



GIVING IS LIVING

Rev. Scott Epperson

Luk 18:18 *And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

Luk 18:19 *And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.*

Luk 18:20 *Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother.*

Luk 18:21 *And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.*

Luk 18:22 *Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.*

Luk 18:23 *And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.*

Luk 18:24 *And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!*

Luk 18:25 *For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*

INTRO:

- We find here that the "Rich Young Ruler" has asked the Lord what he must do to receive eternal life. What do I got to do to live forever, to be as great as you are LORD, to do the works that you do , to have the peace that you have, etc....
- The Lord told him to sell all that he had and distribute it to the poor, or give all of himself to God, and he walked away empty , sorrowfull, and dead spiritually.
- What was the point of Christ? Living is giving. Jesus himself came into the world not to receive but to give
 - **Phi 2:7** *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*
 - **Phi 2:8** *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

CHURCH IS NOT A:

- WAY TO GET READY FOR TAX SEASON
- CLUB
- WE ARE THE HANDS AND FEET, THE BODY OF CHRIST JESUS !!!!!!!!!!!
 - **Illust:**
 - Jesus BROKEN HANDS
 - Story told of a large cathedral church that was hit by a earthquake. The disaster destroyed the church, and all that remained was a century old statue of Jesus stand ing with his arms out stretched, only the rubble that fell from the earthquake fell and broke off the hands of Jesus. They called upon a man who said he could fix it, after making arrangements with him, they changed their minds about fixing the hands. The man asked why and they told him that they all agreed that the broken hands served as a reminder that we as the body of Christ are the hands and feet of Christ.

WE ARE LIKE TREES MADE TO GIVE

- We as Christians are compared all through the Bible as either a tree, bringing forth fruit, or a branch of the vine bringing forth fruit etc..

- A fruit tree or a grape vine are both living organisms that exist and live to give. They grow and produce fruit so that others may be nourished and live. If a tree is not giving it is not living.
 - *Mat 21:19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away.*
 - *Mat 21:20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!*

YOU KNOW WHAT LEAVES ARE GOOD FOR? ADAM USES LEAVES TO HIDE HIMSELF AND HIS CONDITION.

~LEAVES:

- God does not want a part of us but all of us. To live we must give.
- He knew that the tree may have appeared to have appeared to live because it was clothed with leaves but the heart or the inside of that tree was dead because there was no fruit, friend you may look alive on the outside and according to the standards of men but God is not impressed with your leaves,
 - Church attendance
 - Your knowledge of the scriptures
 - Your righteousness(holiness or outward appearance)
 - Your position in the church
- God knows your heart were men just see your leaves and if you are not producing Fruit then you are not giving and for sure not living.
- Fruit will give life to the one in need of it.
 - *Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
 - *Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

PRODUCING FRUIT WILL RESTORE- People need something off of your tree.

- Sample your
- Love, Joy, Peace
- Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness
- Faith, Meekness, Temperance

PRODUCING FRUIT WILL REPLENISH- May seem as though your fruit is just falling to the ground and you don't see anyone picking it up.

- Remember when fruit sets the seed will die and be planted where it lies and it will produce life.
- People see your good works and wonder they realize it or you realize it you are planting the gospel, giving the gospel, planting it in their hearts by simply living your life. People may not understand what you have but when they see your life they will want it.
- We must begin and end with giving,
 - *Math 13:18*
- When we receive the Word of God in order to be fruitful we must first give our hearts to him fully, (our hearts is the ground).
 1. Wayside is path way. Many people walking will step on and kick the seed continually uprooting it, speaking of the philosophies of men mixed with the word will destroy the birth of life in your heart. Your heart must be sanctified or separated for only his use. Example: fenced in so as to not be walked on but sanctified for his use. Give your heart all to Jesus.
 2. Stony ground is the uncultivated heart. It receives the word but only until its roots hit its rocks and hard places(hard feelings, fears, expectations) God wants you to give him everything in your heart. The grudges, the guilt, fears, your hopes and dreams. You must want life and fruit more than revenge, and justice. Allow your heart to be broken up and made vulnerable to Christ.
 3. Thorns care for this life and for riches.

Americans are the worst I think in reference to this verse. There is nothing wrong with being blessed

and having some things but we mingle ourselves and center ourselves too much with the cares of this life. Until there is more of us given to the world than to Christ, and our life is choked out of us by: our jobs, our plans, our wants etc...

- To be concerned with provision and we forget where our provision comes from.
 - **Mat 6:25** *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*
 - **Mat 6:26** *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*
 - **Mat 6:27** *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*
 - **Mat 6:28** *And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*
 - **Mat 6:29** *And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*
 - **Mat 6:30** *Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*
 - **Mat 6:31** *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*
 - **Mat 6:32** *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*
 - **Mat 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
 - **Mat 6:34** *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*
- Seek God alone and everything else is provided because he is our provision.

ILLU. beggar and his rice

- **A Parable of Life**
 - Life is like another parable from another land. A blind Indian beggar sat beside a road, fingering the rice in his little bowl. Wearing only a loin cloth, he sat in poverty beside a road that stretched into nowhere both ways. The scarce travelers occasionally gave him a little rice. One day he heard the thunder of a chariot in the distance. It was the grand entourage of the maharajah. This was a moment that had never come before. Surely the great one would stop and give him baskets of rice.
- Indeed, the golden chariot of the maharajah stopped before the poor beggar. The great one stepped down and the beggar fell before him. Then the sky seemed to fall in. "Give me your rice," said the great one. A fearful, hateful, scowl masked the face of the beggar. He reached into his bowl and thrust one grain of rice toward the maharajah. "Is that all?" said the great one. The beggar spat on the ground, cursed, and threw him one more grain of rice. The great one turned, entered his chariot, and was gone.
- The beggar-angry, empty, and crushed-fingered the remaining rice he had hoarded in his bowl. He felt something hard, different from the rice. He pulled it out. It was one grain of gold. He poured out his rice, caring nothing for it now. He found one other grain of gold. Had he trusted the great one, he could have had a grain of gold for every grain of rice. We rob ourselves because we do not want God to get our rice, and all along he is ready to pour out more than we can contain. (E-Sword)
- **Give to Live:** The more of your rice you give the greater the Master can make you live.
 - **Luke 18:29** *And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,*
 - **Luk 18:30** *Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.*
- **What Is Tithing?**
 - Mathematically it is a tenth. "...and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee" (Gen_28:11).
 - Scripturally it is a law. "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase" (Deu_14:22).
Morally it is a debt. "...Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal_3:8).
 - Economically it is an investment. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Mat_6:20). "Give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luk_6:38).
 - Spiritually it is a blessing. "I will open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal_3:10). (E-Sword) Giving is Living
- **Good ground:** the heart that has that is sanctified or given solely for the Lord's work, the heart that has nothing to hide but has broken up and open with nothing to hide, the heart that is weed free and cares for nothing and is given to nothing but the work of God. Good ground is given ground, rock free, weed free, open to the LORD.

Psa 1:2 *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

Psa 1:3 *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his*

leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Closing

- millionaire /giving is not a one time enrollment fee but daily we must belong to the Lord
 - I Dare You to Do It Again
- A little church was having a homecoming service to which ex-members, who had moved away, were invited. One of the former members had become a millionaire. When asked to speak, the wealthy man recounted his childhood experience. He had earned his first silver dollar which he had decided to keep forever. "But when a visiting missionary preached about the urgent need for funds in his mission work, and the offering basket was passed, a great struggle took place within me. As a result," the wealthy man said, "I put my treasured silver dollar in the basket. I am convinced that the reason God has blessed me richly is that when I was a boy I gave God everything I possessed."
- The congregation was spellbound by the multi-millionaire's tremendous statement until an elderly little man seated in the front row rose and said, "Brother, I dare you to do it again."(E-Sword)
- Giving is Living : Are you still alive?