

Lessons in Liberty

Freewill Offerings

Text: Exodus 35:4-29

Introduction:

1. Liberty in Christ is related directly to morality – it is not a license to sin.
2. The cost of freedom in Christ is precious – it cost God His Son, it cost Jesus His life, and it costs man his total surrender.
3. Man is created in the image of God; and, like the Lord, he possesses free will.
4. When one becomes a Christian, he is freed from sin and filled with gratitude.
5. Thus, the Christian desires to use his free will to express his thanksgiving to God.

I. Giving in the Old Testament

- A. After God gave the instructions for the building of the Tabernacle, the children of Israel were to provide the items necessary for its construction.
 1. These were to be offered with a “willing heart” (Exodus 34:5).
 2. They were given with a “willing spirit” (Exodus 34:21-22).
 3. This type of giving was called wisdom (Exodus 34:25-26).
 4. Thus, this was a “willing offering” (Exodus 34:29).
- B. The word for “willing” refers to something that is voluntary or spontaneous.
- C. This became known as “freewill offerings” (cf. Exodus 36:3, 5-7).
 1. This was different and distinct from the tithe (Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 12:6).
 2. It was also separate from the many sacrifices offered throughout the year and on the feast days.
- D. In addition to all their offerings and sacrifices, the Israelites could also make “freewill offerings” to the Lord (Leviticus 22:18-23; 23:38; Numbers 15:3; 29:39; Deuteronomy 12:6, 17).
- E. This type of offering was an act of devotion to the Lord (Psalm 54:6; 119:108).
- F. God desired that His people would serve and honor Him by their own free will (cf. Ezra 7:13).

II. Giving in the New Testament

- A. The Christian living under the Gospel of Christ is commanded to give (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).
- B. Yet, God desires for one's giving to be cheerful, from a heart overflowing with gratitude (2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 9, 12; 9:6-7, 11).
- C. Thus, God has not specified a specific amount that one is to give, such as a tithe.
- D. Instead, every act of giving is to be a freewill offering to the Lord!
 1. It is done to express gratitude.
 2. It is done to serve others.
 3. It is done to honor God.
 4. It is done to motivate others to glorify God (2 Corinthians 9:12-15).
- E. Every act of giving is an exercise of one's free will – the freedom of choice to obey and honor the Savior.

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- III. Giving Freely
- A. As important as monetary giving is, there are many other ways that the Christian is to give to the Lord.
 - B. Jesus stated: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).
 - 1. This was not stated in reference to money (Matthew 10:9; cf. Acts 3:6).
 - 2. Spiritual things are of far greater value than any material wealth (cf. Acts 8:18-20).
 - C. God's desire is for all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4; John 3:16).
 - D. Those who have been saved have received the gift freely (Romans 3:23-24; 6:23).
 - E. In return, they are to offer it freely to others – no matter the personal cost (cf. Acts 20:33-35; Mark 16:15-16).
 - 1. The Israelites sacrificed greatly to build the Tabernacle.
 - 2. The Christian is working to build something far greater – the church!
 - 3. No sacrifice is too great! No gift is too costly!
 - F. The child of God must be willing to give all to His Lord.

Conclusion:

- 1. God has blessed His children with liberty – freedom of choice and freedom from sin.
- 2. The Christian must use his free will to give back to the Lord.