

All Things Come of Thee

#0147

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—March 14, 1975

Our text this evening is 1 Chronicles 29:14. Paul, writing by inspiration in the New Testament, speaks concerning the Old Testament:

“...whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” Romans 15:4.

So as we read this text from the Old Testament tonight, we are reading the inspired message that God had written long ago to bless us today.

The setting of this text is quite interesting. David, you remember, was King of Israel, and he longed to build a house for God, and God appreciated that. But through His prophet, He said, “David, now it isn’t for you to build the house. Your son will build that.”

But David said, “Well, I can’t build the house, but I can get things ready.” So he gathered all kinds of material: gold and silver, precious stones, and cedarwood, and all the rest. He encouraged the people to give. And as they came to this special service of giving that this chapter tells about, David was so happy because so many people were sharing in the joy of giving.

Now notice what David says as he comes to a climax here in the 13th and 14th verses:

“Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee”
1 Chronicles 29:13–14.

What a wonderful truth: “All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.” Is that really true? Is it? That everything we give to God He gave to us first? Is that true of money, property? Is it true of our strength, what we work for it with? Is it true of our words of praise? When we exercise faith, did it come from Him before it was exercised by us? “All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”

How much do I have then? I have just as much as He gave me. See, I don’t have a million dollars. You know that, of course. But why don’t I? God didn’t see fit to

entrust that to me. I praise His name tonight! He's given me several things that are worth a lot more than a million dollars, but they don't affect the tax returns.

I need a little help tonight for a few minutes. I wonder if there's some boy or girl here that's 10 years old. If there's some boy or girl here tonight that's 10 years old, I wish that I could have one come up here. I need a little help. Thank you.

Now, will you count those pennies for me? Ten pennies, all right. Now suppose I give those to you. Where'd you get them? The girl responds, "From you."

Why, sure enough, that's right. Would you give me one? Would you do that?

Thank you.

Where'd I get that penny?

What's your name?

She says, "Kathleen."

Kathleen. That's right. Where'd I get that penny?

Kathleen responds, "From me."

I got it from Kathleen. Where'd she get it? From me.

Would you give me another one? Thank you.

Where'd I get that one? I got that from Kathleen. Where'd she get it? She got it from me.

Would you give me a couple more? Fine.

Look how rich I'm getting.

Have you got any more for me?

Any more? That's all. Thank you very much. Now how much have I got? I've got 10 pennies. I've got it all, haven't I? Thank you, Kathleen, thank you very much.

Now, let's see, is there anybody here that's 12 years old that'll come up and help me a minute? Thank you, Steven. Now, will you count those for me?

"Ten," Steven answers.

That's all right. Would you give me one?

Thank you, sir.

Now, Steven's given me as much all at once as Kathleen gave me in all those ten pennies, hasn't he? Or has he? It's according to how you figure it, isn't it?

How about another one? Thank you.

Now he's given me twice as much as Kathleen gave me, right? Well, that all depends. How much would he have to give me to give as much as Kathleen gave me?

Would you do that, Steven?

Thank you very much. Thank you.

Now, let's see, Steve, would you help me a minute?

How much have we got?

Steve answers, "\$10.00."

Now when Steven gave me all he had, he gave me how much? \$1.00. Would you give me one dollar?

"Sure."

Thank you.

Who gave me that dollar? Where'd he get it? He got it from me, that's right.

How about another one? That's fine. Why not give me the whole thing?

Thank you very much.

Now would you look at our text again? "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." Is that really true, friends, with God? Is it really true? Do I enrich God when I give Him something? No. It was all His to start with. In fact, dear friends, God has given us a double reason for recognizing that everything we have comes from Him, first by creation and second by redemption. Everything in this world, including ourselves, is the work of His creation.

But lost through sin, the dominion has been restored through Jesus. So the cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf of bread we eat. It's reflected in every water spring. Our strength, our time, our intellect, our ability to sing, to speak, the kindly impulses that stir in some human hearts, the desire to help others, the desire to serve God, the measure of faith that we have—all of these are gifts. "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

You know, there are several truths that follow in the wake of this great truth that should bless our hearts as we meditate on them. One is that we are responsible only for what we have received.

You remember in the 25th chapter of Matthew, Jesus told the story of the talents. A man was leaving, and as he left to be gone for a long journey, he called his servants. He said to one of them, Here are five talents—let's just say \$500; to another one, he gave two talents, \$200; to another, one talent, \$100. Where'd they get all that money? From the master.

And when he came back, they reported. The one who had had five talents (\$500 as we're just calling it here now, to make it simple) he had how much? \$1,000, but where did it come from? It came from *using* the \$500 that the master gave him, and he turned it all back to the master.

The master said, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

And so with the one who had the two. The man that had one, you remember his problem. He just hid it. God was displeased with that as manifested in the story that Jesus told.

So, dear friends, the original gift we have and the *potential* of increase alike are the gift of God. Therefore, rightly understood, there is *nothing* that anybody has, *nothing* that anybody does, that should engender pride or minister to self-exaltation.

This is true, not merely of sinners. Lucifer's problem was that he forgot this up in heaven. Could he sing beautifully? Indeed. Was he the wisest creature in heaven? Indeed. Was he beautiful? Indeed. So inspiration says of him:

"...Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty" Ezekiel 28:12.

But who made him that way? God did. Who gave him those gifts? Who made him beautiful? Who gave him wisdom? God did. But when he turned from recognizing the Creator as the *source* of all, and when he began to think that there was something inherent in *him*, and then he lost the way and became Satan, the adversary.

And you and I will become *little* devils if we forget this great truth, my friends. Yes, we will, won't we? This is the problem in human experience. This is one reason God has such a problem with people to whom He gives special talents. As the prophet to the remnant says, this is an unfortunate age for any man that has talents that God can use in His work because, in 9 cases out of 10, when God gets ready to use him, he becomes exalted, and God has to lay him aside.

Do you know to whom that was written? Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, one of the brightest minds that this movement ever had. The prophet called him "...the greatest

physician in this world...” (*Manuscript Releases*, Volume 5, page 406). But he missed the way because he forgot what we’re studying tonight—“All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”

Notice how it’s echoed in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians 4:7.

“For who makes thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?...”
1 Corinthians 4:7.

What did you have that you didn’t receive?

“Oh, I have a million dollars. I *worked* for it.”

Who gave you the strength to do the work? And whether it was a million dollars or ten dollars, who was it that made the gold or the silver or the paper? Who was it that made the values that the greenbacks represent? Who was it that caused the sun to shine on the earth, and the rain to fall that made the crops possible, without which all our money wouldn’t be worth a penny?

It is God who is the source of every good. Are you with me on this, friends? Are we convinced? Notice the rest of the text then:

“...now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?” 1 Corinthians 4:7.

What a foolish thing for a man to strut or crow or gloat or boast about anything he *has* or anything he’s *done*, for it was all a gift. So why, he says, do you glory when all you have is what you received?

But there’s another beautiful truth here. Although all we have is God’s—whether money, property, time, strength, good impulses—while it’s all from God, He has arranged that you and I shall get a great deal of joy and satisfaction out of properly exercising the *stewardship* He’s entrusted us with. I gave Kathleen ten pennies, and she gave me back, to start with, how many? One, and then another one and then two more, and she ended up with giving me the whole thing.

Did any of you older people, when you were little, have from your parents what was called an allowance—a weekly allowance or a monthly allowance? How many of you ever did? Now I want to ask you another question: did any of you, when you were children, ever take that allowance and save up some of it and buy a birthday present for Father and Mother? How many of you ever did? Why, yes.

What’s the sense of that anyway? If Father and Mother want something, why don’t they buy it in the first place instead of giving the money to Johnny or Mary and then *they* go and buy something? What’s the sense of all that? Do any of you know?

Sure, you all know. You wouldn't have it any other way, whether you were the parents or whether you were the children. Am I correct?

My dear friends, that's exactly what this is all about between you and me and God. That's what it's all about. When we return to God His tithe, when we bring our Sabbath School offerings or ingathering, pay for these *Signs of the Times* subscriptions so that those who don't know the message can hear it, or whether we give to help the poor, or start some new enterprise in Africa or India or Timbuktu—all of these are opportunities to return to God what is already His, but in doing it, we show Him what? Love. But do you know where we got the love that we use in that? The Bible says, "...Love is of God..." (1 John 4:7). The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Love is a gift of God just as much as *money* is a gift of God; more so, friends. I'd rather have love than a lot of money, wouldn't you?

Oh, I feel so sorry as I think of so many stingy, selfish, cruel, hateful and hating people that the world is filling up with. I feel sorry. The Devil, of course, knows what he's doing. He's *stealing* the gifts that God gave them and substituting in their stead his own evil attributes. That's what's back of this competition that fills the world's playgrounds and its marks of commerce, its halls of learning. It's this idea that "I want to get ahead of you, and that's what makes me happy. I want to get something that you've got." Of course, if I'm honest, I'll try to get it by the rules of the game, but if I'm not honest, I'll find some other way to get it. But honest or dishonest, I'm trying to build myself up by tearing you down.

Who introduced that idea? Satan. And whether it's in play or in real earnest, whether it's in fun or 'for keeps', what he does is that he substitutes this spirit of selfishness for the spirit of love. And you know, when a boy plays marbles 'for keeps,' he thinks those marbles are *his*, and hardly would he stop to say to the Lord, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee," would he? No, that would hardly fit that.

Oh, I'm so thankful, friends, for the Master who calls us away from the selfishness of the world and bids us remember what He said to His first disciples that echoes down to us: "...Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).

You remember that shortly before He suffered on the cross, He was in the temple on one of His last visits there. He observed a poor widow making her way toward the place where they left their gifts. She put in what? Two mites, we'd say two pennies. Perhaps the value was actually less—two pennies.

Jesus called His disciples and said, "Do you see that poor widow? She's put in *more* than *all* these rich men."

Why had she? Why, she'd given all she had, and my dear friends, you can't give more than that. No angel in heaven can give more than that. And when you give *all*, you're only giving what God gave you. Therefore it merits no blue ribbon or gold seal or

a place on the honor roll, as if *you* had originated that gift or originated the desire to give it. You did not originate the gift, whether it was two pennies or two million dollars. What does our text say tonight? “All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.” Oh, this would forever banish all thought of pride, all thought of human merit, all desire for human praise. Why, yes!

You know, if someone came up the aisle here tonight and said, “Here is \$10,000 to help the work in Lithuania or Africa, or one of these other places that are struggling.”

We might turn and say, “Oh, isn’t that wonderful? What a wonderful man you are!”

If he should say, “I merely brought this in. The man who gave it is outside. He just asked me to bring the \$10,000 in,” what would we say? “Oh!” Wouldn’t we? But friend, every time you and I give *anything* in Sabbath School, in church, here at the vespers service, or wherever, we are giving what does not belong to us. It never did belong to us. It is *all* the gift of God. He’s the one who deserves the praise.

Another thing this concept will do to us, friends, is spoil this idea that *something* of what we have left after we’ve paid our tithe and given our offerings is ours to spend any way we please. Oh, my friend, *every* dollar that you and I have, every penny, is the gift of God and represents God’s trust to us. Every bit that we have is His. Therefore, when we take *any* of that and spend it selfishly on ourselves or anybody else, we’re missing the blessing that God intended. Shall I say we’re robbing God? Well, I won’t say it, but you can read about it in Malachi 3:8–10.

I repeat, this idea that if we’re faithful in tithe and faithful in offerings, that the rest we can spend pretty much as we please. Of course, we shouldn’t spend it on liquor and tobacco. That might hurt us and we might just be selfish enough that we don’t want to get lung cancer or ulcers. But oh, to enjoy what are called the good things of life, to spend our money for luxury, all kinds of gadgets and conveniences, or to store it up if we happen to have the disposition of misers—all this misses the point, friends. It’s *all*—whether pennies or dimes or dollars—the gift of who? God. While we cannot get any merit by giving it back to Him, we can miss a wonderful blessing by *failing* to give it back to Him.

“Well,” says one, “shouldn’t I spend *any* money on myself at all?”

“...Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things” Matthew 6:32.

And part of the reason that God gives me money is so that I can buy some food in case I’m so situated that I can’t grow it all. Part of the reason He gives me money is so that I can buy some clothes or some fuel perhaps. But friends, if it’s all His, I think I should ask Him how He wants His money spent, what do you say? And if I give it *all* to Him because He gave it all to me, then I’m recognizing *His* ownership. And while I’ll spend what I need to take care of myself and my family, I’ll try—not in a stingy way or a miserly way, but a very careful, economical way—to keep that expense down. And after

I've paid my tithe and given my offerings, I'll try to spend (I'm quoting) "as little as possible upon yourselves." What for? So that I can have, may it please God, an ever-increasing surplus to accomplish more to help finish His work. Or does the work need it? God doesn't need it personally, but He has so arranged that His work may need it.

Well, we could study that more tonight, but I'll tell you a little secret. My great purpose tonight is not to study how to spend money. That isn't my purpose at all. I'm not leading up to an offering or a special appeal, nothing of that kind. I have something *infinitely* more important to share with you. I've known all my life that my money belongs to God, but friends, as I've been meditating recently on this text as seen in the light of the divine commentary, a great truth has dawned upon my soul and that's this: every bit of repentance that I ever feel or exercise, every bit of faith that I ever have or exercise, is the gift of God, and all that God expects me to do is to give Him back what He gives to me.

Now I may wish I had a *deeper* repentance. (God wishes so too. Thank God, He's giving me more as I look at His love revealed on Calvary.) But there is no way (don't miss this!) that I can feel tonight the deep repentance that I *will* feel farther up the road. So I mustn't be discouraged. I must *choose* to repent, but the only way I can repent is to use the gift He gives me. And if He gives me a teaspoonful of repentance, I'll give it all to Him. If He gives me a cupful of sorrow for my sins, I'll go right along with that and give it all to Him. And I look forward to the day when my repentance will be measured in barrels, not cups or quarts. Do you see?

And so with faith. Do you ever read stories of the faith of other people and wish you had that? Well, friend, did you ever hear some lovely singer sing and wish you could sing like that? Do you know God loves to hear you sing just like you sing? You may have to sing when nobody else is listening, but I want to tell you that's sweet to the ear of God. "...Sing unto the Lord a new song..." (Psalm 149:1). Sing to Him when you're alone if you think it might worry other people. But remember, all you can sing is what He's given you, and so with these gifts of repentance and faith.

Now I'm going to read you something wonderful from this book *In Heavenly Places*, page 221. See if you don't think this is marvelous:

"No man has the least cause for boasting or self-exaltation..."

"Those who live on this earth should unite with the heavenly host in describing all praise and glory to the Creator.

"Even repentance is brought about through the application of grace. The natural heart feels no need of repentance. The tears that fall from the eyes of man because of sorrow for his sinfulness, and because of sympathy for other sinners, start unbidden" *In Heavenly Places*, page 221.

You can turn on the faucet and get water, but you can't turn on *this* faucet.

“Faith, too, is the gift of God. Faith is the assent of man’s understanding to God’s words, that binds the heart to God’s service. And whose is man’s understanding if it be not God’s? Whose is the heart if it be not God’s? To have faith is to render to God the intellect, the energy, that we have received from Him...” *Ibid.*

Kathleen gave me back the pennies that I put in her hand. She didn’t give me *one* penny that I hadn’t already given her. No human being has ever given to God one single bit of repentance or faith, sorrow for sin, or choosing to serve Him, not one single bit, but what it all came from God.

“Well,” somebody says, “why doesn’t God give it to everybody?”

He *does* give some to everybody. So the Scripture says that “...God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). But do you remember that story we were looking at about how the master gave one man five talents and another two and another one? What did the man with five talents do? He *used* those talents in such a way that they what? Increased. So with the man who had two. And the man who had only one, he even hid what he had. It never increased.

Oh, my dear friends, if you and I will start right where we are, giving to God everything that He gives to us—every time we get a desire to praise Him, *praise Him*; every time we get an impression to say a word for Him, *say it*; every time the thought comes to us to be sorry for sin, say, “Lord, I’m sorry that I hurt you.” Every time the impression comes to us to exercise faith, say, “Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief.”

If we’ll do that, friends, we won’t need to just lie and wallow in our failures and lament our shortcomings and hope that someday lightening will strike, a miracle will happen, and we’ll become successful saints. No. The path to heaven is simply this: Jesus is drawing me and I am responding. Jesus is drawing me and I am responding.

Your will power is the key; your response is what makes it possible for you to advance. But remember, your will is a gift of God, and the power to exercise it, that’s the gift of God. And God has given you that choice. When you exercise it, you deserve no merit, but if you *fail* to exercise it, then, friends, you’re losing the whole reason why God gave it to you. Do you see?

So, let us tonight, wherever we are in the Christian way, if we’ve never started, let’s start tonight by responding to the appeal of Jesus. What do you say? If we’ve gone partway up the road, He’s calling us further up and on, isn’t He?

Somebody says, “Oh, Brother Frazee, I wish I felt this more.”

Yes, sure. But what will you do with the measure you have? There are people who think that they would do wonderful things in missionary service if they only had

more strength. What are you doing with what you have? There are those who think they would do marvelous things in making gifts to missions if they only had more money. What are you doing with what you have? As we work on the plan of addition, God works on the plan of multiplication. And this applies to the temporal things and the spiritual things.

So tonight, my heart is thankful to know that all my Lord wants, all He expects is for me to render to Him what He has given me. And I want to give Him all tonight. I *choose* to give Him all. It's like these 10 pennies that Kathleen gave me. They're really not worth very much, but friend, the love that you and I manifest, which is the gift of God, is very precious to Him. Do you remember what we were saying about the children that save up some of their allowance to buy Daddy or Mother a birthday present? Let's take some of the gifts that Jesus has, in His love, shared with us and use them to make Him happy, what do you say?

[Testimony service]

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