

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

December 27, 2009

The spirit of giving

by David King

"He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:6-7).

Having just passed through yet another Christmas season, with all the emphasis on giving and receiving gifts, this would be an appropriate time to reflect on the Biblical concept of giving.

In the Old Testament, God's people were required to give ten percent (a tithe) of all their income to the Lord (Lev. 27:30-33). But that does not include occasions in which the people were encouraged to give extra for special projects. For example, the Israelites in the wilderness donated their gold and silver jewelry to help build the tabernacle and its furnishings. The people were so generous that the craftsmen had to ask Moses to restrain the people from giving, because the material was "indeed too much" (Ex. 36:4-7). A similar outpouring of generosity accompanied David's preparation for the building of the temple (2 Chron. 29:5-9).

In the New Testament, the tithing requirement is removed. But that freedom places the responsibility for giving squarely on the heart of the individual. More than anything else, what we choose to give is a measure of our love for God and others. The poor widow who dropped two small copper coins in the temple treasury, for example, was honored by Jesus above the rich men who were dropping bags of money, because she "out of her poverty put in

all the livelihood that she had" (Lk. 21:1-4). Her sacrificial giving exceeded that of the rich.

Our opening text outlines the principles by which God judges our giving. He wants our giving to be motivated by a willing heart, offered cheerfully and without reservation. But He also expects it be generous, not tainted by selfish impulses. Like the poor widow, the dollar amount is not important; what matters is the generous heart behind the gift.

This spirit affects more than just our money. Married couples learn to give each other forbearance, and the space to grow in the relationship. Parents give their children ample portions of their time and attention. Wise employees give their management and customers service that goes beyond the bare minimum. Most charities today would go out of business were it not for the hordes of volunteers who freely give of their time and labor.

You see, ultimately the spirit of giving is not about money or possessions or any other external commodity. It is about training our hearts to always think in terms of serving others — starting with God, and extending out to everyone else around us. It is about giving **ourselves**.

The person who truly has the spirit of giving in his heart does not need a special season to "get in the spirit" of giving. Giving is part of his nature, regardless of the occasion or the recipient. Everything that he has is viewed as tools for helping others, not as treasures to be hoarded for personal enjoyment. Understand that, and giving becomes easy.