

## **Giving and Receiving**

2Corinthians 8:1-15

Hope Chapel Honolulu

For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.”

(2Corinthians 8:12-15, ESV)

### **Introduction**

This subject of “giving and receiving” should be first approached by recognizing that everything we are and have has first been given to us by God who therefore has first right to receive from us. Yet in this 21<sup>st</sup> century more Christians seem to believe one or both of these two assumptions: a) tithing is not taught in the New Testament, and b) that the Old Testament “storehouse” (see *Malachi 3:6-18*) principle is no longer valid. While Malachi 3 is probably the best-known passage on tithing, Matthew 23:23 remains a prime example of where Christ maintained the validity of tithing. While tithing should probably not be thought of as a condition of salvation under the New Covenant, the Early Church’s “devotion to the fellowship” (*Acts 2:42-47*), not the gathering of people but sharing of identity and resources, shows a continued belief and practice of tithes, offerings and a “storehouse.”

### **1. See God as your Provider and partner with Him. (Exodus 16:1-36, 2Corinthians 8:1-15)**

a) Remember that it’s God who enables you to produce wealth. (*Deuteronomy 8:18*)

b) How does love for God and neighbor inform our use of what God has entrusted to us?

### **2. Live disciplined and godly lives God can use and bless. (Matthew 6:1-34)**

a) Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people to be seen by them.

b) Do you just live for today or do you live for eternity?

### **3. Tithe and give regularly to invest in God’s kingdom and church. (Malachi 3:6-18)**

a) What’s the difference between tithes and offerings?

b) Beware of trying to rob God. (see *Malachi 3:6-12 & Matthew 23:23*)

### **Conclusion**

The first key aspects of the devotional life of the First Century Church were “devotion to the fellowship” and “giving to the needs of others” (i.e. Matthew 19:16-30; Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35). A helpful way to think about this might be that when God has given us more than we need, He has entrusted us with what someone else needs. Who, what or where is your treasure? What does your lifestyle reveal about your relationship with God, those He uses to bless you, and those whom God would bless through you?

### **For our prayerful study, discussion and application:**

- 1) What were you reminded or learned anew about tithing and giving?
- 2) How are tithes and offerings different? How does God see these two kinds of giving?
- 3) How can you grow in the discipline of giving this week?

**030319cdg@hch**