

Giving: My Delight or My Duty? Romans 15:22-29

Anytime preachers talk about money, they are prone to being tuned out by the hearers. We live in a society eaten by the worm of greed and people know little of the blessings of giving. In our text we have one of the clearest New Testament teachings on the subject of the Christian and giving. Ask yourself if your giving is similar to that described by Paul.

I. The Reasons Christians Have For Giving to Their Church.

There are three important reasons why Christians should give to their local church.

(A). For the gospel mission . . . *“if first I be somewhat filled by you”* (v.24).

Paul was headed to Spain, but he anticipated receiving help from the Romans.

(B). For the gospel ministry . . . *“But now I go to minister unto the saints”* (v.25).

Before Paul was to go to Spain he first had to go to Jerusalem to minister . . .

(1). To the poor who suffer . . . (v.26).

Macedonia (the churches at Philippi and Thessalonica) had received gifts for the poor in Jerusalem. Paul “sealed” (v.28) this gift and intended to take it to Jerusalem to be distributed among those who were in need.

(2). To the people who serve . . . (v.26).

There are those who assist people in ministry and it is wise for gifts to be used to support those who serve so they may concentrate on ministry.

(C). For the gospel message . . . (v.27).

“For if (since) the Gentiles have been made partakers of spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (v.27). We could put it like this: the evidence that your life has been changed spiritually is your giving.

II. The Requirement Christians Have In Giving to Their Church.

There are two interesting phrases used to describe the giving of Christian people in this text. The first one is *“it hath pleased them”* to give (v.26), and it is *“their duty to minister unto them in carnal things”* (v. 27). So, it seems you can give two ways.

(A). You can give with delight . . . *“it hath pleased them”* (v.26).

The churches giving to the poor gave *“with pleasure.”* They thought it good.

Jesus uses this same word when He said, *“It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”* (Luke 12:32). We all know the verse, *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things (temporal needs) will be given unto you* (Luke 12:31). You don’t have to seek very hard; it’s His pleasure to give it.

(B). You can give out of duty . . .

This word duty is used only a few times in the New Testament. To get a sense of it’s meaning go to the parable of the unprofitable servant (Luke 17:10). Jesus says, *“Who of you thanks your servant because he did the things commanded?”* *“So likewise, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty.”* It is expected by Christ and the Apostle Paul that the person who has received the grace of God will give and think nothing of it! If anything, he delights in it.