

"FOURTEEN PRINCIPLES ON GIVING"

Steven R. Hall

David wrote, "Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: Bring an offering, and come into his courts. Oh worship Jehovah in holy array: Tremble before him, all the earth" (Psalm 96:8-9). Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables Jesus taught were about the subject of how to handle money and possessions. Furthermore, one out of every ten verses of the New Testament directly deals with the subject of money. The Bible records over five hundred verses on prayer; less than five hundred verses on faith; and more than two thousand verses on giving, money, and possessions. Therefore it should not surprise us that God is concerned about how we handle our money.

Sadly many Christians are going to be lost because of their lack of giving. Jesus said, "For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what should a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36-37). What does your giving speak about your faith?

The following are fourteen principles on giving: 1. All we have belongs to the Lord (Psalm 24:1). 2. The amount you give should be in proportion to the amount you earn (II Cor. 9:6-8). 3. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:38). 4. Giving is an eternal and profound principle (Proverbs 11:24). 5. Your earthly possessions are only temporary (Matt. 6:19-20). 6. Giving must come from the heart (Prov. 22:9). 7. Giving should be done regularly...every week (I Cor. 16:1-2). 8. Giving puts you closer to the Lord's work (Phil. 4:15). 9. Giving is an expression of your love for God (Prov. 3:9-12). 10. Giving to the Lord is the safest investment you can make (I Tim. 6:17-19). 11. Giving should be taken seriously (Mal. 1:13-14). 12. It doesn't pay to rob God (Acts 5:1-10). 13. Gifts withheld are in effect stolen from God (Mal. 3:8-9). 14. What if God gave to you like you give to Him? (Mal. 3:10). How is your giving? The Lord wants you to know that you don't need money as much as you need Him (Matt. 6:30-33).

(The above article, written by Steven R. Hall came from the bulletin of the Union Grove church in Cleveland, Tennessee. Steven is the preacher there.)

FEEDING MANY THOUSANDS

On two separate occasions, the gospel recorders revealed how Jesus fed thousands of hungry people with just a few loaves and a couple of fishes. He literally fed these people and by doing so provided proof that the message He presented to them was indeed, a message from God. Using Mark's account of the feeding of the four thousand, we wish to present a parallel showing that Jesus not only fed those thousands recorded in the gospel accounts with bread and fish, but that He has and continues to feed thousands.

Let us start with the realization that man is in need of a type of bread that is of much more eternal value than the sustenance we eat to the well being of our bodies. Jesus told those of the five thousand that He also fed with bread and fish, after they followed Him to Capernaum, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you..." (John 6:27). He went on to tell them that, "...my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (John 6:32), "...I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"(John 6:35) and, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever..."(John 6:51).

When Jesus saw the four thousand who had nothing to eat, He said, "I have compassion on the multitude...if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way..."(Mark 8:2-3). When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan, He told him, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). After Jesus had blessed the loaves and fishes, He gave them to the four thousand and "they did eat, and were filled" (Mark 8:8).

It is the sincere milk of the word of the Lord that we must desire that we may grow thereby (I Pet. 2:2). Fortunately for us, all of said nourishment is preserved, printed and proclaimed in the form of the gospel of Christ. Paul said of the gospel, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The written scriptures provide us with all that we need for "...doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"(II Tim. 3:16-17). *Tilis*