

Our God, the Ultimate Giver

(Companion Paper to the Sermon Delivered By James Moriello on April 2nd, 2017 at Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket RI)

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35, NKJV)

Context: *"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"* (Acts 20:32-35).

Note Paul's unselfish service, which he urges the elders and people to emulate. *"Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ"* (1 Corinthians 11:1).

1. Paul conducted himself with integrity.
2. Paul had no desire for material gain.
3. Paul was willing to give his all for the ministry of Christ, whether or not he was paid for it. He was even willing to minister at his own expense! What a shame it is when people do not use their God given gifts to their fullest potential because they are unwilling to take risks and make sacrifices.
4. Paul was blessed in the giving of his life service for the Gospel of Christ.

Note that the words in our text were spoken by the Lord Jesus Himself. His words are backed up by His actions. Our God is the Ultimate Giver!

1. John 3:16: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*
2. John 10:28: *“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”*
3. Romans 5:15: *“But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.”*
4. Romans 6:23: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
5. Galatians 2:20: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*
6. Ephesians 2:8: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”*
7. Galatians 1:4: *“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.”* In these 7 Scriptures, we find God’s gift of salvation from our sins through the work of Jesus Christ.
8. Ephesians 5:25: *“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”* This salvation of God manifests itself in the particular love that Christ has for His church.
9. 1 Corinthians 3:6: *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.”* We can expect spiritual fruit when we exercise our responsibility to go and fulfill the Great Commission by spreading the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

10. Psalm 17:1: "*Hear a just cause, O LORD, Attend to my cry; Give ear to my prayer which is not from deceitful lips.*" This one is awesome! God gives us an audience with Him in our time of need. He is never too busy. Nor will He ever turn away the seeker.
11. Romans 8:32: "*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*"
12. James 1:17: "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*" God gives us all good gifts that He knows we need, according to His perfect wisdom.
13. James 4:6: "*But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.'*" Our God gives us just enough grace to get through each and every day.

God has sufficiently proven Himself to be the Ultimate Giver both in word and in action. Let us go and do likewise. Scripture is not without challenge and guidance on that point.

1. John 4:10: "*Jesus answered and said to her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.'*"
Receive God's gift of salvation today!
2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15: "*But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.*" Give thanks to God! Count your many blessings.

3. 1 Timothy 4:14: *"Do not neglect the gift that is in you."*
4. 1 Peter 4:10: *"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."* Let us be diligent to use our natural and spiritual gifts in God's service for His Glory, and not our own.

Forget not the words of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ: *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35, NKJV).