

“The Blessings of Sharing”

10-18-15

Well, here we are! We're on the last Sunday in our Stewardship focus on Sharing. Today is Commitment Sunday, where we, as individuals, and a congregation have been asked to share our commitment to God and to each other and follow, “Ten For Ten,” 10% for ten weeks. 10% of your income or a 10% increase in what you have given already.

Jesus wants people, rich, middle-class, or poor, to give their whole lives to Him and to know that everything belongs to Him. Eternity waits all those who surrender all!

Our focuses these last two weeks have been on ‘The Reasons for Sharing’, ‘The Joy of Sharing’, and today, ‘The Blessings of Sharing’. There are four things that are asked of us as the people of God in this place. One thing we can't forget is that any blessings we might have are gifts of our loving God. The greatest blessing we've received is the gift of Jesus Christ! He came to earth and suffered and died for us giving us life now and forever.

But because we're so short-sighted, we look at that each Christmas and Easter and go, “that's nice, but it happened a long time ago. It really doesn't mean anything now!” We tend to forget that Jesus is with us each and every day now and when we confess, He forgives us our sins and changes us and makes us new!

As you continue to give yourself to Him, God blesses you and will continue to bless you beyond measure! There are four areas we need to commit to and be willing to give to as we walk each day with Jesus Christ!

We see God's Blessings in Prayer. God asks us to come to Him each and every day bringing our joys, doubts, and struggles to Him. This should be part of our lives because we know that we can trust Him! He's given us everything! Remember, you can't outgive God!

When we come to Him, **God Listens!** It's not enough to just hear, but we need to listen! Hearing involves realizing that sound is surrounding you, but listening is paying attention to what is being said!

God listens to you when you turn to Him, and according to His promises, You realize **God Answers.** You serve an Almighty God. He loves you with a never-ending love and He promises to always be there for you. Listen to His words for you from Psalm 91:15-16, *“When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

It's so incredible to have a God that cares about us so much! As we turn to Him in prayer for ourselves and others, we see the power of the Almighty Creator! It's important for us to come together in prayer seeking God's help. It's so true, there's power in the prayers of many.

We see God's Blessings in Time. Let's face it, we have trouble with time. We're always running out of it! We constantly try to put 25 hours of doing in 24 hours of each day! It's no wonder many times we're exhausted!

Because of over planning and overworking, we're good at making excuses about not being able to give time or feeling that someone else can do it. But when we take time and serve others and share with them and do something for them or for the Church, **God knows** and blesses what we do.

When we take the step and turn everything over to God, we can have comfort in knowing **God Controls.** The same God who said, *“Let there be light. And there was,”* puts you exactly where you need to be, exactly when you need to be there! Give Him and others your time and He will bless it every time you do it!

Even though we struggle, and time seems to be out of control, God blesses us and gives us a message to share and it calms spirits and focuses hearts. Romans 8:18, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”*

We see God's Blessings in Talents. Every one of you has been so blessed by God and have such incredible talents! I'm continually amazed as I see what you can do! But you can't keep these talents to yourself or think you really aren't all that special!

God Gives you every talent you have. Even though many of us are older, there's still so much we can do to be a blessing and help to all those whom we're around. God's gives you your talents, and He asks you to do something with them.

God Directs. Open to 1 Peter 4. You can't use the excuse, 'I don't know what I could do', because God already knows and He has work for you to do as His disciple to make a difference to the world. Look at verses 10-11, *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

We see God's Blessings in Treasures. Well, here it is. The reason people don't like to hear about money in Church! They see church as a place that should be so very comfortable that nothing in the world should touch it! But **God cares.** He cares about each and every one of you and the people outside these walls who He created!

In an article in Kiplinger's Magazine, reporter Sean O'Neill wrote, *"Immediately following WWII, people gave proportionately more of their income than they do today." The average Christian today gives only 3.5% of his income. As a result, the average church is only able to support half the outreach and mission they'd like to."*

Talk show host Dave Ramsey once observed how different America would be if all those who claimed to be Christians tithed. He said, *"There would be no more welfare in North America. In 90 days, there would be no existing church debts. And in the next 90 days, the entire world could be evangelized."*

Listen again to Malachi 3:10, *"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need."*

God not only gives His blessings to you now so you're taken care of here, **God gives Heaven.** He wants you near Him forever. But He wants more than just you and me, He wants the world! That's why He sent His Son, Jesus Christ!

Our Mission and Vision statements in the bulletin tell anyone who walks into worship why we're here and what we see as valuable! They're our goal in ministry!

In closing, look with me at the tender, loving words of God's blessings as we trust in Him alone for everything from Luke 6:38, *"Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."*