

On Stewardship

When he was a young preacher, the late brother V. P. Black (1918-2007) was asked by a church member to preach a sermon on giving. At first, br. Black wasn't sure there were enough scriptures for a whole sermon, but he prepared and preached on giving. He was fired for preaching about giving! Br. Black dedicated himself to teaching members of the churches of Christ about stewardship. This story and some other quotes were reported in a book by Kyle Butt and John Farber, *The Truth About Giving*. Brother Black also wrote, *The Bible talks more about money than it does about faith, repentance, confession, baptism, church organization and qualification of elders, all combined!*

Following are some of the more familiar passages about giving of the many found in the Bible.

- The rich young ruler asked Jesus, *Good Teacher what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?* Jesus' response was, *Go sell whatever you have and give to the poor (Mark 10:17-22).*
- While with His disciples, Jesus pointed out the poor widow who had given all she had (Mark 12:41-44).
- Jesus said, *Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, shaken together and running over (Luke 6:38).*
- He also said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).*
- *Give as you may prosper (I Corinthians 16:2).*
- A warning about giving God the leftovers. (Malachi 1:6-10).

Some verses for additional study on giving are: Gen. 14:20; Gen. 28:22, Num. 18:24; Prov. 3:9-10; Prov. 11:24-25; Matt. 6:24; Matt. 13:7, 22; Luke 12:13-21; 2 Cor. 9:6; James 2:1-13; Phil. 4:10-19; 1 Tim. 6:9-10.

The question we must ask ourselves is how much does God want each of us to give? The conclusion from the story of the rich young ruler is clear: Stewardship is a salvation issue and we must be WILLING to give everything we have to God. Though God hasn't asked all of us to give everything, we need to carefully consider this factor when deciding how much to give: There is no record in the Bible where God ever accepted less than 10 percent from any of His followers.

Finally, remember these two points when deciding how much to give to the Lord: 1) Scripture teaches that we will have more if we give generously than if we do not. 2) Paul wrote, *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:7).*

The elders commend all the Karns members who give generously and sacrificially.

For the elders,
Don Denton