brotherhood we work together and we owe each other a debt, each one of us owes a debt to our brother, our brethren and the refusal to accept help is a refusal to be part of the brotherhood.

It is also well for us to remember that giving is not always giving money, sometimes it can be time or products. I remember many years ago when a brother's barn caught fire and burned pretty much to the ground, all that was left was the milking parlour and it had some damage to it, and I remember many people gathering in there and working hard that day to make that milking parlour ready for temporary use so it could be used yet that evening and it was accomplished.

But everyone couldn't work there that way and I also remember that there were several truckloads of hay that came in to feed his cows and to replace the hay that burnt in that fire. Each person giving what they could give. And sometimes in cases like that the psychological effect of your presence is worth more than any money that you can give, that doesn't mean that money cannot be something that can't be given at a later time. But there are things that we can give besides money sometimes that are worth more.

While we're on this subject there is something I would like to share.

I know it doesn't relate directly and yet it does somewhat indirectly to the subject that we are looking at. I'd like to stir your thinking just a little bit in relation to this, I'm not saying that everyone needs to think exactly like I do on it, I sometimes refer to something I call the Mennonite economy.

It is from this Mennonite economy that the money is generated, the profit is generated to meet our families needs, and the brotherhood's needs, to give in mission offerings and so forth. It is from this Mennonite economy that this profit is generated. Now I realise that there are many factors such as neighbourliness and things like that, that sometimes play a part in where and how we make our purchases, but

I wonder sometimes does our strong emphasis on frugality and stewardship cloud our vision a little about what is in our best interests.

I personally think that where we can buy a satisfactory product from our brethren that price should not be the primary issue, but we should give opportunity to that one and purchase from them as we have that opportunity because that is what generates the income to meet the needs of the brotherhood. Of course I am sure that this could be carried to extremes, but I think back to our own community and some of that.

Just to give a little illustration of that, we have several Mennonite contractors in our area, we have a Mennonite tyre dealer in our area and when I need the services of these people I don't spend much time shopping around to see who can give me the cheapest or the most lucrative deal as far as my pocketbook is concerned but I call them up and say; This is what I need, give me the best that you have to offer. These businesses hire several Mennonite brethren in our community and so I want them to prosper, I want them to do well because this is where the Mennonite economy is being generated from, it is from these resources that our Mennonite congregations are going to be able to meet the needs. Well maybe that's just a sideline.

Principal number 5 is found in **2 Corinthians 9:6**

“But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.”

Principal number 5 is to give with liberality, give with liberality, give expecting nothing in return.

A couple of weeks ago I was working at a place where I hardly knew anyone and I was working right up till closing time and after things closed it took a few minutes till I wrapped up my business and got outside to discover that in the morning when I had arrived I had left the lights on in my van and you know what I found - a dead battery. Now what was I going to do?

I was exploring around a little bit trying to figure out what to do, but I was pretty sure there were no jumper cables along in my vehicle, about that time a man came out that I had been working near me during the day, we had a little conversation a couple of times, I told

him my predicament and he said: “Well let me look in my truck” and he didn't find any there either.

He said I've finished so we'll go down the road to a store I know it's still open we can get a pair of jumper cables over there. So we went over purchased a pair of jumper cables and came back and he gave me a jump and we got started.

I shook hands with him, thanked him and said: Now I would like to give you something.

Oh no, he said, I wouldn't think of taking anything he said, your handshake and your thank you paid all that is necessary and all I want you to do is the next time you have an opportunity is to share with someone else.

That man had told me earlier in the day that he didn't profess Christianity, I am not trying to hold him up but what I am trying to help us to see is what would we do in a similar situation? Do we have time to help out the person who finds himself in such a predicament or do we pass by on the other side? How do we measure up? Is it possible sometimes that our neighbours might think that we are just a little stingy? Liberality, give with liberality.

Principal number 6. Give without ostentation.

That is a pretty big word but it is a word we use in one of the songs we sometimes sing and that is why it I chose to use it ostentation. Matthew chapter 6 talks about this:

**Matthew 6:2-4:** “Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: <sup>4</sup>That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly”

Sometimes in our local paper there is a picture of someone giving a cheque to someone else in charity and a lot is said and lot of to do is made over this cheque that is being given and I'm amazed sometimes

at the smallness of the cheque that is being given and all the to do that is made over it.

I know that in many of our churches many of our people have given much more than that, although I don't know the exact amounts, but I know they have given much more than that and there is never been any to do or much ado about it nor we don't want it to be that way, that is not what the scripture teaches us here to do, the principle is to do it without ostentation. The scripture says if we have that then we have our reward. We are looking for a greater reward than that, we are not looking for the praise of men but we are looking for the praise of God, we are not looking for undue thanks or acknowledgement from men. We are looking for bringing honour and glory to our Maker, that is our purpose and that is the motivation for which we are giving and sharing.

Principal number 7. We should do it with simplicity. In Romans chapter 12 it tells us to give with simplicity. **Romans 12:8**

“Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it with simplicity*; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

We are not doing it out of bribery, we are not giving because we are expecting to get a return from it. We are not giving because we are hoping to get favours from someone else for our gifts. Do it with simplicity not with some hidden agenda of what we hope to gain out of it.

Principal number 8. Found here in the first Corinthians 16 verse two, is to give systematically, we could get that out of second Corinthians chapter 8 as well but I like what it says here in:

**1 Corinthians 16:2**

“Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

It says systematically. It says to do it on the first day of the week, it doesn't say once in the year, it doesn't say twice a year but it says: Upon the first day of the week. I understand that to mean that each

time they came together on the first day of the week there was to be an offering taken. Systematic giving.

Sometimes people say that we because of what we read there in Matthew 6:24 that we should not keep any record whatsoever of what we give. I don't quite understand Matthew six to be saying that we shouldn't know ourselves what we are giving. I think from my own experience that I can say that if we don't keep track of what we give most of us, at least I know that's how it works for me, most of us wind up thinking we have given more than we have, and so in order for us to give what we ought to be giving we need to keep some kind of record so that we can see that we are giving what we ought to be giving, but that is not a record that we display and show to a lot of other people or perhaps to anyone

Systematically also tells us that we should plan ahead. How much is needed for this offering? Sometimes offerings are asked for and we are told that we are trying to meet this certain amount and if the congregation is trying to meet that amount it doesn't take long for us in our head to do a bit of calculation and see what is our responsibility and then we know our abilities and we can give more than what we see as our responsibility to give to help to meet that need. We need to plan ahead, how much is needed, how much should I give? Let's think about that instead of waiting until Sunday morning and then reaching into our pocket and pulling out our wallet and giving what happens to be left over there in the wallet, it takes a little bit more preparation, more thinking than that.

Giving systematically.

Principal number 9. Thinking about to whom we are going to give. There are a couple of groups of people that the scriptures clearly tells us that we ought to be giving and sharing with, in Matthew 19 verse 21 Jesus told this rich man that He was talking to here:

**Matthew 19:21**

“Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.”

Now He doesn't ask us all to go out and sell everything that we have and give to the poor but I think that there is a principle here that we need to be willing to give to the poor. Give to the poor, and give to those who have less than we have. We need to be willing to give to our enemy as in Proverbs 25, and this is repeated again somewhat in Romans chapter 12 but I'd like to go back to Proverbs and get the verse right here: **Proverbs 25:21-22**

“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: <sup>22</sup>For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.”

I'm going to tell a story here for the benefit of myself.

A story that should be especially of some interest to the children, some of you may have read this story, I wonder how many of you get the Family Life, but this story appeared there and I think it's a very good story in relation to this thought.

The family was planning to make a move from one place to another shortly before they made that move their dog ran out onto the highway and was run over and killed. The twin boys, 11 years old, asked and begged their father that he would replace that dog or give them another dog, get them another dog, and he said: “Well, why don't you wait till we move, why don't you wait till we move, it'd be better to wait till then to get the dog.”

Well a few days before they moved these twin boys had a birthday they were 12 years old, that evening when father came home he carried a box into the house that looked like he brought some groceries along home and the boys had tried to figure out what groceries would be in the box. Their father told them to look in the box and see what was in there and while they were getting ready to open the box the box moved a little bit and they opened the box to discover a little puppy.

That puppy was dear to them and they spent a lot of time with that puppy and taught that puppy how to do tricks, a lot of them, that puppy learned a lot of things but there is one thing that the puppy didn't quite learn and that was to obey when they said; Come.

So after they had moved they had a neighbour right across the road from them, an old man whom they knew little about and one day they happened to glance up and they saw their dog running across the road into that man's yard towards something, something black and white with stripes, it was a skunk, they called: Come! They called: Come, but the dog didn't come till after the dog had grabbed the skunk and killed it and was sprayed with it.

Well the neighbour wasn't very happy with the boys, the neighbour wasn't very happy with the family and he came over that evening and told them he said: You let that dog come over there and kill that skunk in my yard, make all that stink, he said if that dog ever comes into my yard again it'll be the last time.

Now the boys thought that he was just blowing of steam like some people do.

It went quite some time but springtime came, the flowers came up and one day the dog wandered over into the neighbour's yard and started digging up some flowers over there, and they found out that the neighbour meant what he said. He got out his gun and shot their dog right there and the boys had to bury it.

How many 12 year olds do we have here today? Let's see a raise of hands, a couple of them. What do you think you would feel like if your neighbour had shot your dog?

Well these boys weren't very happy and they didn't have many very pleasant things to say about their neighbour, but that evening their mother had baked some pies and when Dad came home that evening she said a little something to him and Dad took one of those pies over and he put it on the neighbour's porch and then he left. And all through the next weeks and month, springtime came again and one day mother was at the greenhouse buying some flowers that she wanted to plant around their house and she bought some flowers that she sent the boys over with to put on the neighbour man's porch.

That evening the neighbour man came over, he had a box in his hand, and he said: I am sorry that I ever called you bad neighbours, he said you are the best neighbours I've ever had.

And it was the boys' birthday and I don't know whether he knew that or not, the boys never knew whether he had any idea that it was their birthday that day, they were 13 years old, and he gave them that puppy to replace the one that he had killed.

What does this verse say? Proverbs 25:21-22 "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: <sup>22</sup>For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee."

The principle of giving to our enemy.

Also under Principle Number 9. To give to him that asketh.

**Matthew 5:42** tells us give to him that asketh.

I suppose there certainly is sometimes when we need to say no to people who ask us, I think we should at least give careful thought to what we hold in our hearts and how we should answer.

I remember a number of years ago when a neighbour woman appeared at our door and she was crying, she said they were going to be thrown out of their house because they hadn't been able to pay rent for the last two months and she was begging for one month's rent pay.

I wasn't sure what to do, I consulted with a brother in the church whom I have a lot of confidence in and he said: "If that one month's rental payment is the most you ever lose in your life consider yourself fortunate, and he said if that is too much for you to lose right now I'll reach into my pocket and come up with it."

Well I was glad for his advice and we gave the woman enough to pay one month's bill, well actually we didn't give it to her we sent it to the landlord. I spoke to him and he said he would accept it, he wanted to throw them out but he wouldn't if I sent that to him.

I feel that lesson thinking through that lesson that the brother taught me it was a lesson that was good for me.

I think it's a lesson we all ought to think about when someone asks us. She said they would repay it, but we never seen that and I didn't really expect to ever see it, but it is something we ought to weigh in our mind you know when someone asks us.

I thought about this again sometime ago when I was in Guatemala and I was riding with a brother who was living there and we drove through the streets of Guatemala City and there it seemed like there was a beggar on every corner. And sometimes he gave a few coins out of the window to some of them and sometimes he didn't and I asked him: How do you decide? Well he said I don't know, it is just how my heart is moved, he said when it is somebody who looks like they could be able to provide for themselves I am a little slower to give to them than someone who definitely has reasons for which they are having difficulty.

So the person that he had just given to had some parts of his limbs missing and I could see that there was a reason why he had decided to give something to this man.

The scripture also tells us in [Acts 20:35](#) that we should give to those who are weak.

Again I remind us that there is more than one way to do that.

Now I will give an example of something that I saw happen many years ago when I was a teenager, there was a contractor in our area, this man no longer lives, but he had hired a young man who had a family, he hired this young man to work for him and I watched them work, I had them do some work for me and I helped some other places where this brother was in charge running the work, this man whom he hired was a man who had held several jobs but sooner or later it seemed he was dismissed from each one of them. As I watched him work I realised why he was dismissed from the other jobs, it wasn't because he couldn't work, it wasn't because he didn't want to work but he had some mental limitations that made it difficult for him to get as much work done as what he ought to.

Now I'm not sure what the contractor was paying him but I'm sure that what he was paying him was probably more than what he was worth, but it was a brother in the church and this brother had a family and he hired him he kept him hired for many years, he paid that brother, for many years he used his labours and I think warmly of

that brother when I think of that because I am sure that there was sacrifice on his part in helping this man feel needed and feel that he could make a contribution in paying him the way he did. Now he could have just taken out of his pocket and given him money, he could have done that but that's not the way he chose to do it and I think the way that he chose to do it was likely more honourable than if he had taken money out of his pocket and just given him some. So I say there are more ways than one that we can give.

**Deuteronomy 26 verse 12** tells us that we should give to the stranger we should give sometimes to those, people that we know nothing about, sometimes they come knocking at our door. Principles of giving.

Principle Number 10.

One more yet – I don't have a scripture for this other than one that we will be looking at shortly, but this principle is that we give all.

I would like to say that this principle in giving all brings into focus what I was thinking about at the beginning. I'd like to pick up on that now in closing and tie this all together. And what we looked at, I do not want to minimise in any way the principles that we've looked at here, but if our giving stops at what we looked at in these nine principles that we have looked at up to this point, if our giving stops there, we are probably more like the men, the rich men who give of their abundance into the Treasury then we are like the widow who gave of her living. Romans chapter 12 verses one and two, very familiar verses let's look at them let's be reminded about what it says there, we can get many applications out of this scripture but I'm going to make just one of them this afternoon:

**Romans 12:1-2**

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup>And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye

may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

I'd like to underscore that word living there, a living sacrifice as the scripture says [\[1Corinthians 10:31\]](#)

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

Now God has put into our hands the things that we call our own, those things which we say belong to us He has put them into our hands and we are now responsible to bring glory to Him through it. And when we do something with that which He has given us our primary consideration should be;

What is the best way I can use this to bring honour to Him?

What will be the greatest benefit to Christ's kingdom, what will be the best use for this resource that He has given us?

Yes we are involved in occupations and many of us need to use a portion, a goodly portion, of the means that we have in our possessions to continue to make that occupation work. So we are in our occupations as a means to an end not as an end in itself. We are not here to build the biggest operation in Juniata County, we're not here to have everyone in the community looking up to us as being the largest farmer or the largest whatever business, I'm not sure what the occupations are here in the congregation, but you fill in the word of your occupation or business, but we are here to build the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

We are here to minister to the needs of our families. We are here to minister to the needs of humanity. We are here to minister to the needs of the brotherhood and our occupations are only useful as we use them as a means to that end. And so as we make expenditures as we use what God has given us, how can we use that to the greatest benefit and for the best use of His resources?

More could be said, maybe more should have been said, but I hope that as we have looked at these principles this afternoon that I've helped to convince you that the corruptible treasures of this earth are not the treasures of what life is about, rather the incorruptible treas-

ures of heaven and we have the opportunity this afternoon to apply these principles of the word so we can convert them, convert the corruptible treasures of this world into the incorruptible treasures of heaven.

May God help us to that end.