

Devoted to Giving More than Receiving
Lesson 02 in the series, "Devoted"

A. Jesus wants us to be more devoted to giving than receiving.

"You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Acts 20:35 (NLT)

1. Giving reminds us that God has given us everything we have.

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you have already given us!" (1 Chronicles 29:14 NLT)

"When you have eaten your fill in this land, be careful not to forget the LORD... You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...." (Deuteronomy 8:17-18 NIV)

2. Giving demonstrates that God has first place in our lives.

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

3. Giving helps us develop a generous heart like our Heavenly Father's.

"... 'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.' And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others... he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God." 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, 10-11 (NLT)

"... every man and woman who was eager to help in the work the LORD had given them... brought their gifts and gave them freely to the LORD." Exodus 35:29 (NLT)

4. Giving increases our faith in God's provision.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones. Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine." Proverbs 3:5-10 (NLT)

5. Giving helps keep money from becoming an idol.

"So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world." Colossians 3:5 (NLT)

Life Application: God wants us to be devoted to loving Him more than money.

"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." Matthew 6:24 (NLT)

B. We must each decide how much we give.

"You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure...." 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT)

"Give as you are able, according as the Lord has blessed you." Deuteronomy 16:17 (TLB)

1. **Initial Giver** - someone who decides to give for the first time. "Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving." 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NLT)
2. **Consistent Giver** - someone who decides to give on a regular basis. "Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop." 2 Corinthians 9:6 (NLT)

3. **Intentional Giver** – someone who budgets a specific amount they want to give to God each month. “But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?” Luke 14:28 (NLT)
4. **Surrendered Giver** – someone who tithes (gives 10%) each month. “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,’ says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, ‘I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!” Malachi 3:10 (NLT)
5. **Extravagant Giver** - someone who gives above and beyond their tithe. “Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.” 1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to sacrificing things we value for things we value more!

“While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. ‘I tell you the truth,’ Jesus said, ‘this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has.’” Luke 21:1-4 (NLT)

Note: God gave sacrificially to us first.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (NIV)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Anytime a pastor speaks on tithing or giving in worship, some people get offended. Why do think this is?
2. Did you grow up in a home where tithing was practiced and expected? If so, how did this impact you?
3. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus said, “You cannot serve both God and money.” Why is this true? Why do some people say it’s not true?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. What would it look like for someone to be devoted to a life of generosity?
5. Describe a time in your life when you have given something cheerfully? Why did you do it?
6. Read Luke 21:1-4. If I can’t give as much as some other people, does it really matter if I give?
7. Read 2 Corinthians 8:7. What would help you excel in the gracious act of giving? Do you know someone who’s already there? If so, how did they become so generous?
8. Read John 3:16. How does it make you feel to know that God has been more generous to us than we will ever be to Him?