

Freely Give

#0626

Study given by W.D. Frazee—September 14, 1968

“Freely ye have received, freely give” Matthew 10:8.

Jesus was weary. As he came to the city of Samaria he sat down at Jacob’s well. A woman come to draw water.

“Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” John 4:13-14.

This is an artisan well. How could an artisan well keep water in it? Jesus isn’t talking here about a gift that you cover up, and that you keep just for yourself. God intends that every gift you have shall be shared. Instead of boasting about what we have, and thinking that we can do with it what we wish, and use it for ourselves, the Scripture tells us:

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” 1 Peter 4:10.

We are not owners. We are stewards. This is true whether what we possess is something we were born with, or something we have acquired through education or training. Every talent we have, every bit of strength or influence or ability to do something is all a gift. And as every man has received the gift, minister the same to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

This applies in our religious life just as much as in material things. As a man may hoard money and property, so there are those who seem to be quite happy in accumulating religious facts and information and having what they call a good spiritual experience while all the while the hungry, as far as spiritual things are concerned, are outside.

Years ago I saw a picture I shall never forget. The artist pictured on Christmas day a poor little news boy with newspapers under his arms looking in through a big glass window at a fashionable restaurant. In that restaurant the rich were feasting. They were having Christmas dinner. This poor little fellow had his face pressed against the window, and was looking in. Could he go in? No. What did he lack? He lacked money. Those people who were inside that restaurant supposed they were spending their own money. They were mistaken. They were not owners, they were stewards.

Are you a steward? Have you received any gift from God? What does He intend you to do with it? He intends you share it.

When Jesus met Paul on the Damascus road he was a rich man. He was an eloquent man and an educated man. He was a leader in the Jewish church. He was one of the nation's great men. His star was rising. But he met Jesus. And by the time he wrote the following verses he had lost much of what he had as far as this world is concerned. He had lost his money in serving the Gospel of Christ. Much of his time was spent as a self-supporting missionary for Jesus. He worked with his hands sewing tents so he could support himself and the gospel medical company he had with him. He lost his position. His former friends despised him. They thought he was crazy. Yes, Paul had more of what this world can offer than any man here. Yet after meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus instead of thinking the church was in debt to him, and that Jesus was in debt to him, notice what he says:

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also”
Romans 1:14.

How could Paul be a debtor to the barbarians he had never seen? The answer lies in what we have already studied. Paul had come to realize that everything he had he received from God. As a steward he was responsible to disburse what was in his hands according to God's directions. But here is the mystery of the Gospel. You cannot give God money directly. He doesn't need it. All the gold we can gather could not pave those streets up there in the New Jerusalem. They are all paved anyway. So with many other things that God have given to us. He wants us to recognize our ownership and stewardship. But in doing that He wants us to look to Him for direction. And He says, This property, money, strength, and talents that I have given you I want you to share them with others more needy than you are. That is why I have put these gifts in your hands.

So don't think that it is because of your wit and skill and strength that you are blessed with more than someone else. Everything you have is a gift, and God has given it to you in order that you might find others who need it more than you do, and share it with them. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Paul says, I am in debt. Who was Paul in debt to? To the Greeks and Barbarians. In other words, Paul was in debt to everybody in the world that needed what he had. He was in debt to the wise and to the unwise. How much was he in debt? “As much as in me is” verse 15.

Suppose you are going to go in business, and you come and borrow ten thousand dollars from me. How much are you in debt? Ten thousand dollars. Who are you in debt to? Me, because I furnished it. Suppose you come to me next week and say that in order to carry on the business the way it needs to be done you need another five thousand dollars. I turn it over. Now how much are you in debt? Fifteen thousand dollars. Do you see that the more you have the more you are in debt? That is the program you are on.

How was it that Paul got in debt to the Greeks and Barbarians, the wise and the unwise? Did he borrow something from them? No. The gift of God made him in debt. And everything you have is the gift of God. If you inherited it, it is the gift of God. If you work for it, the strength and wisdom to do the work are the gifts of God. It is impossible for you to escape it. It is impossible for you to go to some part of the universe where you can take one square mile, or even one square acre and say, This is mine. I will do what I will with it. You are not your own. Everything you have God gives you, and He wants you to give it to others freely.

This is the happy way to live. It is because most people don't understand this that they are unhappy. Those who don't have anything are unhappy. Those who have everything are unhappy because they are afraid someone is trying to get it away from them. It is a selfish world, a dog eat dog world.

Someone ask a very wealthy man, who was on his death bed, how much it would take to satisfy him. He whispered from his dying bed, "A little more."

Oh friends, what a rat race. I feel so sorry for the people of this world that are rushing in this mad race trying to get something. Other people don't want money so much. They want political power, or power of some other kind. Other people want fun, the pleasures of sense to indulge appetite, passion, and all the unlawful ways that are making the world a Sodom and Gomorrah. And all these people are missing the real thing.

As Jesus said to that woman at the well:

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water" John 4:10.

That satisfies the soul. But remember the water He gives you comes from an artisan well. It isn't something to fence off. Oh, no. It has got to be springing up in your life and spreading out to others.

"By all that has given us advantage over another,—be it education and refinement, nobility of character, Christian training, religious experience,—we are in debt to those less favored; and, so far as lies in our power, we are to minister unto them" *The Ministry of Healing*, page 105.

Let's do it. What do you say?

Paul said he was in debt as much as he had. He was in debt to everybody who needed his help. Do you know anyone who knows less about the Bible than you do?

You say, "Oh, I don't know very much."

That's not my question. Do you know anyone who knows less about the Bible than you do? If so, then you are in debt. Have you paid anything on it? Have you even kept up the interest on it? Is that a fair question?

Do you know anyone who has less health than you do?

You say, "Oh, I don't have good health."

That's not my question. Do you know anyone who has less health than you do? If so, then you are in debt.

You say, "But I need someone to take care of me."

Isaiah 58 says that if you will deal your bread to the hungry and bring the poor that are cast out to your house, then your health will spring forth speedily. It is dealing with this very principle. God is trying to teach us that we are stewards, not owners; that we are debtors, and the more we have the more we are in debt. This is true spiritually, educationally, materially, and every other way.

Is there anyone here who is a good carpenter, a good farmer, a good mechanic? Tell me, do you know anyone who knows less about those matters than you do? It might be a good thing for you to study the chapter in *The Ministry of Healing on Help for the Unemployed and the Homeless*. The way to help the poor isn't always to dish out money, or even to deal out food. It is to help those who can learn how to use their minds and muscles to increase their own efficiency. And that talent God gave you in business lines and mechanical lines was never intended to make you rich, or put you in comfortable circumstances so you and your family could have a good time. Everything you have is a gift, and God says freely share it with others.

I would be a good thing for you sisters who know how to cook and sew and keep house to look around and find someone who knows less about it than you do, and try to share what you have with them.

Someone says, "But they don't want it."

No, some don't. But some do. A colporteur keeps hunting until he finds someone who wants the book he has. He doesn't quit because one or two or three houses say, No, I don't want it. Whatever we have let's share it. And the greatest gift we have to share is the gift of the love of Jesus; the gift of forgiveness of sins; the gift of the joy in our hearts. He that winneth souls is wise. Oh, I hope that anyone here who hasn't done it will make up your mind to spend the rest of your life in soul winning.

At the beginning of this service you heard a young woman stand up with her brother and sing. This young woman isn't here right now, so I will tell you something about her. She is a graduate nurse, and an anesthetist. Some months ago she was employed in a worldly hospital drawing a good salary. She was a member of the church in good and regular standing, but she was working for the world, and the world was getting hold of her more and more.

In the providence of God this young woman heard a message that began to get hold of her soul, and changed her viewpoint. As the Spirit of God began to work with her heart, she began to get more and more dissatisfied with what she was doing. One day she was counseling with me. The Spirit of God impressed me to tell her that if between now and the coming of Jesus she would quit working for the world and start working for Jesus a hundred percent, and learn how to win souls, God would give her a hundred stars in her crown. This young woman got into soul winning. She knows she is in debt. She has made what the world calls a sacrifice.

I am sorry to say that even some members of the church would say it was too great a sacrifice. There are many people whose idea of missionary work is something you do as a kind of a sideline, making sure that you and your family have most of the things you want. But when Jesus found Matthew at the tax collecting booth, He said in effect, Matthew, someone else can collect these taxes. I need you to collect souls. Matthew left the money collecting to someone else, and he wrote the first Gospel in the New Testament. He died a martyr, and he is going to have hundreds and thousands of stars in his crown.

What are your plans? You say you have some wonderful plans. You are going to this and that. You are not going to go to the penitentiary. You don't want to go there. You are going to live a good religious life to keep out of trouble. You are going to study your Sabbath School lesson and pay tithe. In fact, you are going to have things so that you will pay tithe and give good offerings, and have plenty left so that you and your family can drive a good car, and have this and that.

I challenge you, what do you have that you didn't receive? If there are ten men drowning in the lake, and I have the time and strength and knowledge to save everyone of them, and because I have some plans of my own that might interfere, I plunge in and save five of them and leave the others to drown so I can go on to my party, what am I?

You say I am a murderer. But I saved five lives. Oh, I may get my name in the paper, and get a medal for lifesaving, but I could have saved twice as many. What is life for in this closing hour of human history? What are your plans? Just to be good? Just to be religious? Just to be good citizens and church members? Or is there a vision that God might give to someone tonight to plunge in for God; put your whole life and time into soul winning work for Jesus?

I realize that God uses these practical everyday things as part of it. God wants plumbers and bookkeepers and housewives. He wants secretaries and carpenters and bricklayers, and all the rest. Jesus was a carpenter in Nazareth for more years than He preached, but I doubt that He spent his time once building a dance hall or a nightclub. God needs men and women who have harnessed their talents and abilities to the cause of the third angels' message. God needs men and women who are not interested in simply being good citizens in this world, but in being lifesavers for Jesus Christ.

Don't be so satisfied with your life's plans merely because they include doing a little missionary work. Only God knows what you could do if you would put

everything on the altar. And don't measure your call by what someone else does. Let God talk to your heart. Only God can tell you how to use what He gave you, because you are His steward. He is the One who must direct you. He will call you to do some things that He doesn't call someone else to do in the way of sacrifice. There is a crown of rejoicing ahead of you.

The last chance to get in on what I am talking about is just about over. There won't be any lifesaving in heaven. There will not be any people drowning in that crystal river. There will not be any souls to be saved, any hungry people to feed. There will not be a soul to give a Bible study to. There will not be a poor person to help.

Someone says, "Won't that be good? We won't have any more calls."

Dear friends, think that the only opportunity in all eternity is about to close. You can win someone to Jesus, if you will put your life into it. Not on a hobby basis, but to take everything that God has given you and put it on the altar. Quite calling it yours. It is all God's. He gave it to you. It is bought with the blood of Calvary. It is stamped with the marks of crucifixion. Everything you have is His to be used up in the one work of rescuing the drowning men, saving the lost, and getting them ready for the coming of Jesus.

Someone here tonight is going to get that vision. If you will, thank God. There is a glorious vision for you that will be fulfilled. And in the kingdom of God you will have many souls. Wouldn't you like to put everything you have into the work? You don't need to be afraid. It is not a matter of turning yourself over to some man or set of circumstances. It is a matter of turning yourself over to Jesus Christ and let Him direct you. Will you put everything you have on the altar? Will you play fair with God, and do what He leads you to what is His call to your heart? That is safe. Anything less is not safe.

You don't need to worry. He loves you better than you love yourself. And all you have is what He gave you. He waits for the consent of your will. Freely you have received. Freely will you give? Will you place yourself and all you have in those hands that were nailed to the cross for you?

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