

THE BLESSED GIVERS

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“Remember.” Near the end of Acts 20, as Paul bids farewell for the final time to Christians in Ephesus, he gives them something to remember. We would do well to listen in and follow his lead.

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

Life, as it was meant to be, is not about receiving, consuming, and expectantly looking for the next thing I “deserve” to receive. My Creator is a gracious giver.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures” (James 1:17-18).

Take a few moments to slow down and really think about those insights. You have not been created to be a consumer. Your creator is a gracious giver. Every good and perfect gift comes down from Him, and of His own will, He has brought us forth—as His creatures—to be His images in His world. We have been created and blessed to serve as gracious givers—imitators of the Father of lights. In fact, the Lord Jesus himself revealed that the greatest blessing is found in the giving. Remember those words today...

- ◆ Though some around you may be long on talk and short on application, unashamedly show, “in all things,” who the Lord of your life is.
- ◆ Even as the majority may be focused on getting, be a joyful giver.
- ◆ Don’t settle as a reservoir of blessings. Be a life-giving channel of blessing to others.
- ◆ Swim upstream against selfishness and the all-too-common tides of entitlement. Work hard. Work with a sincere heart, as if you are serving Christ himself.
- ◆ Be the salt in a decaying culture of selfishness. Fueled by the mercies of God, shine as a selfless light. A living sacrifice.
- ◆ In a cruel world wherein far too many live with a “survival of the fittest” mentality, notice the vulnerable. Comfort the hurting. Encourage the fainthearted. Help the weak.
- ◆ Turn down the noise. Unplug if you have to. Resist the riptide that easily drowns us in meaningless, never-ending distractions. Make the best use of the time you’ve been given. Pay the price of undivided attention.

- ◆ Though some may take and take and never thank, humbly receive. Then thoughtfully express your genuine appreciation.

When it's far too easy to be far too busy, remember the words of the Lord Jesus. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Let's take Him at His word today. Let's live as blessed givers, the firstfruits of the Father of lights. The greatest blessing will be found in the giving.