



Just A Minute With Scripture

Joyful Giving

What is ‘giving?’ In Scripture, it denotes the idea of providing a gift of grace or act of loving kindness: *“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also **freely give us all things?**” (Romans 8:32)* The dictionary relays the idea of bestowing something to someone; to transfer, set aside, or sacrifice for a purpose. Life provides many opportunities to give joyfully. Can you think of some?

Who can know the heart attitude behind what someone does? Can we know our own selves? The Lord pointed out an elderly woman giving all she had: *“...That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living. (Mark 12:43-44)* She expressed her earnest desire to offer the Lord everything.

The Lord Himself had great wealth and position, yet, for us, He humbled Himself: *“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (II Cor. 8:9)* Isn’t the Lord’s example as ‘a servant of love’ what we are called to be? Reflect on your heart attitude when you give. Is it a genuine, sacrificial heart love or does it feel more like a requirement or pressure? The difference is a grace motive verses the law.

The Lord Jesus Christ delighted to take our place to pay for our sin because of His great love. He left His throne of glory to be obedient to the Father’s will because He knew there was no other way. Thus, He gave joyfully, laying down His life for you and me! This is the ultimate sacrifice of selfless love. Look for opportunities to live this kind of love.

A Sacrificial Giving Goal for this New Year, 2023

There are many ways to give of ourselves using our time and heart. One way is to share the gospel with one person every month this year. Do it unto the Lord, ‘constrained by the love of Christ.’ (II Cor. 5:14)

At first, this may not be easy, so simply pass out a tract. Progress to walk by faith, setting your flesh aside to speak from your heart to hold forth the gospel. It can change their life and yours for eternity!

Feel free to call if you have questions with any articles.

Articles in This Issue

- Joyful Giving 1
- Devotional: Galatians 2
- Living in a Bubble 2
- Questions & Answers 2,3
- Are You Ready? 3
- The Ripple Effect 4
- About Us 4



Study Devotional of the Book of Galatians

Galatians is a book that reveals the challenges of going back under the law. Paul addresses a few issues to help this Church get back on track, living the gospel of grace.

Verses this Month: *Galatians 3:24-26*
"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

1. Define "schoolmaster?" How does it have a positive affect upon us today?
2. How did the law "bring us to Christ?" Can you explain this phrase?
3. How is someone saved from God's wrath? Is this what Paul means when he says "justified by faith?"
4. When "faith is come," that is, the dispensation of Gentile grace, "we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Explain.
5. Once we believe (justified by faith in the blood of Christ) we are saved. Is this when we become God's "children?" Can you find a similar verse in *Romans 8*?

"...Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor..." II Corinthians 8:9

Questions & Answers With Deborah

Question 1: I'm a believer, but my past haunts me. How can I move forward?

Remember, you are eternally forgiven. Paul gives a few verses in *Philippians 3* that may help. He says to forget things from the past and push forward toward the future: "*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" (Vs. 14) Then focus above.

What you choose do with your resources and time on earth will affect both now and eternity. For example, God uses all things to work together for good. Practically, God enables the doctrine to function within us, together with our sufferings/mistakes to work for us.

Focusing on the things of the past and failures is putting yourself under the law. Satan loves that because it interferes with your ministry. Remember, we are left here on earth for God's work and to manifest His glory. (Cont.)

Are You Living in a Bubble?

From observation, it seems that man has the tendency to try to control others and the circumstances of life. This produces frustration, anger, and high stress. We put everyone and everything in our world in our bubble, where, in a way, we are god. We want life to go the way we want and expect. We want people to do as we desire. This is putting everything under 'our law.' We are happy when things go our way and become displeased, frustrated, and even volatile when they don't. (*Gal. 5:19-21*) Basically, we're trying to be God. What does the Word say? "...for I am God, and there is none else." (*Is. 45:22*)

Realizing that we cannot control anyone but ourselves is helpful. In many ways, a key issue as believers is how we respond to circumstances. Will it be an emotional, fleshly reaction or the grace response of trusting the Truth. We can be angry at circumstances or a person or, in faith, accept things as they are and use opportunities to minister to others. It's not to be all about us, exalting our flesh, but to serve.

We can rely on God's power and wisdom to be changed and learn to be content, patiently enduring the challenges of this life. Life's focus is to apply the Word and prefer others. Yet, there's nothing we can do of our own selves. It is all Christ's work in us, the inner man: "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*" (*Galatians 2:20*)

*For more on this subject, visit our YouTube channel. Truth to Go: #17 Are You Living in a Bubble? <https://youtu.be/2KkQbLhmULs>



Are You Ready?

Part of Paul's instruction to the Corinthians was that they were to be ready and willing to perform what they agreed to do. *"To prove the sincerity of their love,"* Paul encouraged the Corinthians to follow through with giving the gift as promised, to help the poor saints at Jerusalem: *"Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have."* (II Cor. 8:11)

Paul teaches that there is a process to giving. In verse 12, he relays that a *"willing mind"* is important. We are also to understand that God is not wanting them or anyone to be over-burdened, but to see one another as one body, members one of another, and family. In addition, they were to see that now others may have a need, yet at another time, they also may have needs. *"But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality."* (II Corinthians 8:14)

How is this relevant to make us ready? Be reminded that out of exceedingly great love, everything we have has been given to us by God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *"For we are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* (I Corinthians 6:20) Thankfulness can motivate us to 'be ready' to give, not only money but even our own bodies, using our time on earth to be a living sacrifice. *"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."* (II Corinthians 5:14) Think on this!

Questions & Answers With Deborah

Question 2: How can I accept and live under the control of an intolerable system?

Do you have the conviction that you are under the authority of someone who is unkind, oppressive, incompetent, or ungodly: your president, employer, husband, or father?

What can you do? *Romans 13* deals with authority in this time of grace. Read this chapter slowly, thinking about your personal situation. God gives clarity, though it's contrary to the flesh. God's grace is sufficient to deal with this issue. We're to be in subjection to *"the powers that be,"* as they are ordained by God. (vs. 1) This includes people we don't like or with whom we disagree. Why? *"Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God..."* (vs.2) Yet, if they require you to live contrary to God's instruction, then always obey God. (Acts 5:29)

Question 3: Can you give an example of how to deal with a life issue using Scripture?

I wanted to make this article personal, so I will share one of my struggles: I talk too much. I'm a driven, ADHD sort of person. While it's easy to blame my challenges on ADHD or impulsive, anxious tendencies, in reality, it is my flesh, unrestrained and wanting to be in control. Most of the time I'm unaware and caught up in myself, and I can overwhelm others. To my family and friends, I am truly sorry. This and most bad habits aren't easy to change, but God is able.

I'm realizing that I exalt what 'I want' at that moment, absorbed in what I am thinking. I want someone to hear, or understand what I say; to agree, or give me feedback. I'm not preferring others, but exalting me. Humbling.

God desires that I move forward in my thinking to be renewed. It's a choice. How? Be in the moment, self-aware, and choose to exalt others. (Rom. 12:10) When I realize I'm over-talking, I need to STOP, prefer, & live selfless love. In a week, year, or eternity, will it matter what I'm saying? At times it does. Mostly, I ought to choose to be quiet, think on verses, and pray to switch the focus. I can ask the other person a question or just be quiet. Can you apply this process in your life?



The Ripple Effect in Sharing the Gospel

As saints in the Body of Christ, we are to manifest the glory of God in our earthly vessels, holding forth the gospel of grace. Many times we have the glorious privilege of seeing how it impacts others: some believe and are justified by faith in Christ's blood or we see a saint being edified. However, often we don't know, as God works invisibly within the soul. We are to trust God. His Word doesn't come back to Him void, but accomplishes what He desires. (Isaiah 55:11) Each person is impacted and this affects eternity. You can do your part to share the gospel, 'planting seeds or watering.' God does His part to pierce their heart and soul with the Word to grow. Paul relays, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. 3:6)

To explain it another way, there is a ripple effect to everything we do in this life. It's much like throwing a stone in a pond and watching the ripples spread through the water. When we speak the Truth in love, it has this effect into eternity with whomever we speak. It produces life in some, and manifests sin and death in others. (II Cor. 2:16) You share with one person, who becomes justified, and then their life is eternally changed. They then manifest Christ to others, impacting many more people in their circle of influence, who in turn affect others. This is an amazing process to meditate upon, as the fullness of it will not be seen until we are with the Lord and into eternity.

Knowing this can help us in our motivation to be ambassadors to share with others, even though it may feel contrary to our flesh. Sharing the gospel in Satan's sin-cursed world can prompt a 'fear and trembling' sort of fleshly response. However, will we allow Satan to shut us down or detour us from this privilege to have this kind of power over us? God forbid! We can choose to trust Him and hold forth the Truth. This is putting into action our faith in spite of our fears, walking out our faith in the details of life. As we 'set our affections above,' (Col. 3:2) we can push through fear and trust our Father. I pray you think on this. It is not our responsibility to make sure someone responds properly to be saved. We're to hold forth His Word. God will bring the increase.

*For more on this subject, visit our YouTube channel. Ministering to Others: #5 The Ripple Effect: Your Job vs God's <https://youtu.be/SNeTwnZ2YRQ>

A GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY

Join us to make a new goal in 2023. Read through the Bible this year at your own pace! Let us know how you are doing or if you need help or motivation!

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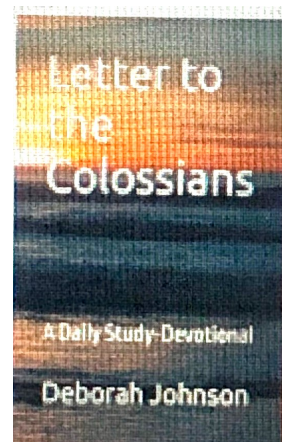
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Note: For all Publications the King James Bible is used. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.



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