

The Best Kind of Giving

“I don't deserve this award, but I have arthritis and I don't deserve that either.”~

Jack Benny

God has given us this beautiful world, a lifetime to find joy in it, and eternal life through his Son Jesus. Greater gifts than these, no one on earth can give. His example of giving out of love is one I hope we all discover one day.

Sooner or later, we as Christians will learn that it is more blessed to give than receive. To give things which are eternal, like forgiveness, hope, encouragement, help, and life, can be sometimes impossible. But we must spend our lives as close as we can to doing just that.

God gives salvation, the gift of life forever, not because we deserve it, but out of his infinite mercy and grace. Whenever we begin to feel in the slightest that we deserve it, or that we know better, we must abandon that false idea; thinking that we deserve, or are entitled to anything, is the most dangerous fallacy in the world.

We all can give our opinions. But most people don't know enough of the picture to tell someone else what to do. Winston Churchill, one of the great leaders of the free world, wrote, “The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.”

Shortsightedness, exaggeration, and pride are the arsenals of the human man. Vision, reality, and humility are God given virtues.

The greatest dynamic of giving, and the way we know it is from God, is when it is filled with love. “Kindness in words creates confidence, says ancient writer Lao Tzu.” “Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.”

One of the best kinds of giving, and one which people need most, is just walking with others along the path they travel. Henri Nouwen has spent his life helping others. He wrote a marvelous book called “Wounded Healer” in which he says that we who are wounded, or in pain, have a kinship with Jesus Christ because of that, and with one another as well. He writes, “When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand.”

Giving, we must discover, is not just money. Giving of ourselves, of the love that God has put in our hearts, of our time and energy, is real giving. Especially if it inconveniences us, and for sure if we do it even though we don't have the time to do it. For giving, after all, is God's gift, not ours.

Giving good thoughts is a great gift, and costs nothing. Think about it. Plan to give that good thought, that word of encouragement, that word of love that God

has given us to someone today. “If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we should cast the gift of a loving thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give.”~ George MacDonald

Let us not put it off. One of the greatest tragedies could be that we only have a limited amount of time on earth, and we could plan to give for the rest of our lives, and never get around to doing it.

God keeps on giving to us as we give. The more we give, the more receive, for the more room there is in our hearts. God gives us ways to be the church together, to gather with friends around table, to worship in humility and expectation, and to give to others because God has given to us. Jesus says, “give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

One way of putting that amount of giving time is to measure it the way Howard Buffet does. “Each of us, “he estimates and pontificates, “has about 40 chances to accomplish our goals in life. I learned this first through agriculture, because all farmers can expect to have about 40 growing seasons, giving them just 40 chances to improve on every harvest.”

Some of us will have less than 40, some more. But we must realize and act in giving before we have no more time to give. Giving is the way of Jesus. After all, he gave his life for us at exactly the right time.

So, dear reader, let us take a close look at the type of giving, the role of giving, and the result our giving has on other people. Let us give as Jesus gave, with love, healing, full of hope, and without limit. After, all, what else are his disciples here to do? And let us be prepared to receive, in exactly the same way.