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Unless otherwise
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by our preacher,
Russell M. Kline

THE PAPER PULPIT

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the Madisonville Church of Christ

GIVING

Volume 5, Issue 3

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...Of Our Means

When one thinks about the Bible doctrine of giving, money is usually the first thing that comes to mind. In First Corinthians 16:1 and 2, the apostle Paul succinctly stated that giving of our means is supposed to be part of the worship that Christians offer to God. *“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”* The “collection for the saints” to which Paul referred was money that he was raising to take with him to Jerusalem, so he could present it to the elders of the church there for the relief of Christians who were suffering financially (Acts 11:29,30). He wanted the members of the church in Corinth to set aside money for this effort by giving of their means on the first day of every week, so there would be no need for a special collection, when he arrived.

This passage authorizes the church to take up a collection on the first day of every week. This is meant to be part of the worship that the church offers to God, because the first day of the week was “when

the disciples came together” (Acts 20:7). It also authorizes the church to put up money “in store.” Churches may have savings accounts and checking accounts. Churches may budget money for specific purposes. The church is not authorized to hoard money, but it is authorized to have a plan, or a purpose for the money that is collected, on the Lord’s Day (Luke 16:9).

As to the amount of money that Christians are supposed to give on the first day of every week, there is no limit. The

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store...”

—1 Corinthians 16:2

New Testament does not teach that Christians are supposed to give a tithe, or a “tenth” of what they possess, but that they are to give “as God hath prospered” them.

That means that it is up to the individual Christian to determine the amount of money he will contribute on the Lord’s Day. Of course, every Christian should bear in mind that the giving he does is part of the worship he offers to God, and that God would not be pleased with a half-hearted gift (2 Cor. 9:6,7). Also, it should be noted that we all owe the Lord a debt that is far greater than our ability to pay. We cannot put a price on what Jesus did to purchase our redemption, so the truth is that owe God everything we have. Let us all consider these things when we give of our means.



Quotable Quotations

“One dollar spent for lunch lasts five hours. One dollar spent for a necktie lasts five weeks. One dollar spent for a cap lasts five months. One dollar spent for an automobile lasts five years. One dollar spent in the service of God lasts for eternity.”

—Roger Babson

“Some Africans, converted from a heathen religion to

the Christian religion, were casting gifts into a large ring drawn on the ground. Gold, silver, etc. were being given; but one native stepped into the ring and said, ‘I give myself.’ We need to give ourselves...”

—Leroy Brownlow

“How many times have you heard a fellow saint confess: ‘I know I’m not giving

enough to the church’? When anyone makes such a confession he is admitting he is withholding a portion of his material possessions that should be devoted to the service of his God. Hence, he is ‘robbing God.’”

—F.B. Shepherd

...Of Our Time

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

—Ephesians 5:15, 16

How much of your time do you give to God? Sure, you may give a generous amount of your money to the Lord, but money is not the only thing with which God blesses us. Time is a much more precious commodity, and all of the time we have is a gift from our Heavenly Father.

In Ephesians 5:15 and 16, it is written: “*See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*”

As is typically the case, in New Testament epistles, “walk” is a figurative term used in reference to living

used in reference to living one’s life. To “*walk circumspectly*” is to *live cautiously*. Christians are commanded to live cautiously, “*redeeming the time.*” To redeem something is literally to “rescue [it] from loss.” Therefore, Christians are commanded to live cautiously, so that their time is not wasted. After all, time is something that we all are running out of, and no one is capable of substantially increasing their supply.

The world teaches us to spend our time making money and enjoying leisure activities, but the Lord wants us to spend our

time in pursuit of spiritual goals, as well. How much time do you spend worshipping God? How much time do you spend studying the Bible? How much time do you spend being of service to your fellow men? How much time do you spend talking to others about Jesus, and encouraging them to follow in His footsteps? How much time do you spend visiting those who are spiritually and physically sick? All of these are perfectly good ways for us to spend our time wisely; and give back a portion of what God has blessed us with, in our lives.

PP

...Of Our Talent

Paul, in praise of the Christians of Macedonia, wrote: *“How that in great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering of the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God”* (2 Cor. 8:2-5). The fact that these Christians were willing to give more than just their money those who were in need is most impressive, indeed!

The various abilities we all possess are gifts entrusted to us by God. Whether we are capable of great feats of physical strength and endurance, diplomatic interpersonal skills, extraordinary intelligence, or any other such like ability, we all have God to thank for what we are capable of doing. But, are we using our various talents for the glory of God, or we simply wasting them selfishly?

In His “Parable of the Talents” (Mat. 25:14-30), Jesus made the point that, no matter how many talents we may or may not have, God expects us to use those talents and not simply hide them from the world. If one has a talent for teaching, one **must** find a way to use that

talent for the cause of Christ; if one has a talent for singing, then one **must** find a way to use that talent for God’s glory; if one has a talent for preaching, then one **must** preach the gospel to all who will listen. Making the best use of our God-given talents is **not** an optional proposition: it is something we all must do, if we want to go to Heaven!

There are Christian doctors who go on medical mission trips, so they can use their talents to glorify God. There are Christian young people who go on door-knocking campaigns, so they can be useful in the Lord’s service. It doesn’t matter who you are, or how much talent you have, God can use you in His kingdom!

“For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

**—Matthew
25:29**

PP

Web Sites That Won't Waste Your Time...



Use this code with your smart phone to visit the web site of the Madisonville Church of Christ. Get news and information about what’s going on in our congregation. Put your knowledge of the Bible to the test on our “Q & A” page. No smart phone, no problem. Just use your computer’s web browser to visit www.madisonvillechurchofchrist.org.

Do a search for the “Madisonville Church of Christ” on Facebook, and “like” our page. We post many announcements about happenings at the church and other items of interest, each week. We would love to have you as part of our Facebook following!





Madisonville Church of Christ Sunday Morning Bible Study

—9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship

—10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship

—6:00 p.m.

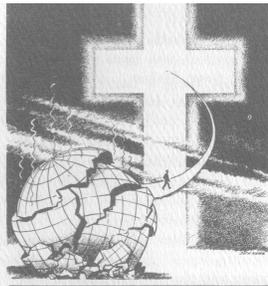
Wednesday Evening Bible Study

—7:00 p.m.

A Christ-Preaching, Bible-Teaching Church

What Is a Tithe?

In Genesis 14:18 through 20, it is written, “*And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.*” This is the very first time that the word “tithe” is used in the Bible. It literally means “a tenth” of something. Typically, it is used to refer to some kind of an offering of one’s means to the Lord, as in the case of Abram giving a tenth of what he had gained in the battle with Chedorlaomer’s forces to Melchizedek, who was a priest of the most high God. Under the terms and conditions of the Law of Moses, there were various times when the Jews were required to give tithes of all they possessed to the priests who served in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple. Are Christians required to give tithes of all that they possess? What does the Law of Christ have to say about giving? These are the questions addressed in this issue of the Paper Pulpit.



Lesson 25

Bible Correspondence Course

By Wendell K. Freeman

What Does The Bible Teach About **HEAVEN**

The search of all men is for happiness. To some it is happiness to have a nice home; to another, it is happiness to have a fine automobile; to another, it is happiness to have a prominent position.

To the Christian, none of these things give the happiness which they seek. The Christian has placed his hope and aim higher, and he is looking forward to eternal happiness in heaven. This lesson is aimed at raising our hopes to a higher plane and causing us to be more concerned with making heaven our home.

Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:11-12, that we should consider ourselves happy when we are privileged to suffer for the name’s sake of Christ, for when we do so, great is our reward in heaven. Many are they whose blood has been shed for the name of Christ, yet through this suffering there shall come the eternal reward.

The Bible Teaches That . . .

1. **WE SHOULD LAY UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN.** “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matthew 6:19-21.

In this passage, Jesus taught in such a way as to leave no doubt. His desire for us is that we seek those things that are above and not the things upon the earth. If only men and women could be brought to a realization of how short life is and how transient the things we possess materially, they would be more concerned with an eternal reward.

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- ◆ CERTIFICATE PRESENTED UPON COMPLETION.
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- ◆ AN EXCELLENT AID TO A PERSONAL STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.
- ◆ ELEVATES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT OVER THE OPINIONS OF MEN.