

Authentic Christianity, Part 10: Give with Humility

August 13, 2023

Matthew 6:1-4

Short Review of Authentic Christianity: Why the church is languishing: 1) Worldly Shepherds: don't use God's Word to guide and lead. 2) Generation of Sentimentality: worship is focused on man and not God. 3) Embarrassment of the Biblical Gospel: repentance follows regeneration, tares grow amongst the wheat, false believers assuming salvation by their works. 4) Congregation as a Consumer: We worship on the Lord's Day built on a culture of holiness needed to worship God. The preaching given to convict of sin and for us to learn God's Word. Giving with Humility is a response of a changed heart. Matt. 6:21 says it shows where your treasure is. Matthew 6:1-4 is a reasonable bridge between caring for the poor in the OT to supporting the Gospel proclamation in the NT. Why? 1) Giving to poor funneled through the church to its members. 2) Jesus giving New Covenant Law because the OT acknowledged that the poor would always be present, Deut. 15:11. Jesus is not commanding to give, but says in Matt. 6:2, "when you give." 3) Giving to poor changing to giving to the Gospel. This passage is a bridge for the heart of giving in the NC.

How to Give Like a False Believer:

- 1) Seek a Reward Now: V1, "doing your righteousness deed" to be seen by men. V2, blowing a trumpet with every good deed, as hypocrites do with their form of righteousness.
- 2) Tolerate the Church: have a low view of the church. See the church as a charity like other charities. Concern that a giver has that the church owes something to its members.
- 3) Tolerate the Shepherds: Eph. 4:7-16, Shepherds are gifts to the church they are not like a corporate board or managers for other shareholders.

How to Give Like a Believer:

- 1) Seek a Reward Later: V3, humility in giving not for drawing attention. It is a prohibition against gloating. V4, giving with a heavenly motive- obedience to the Lord is a reward in itself, self-denial brings joy.
- 2) Have a High View of the Church: ascribing high honor to the Bride and Body of Christ. Churches are evaluated by Christ (Rev. 2-3), members are commanded to be at peace and free of discord amongst themselves (Matt. 18:15-20). The church is the foundation of the truth, 1 Tim. 3:15. It is called the House of God, the Church of the Living God, and bears the name of the King of kings, God's Son. The church will rule the earth.
- 3) Have a High View of the Shepherds: showing obedience to them can't be joyful if in disobedience to shepherds. Paul provides the basis for valuing the labor of shepherds, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching, 1 Cor. 9:3-14. Paul describes the right of a shepherd to be supported by those he ministers to: a) Logical Practice: V7, the soldier, farmer, and shepherd aren't expected to go to war at their own expense. b) OT Scripture: V8-9, the ox is not muzzled while treading out the grain. c) Reasonable Reward: V10, the plowman and thresher hope to gain from their labors. V11, if spiritual things are sowed should not those who benefit give physical things to the those that sowed? d) Usual Practice: V12, Apollos and Peter were provided for by the Corinthians, Paul has the right (authority) as well. e) Priesthood: V13, they were provided for from the offerings given by those who came to the temple. f) Command of Christ: V14, Jesus commanded the disciples to be provided for as they traveled to preach in Luke 10:7.

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Revisiting 1 Cor. 9:9 and considering 1 Tim. 5:17-18, shepherds are cautious to not be domineering but are also commanded to insist on obedience to God's commands, Titus 2:15. The word *ti'me'*: has the meaning of honor, respect, and money. All shepherds work hard (1 Thess. 5:12-13), but those whose life is preaching and teaching are worthy of double honor (*ti'me'*). An ox would be borrowed or rented at harvest time. Certainly, the owner would feed their own animal. This is focused on the animal if rented or borrowed.

>>Paul is commenting on the value of preaching using a lesser to the greater comparison. Certainly, the ox should be allowed to have the equivalent of a loaf of bread while it works for you. Even so, a preacher should be cared for even more for the labor of preparing to proclaim God's Word to us. Justice: we receive life giving preaching of the Word of God, we should give for that gift. Value: we should value the hard work and training to be prepared to preach God's Word and pay well for it.

Further Discussion and Application

What value do we put on the preached Word? Do we see it as a mercy of God to give us truth that would sanctify our lives, John 17:17? Do we see it as a joy to know God's word, Ps. 119:105, Pro. 30:5? What is the value of having truth from God's Word?

The preaching of God's Word is the priority of gathering. Why should churches pay well for the blessing of having a man well prepared to come and proclaim God's truth? Why is it a blessing for the hearers of God's Word to have such a man? How can we honor the Lord by supporting the man He sends us and sharing the blessings we receive from the preaching?

Examine Matt. 13:45-46. This pearl what is it? Why does Jesus define loving Him by keeping His commandments, Jn. 14:15, 1 Jn. 5:3? So how do we connect the heart of one changed by the Gospel and then the subsequent desire to support those whom God has prepared to lead His people? What do we begin to understand about the gifts of men that God has provided to lead His church, Eph. 4:7-16? How does this gift demonstrate God's faithfulness to His people and His perfect wisdom?

What has Steve's preaching done in your life? How has the truth proclaimed to you changed your life? How do we value that labor? How do we esteem our shepherds who labor in preaching and teaching? How do we value the sanctification we have experienced from God's Word?