

10 Giving BACK

11 Mar. 23



Ice-Breaker: *How blessed would you say you are?*

Luke 12:13-34 cev ¹³⁻¹⁴A man in a crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, tell my brother to give me my share of what our father left us when he died.” Jesus answered, “Who gave me the right to settle arguments between you and your brother?” ¹⁵Then he said to the crowd, “Don’t be greedy! Owning a lot of things won’t make your life safe.” ¹⁶⁻¹⁹So Jesus told them this story: A rich man’s farm produced a big crop, and he said to himself, “What can I do? I don’t have a place large enough to store everything.” Later, he said, “Now I know what I’ll do. I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, where I can store all my grain and other goods. Then I’ll say to myself, ‘You have stored up enough good things to last for years to come. Live it up! Eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.’” ²⁰⁻²¹But God said to him, “You fool! Tonight you will die. Then who will get what you have stored up?” “This is what happens to people who store up everything for themselves, but are poor in the sight of God.” ²²⁻²⁸Jesus said to his disciples: I tell you not to worry about your life! Don’t worry about having something to eat or wear. Life is more than food or clothing. Look at the crows! They don’t plant or harvest, and they don’t have storehouses or barns. But God takes care of them. You are much more important than any birds. Can worry make you live longer? If you don’t have power over small things, why worry about everything else? Look how the wild flowers grow! They don’t work hard to make their clothes. But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth wasn’t as well clothed as one of these flowers. God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. Won’t he do even more for you? You have such little faith! ²⁹⁻³¹Don’t keep worrying about having something to eat or drink. Only people who don’t know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father knows what you need. But put God’s work first, and these things will be yours as well. ³²⁻³⁴My little group of disciples, don’t be afraid! Your Father wants to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves money bags that never wear out. Make sure your treasure is safe in heaven, where thieves cannot steal it and moths cannot destroy it. Your heart will always be where your treasure is.

- *How do we relate to the man’s problem in verses 13-14? What would we do?*
- *What do we think of Jesus’ answer found in verse 15?*

- *In the following parable, was it wrong for the business man to do so well? What was missing from his goals and actions?*
- *Put into your own words Jesus’ message found in verses 20-21.*
- *Why do you think Jesus uses the word worry so much in verses 22-28?*
- *How does this passage relate to “it is better to give than to receive”?*

Ecclesiastes 5:8-17 cev ⁸⁻⁹Don’t be surprised if the poor of your country are abused, and injustice takes the place of justice. After all, the lower officials must do what the higher ones order them to do. And since the king is the highest official, he benefits most from the taxes paid on the land. ¹⁰⁻¹²If you love money and wealth, you will never be satisfied with what you have. This doesn’t make sense either. The more you have, the more everyone expects from you. Your money won’t do you any good—others will just spend it for you. If you have to work hard for a living, you can rest well at night, even if you don’t have much to eat. But if you are rich, you can’t even sleep. ¹³⁻¹⁷I have seen something terribly unfair. People get rich, but it does them no good. Suddenly they lose everything in a bad business deal, then have nothing to leave for their children. They came into this world naked, and when they die, they will be just as naked. They can’t take anything with them, and they won’t have anything to show for all their work. That’s terribly unfair. They leave the world just as they came into it. They gained nothing from running after the wind. Besides all this, they are always gloomy at mealtimes, and they are troubled, sick, and bitter.

- *What is this passage saying to us about human existence in general?*
- *How can we get in step with the philosophy shown here?*

2 Corinthians 4:7-18 cev ⁷⁻¹²We are like clay jars in which this treasure is stored. The real power comes from God and not from us. We often suffer, but we are never crushed. Even when we don’t know what to do, we never give up. In times of trouble, God is with us, and when we are knocked down, we get up again. We face death every day because of Jesus. Our bodies show what his death was like, so that his life can also be seen in us. This means that death is working in us, but life is working in you. ¹³⁻¹⁵In the Scriptures it says, “I spoke because I had faith.” We have that same kind of faith. So we speak because we know that God raised the Lord Jesus to life. And just as God raised Jesus, he will also raise us to life. Then he will bring us into his presence together with you. All this has been done for you, so that more and more people will know how kind God is and will praise and honour him. ¹⁶⁻¹⁸We never give up. Our bodies are gradually dying, but we ourselves are being made stronger each day. These little troubles are getting us ready for an eternal glory that will make all our troubles seem like nothing. Things that are seen don’t last for ever, but things that are not seen are eternal. That’s why we keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen.

- *What message is the Apostle Paul giving us in these verses?*
- *Why should we look at life as a whole in order to deal with daily activities?*
- *What challenges has our discussion presented us with today?*