

## Wise Giving

Sunday , May 10, 2009

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**1. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [ Wife of Noble Character].  
Proverbs 31.10 onwards**

**2. Obedience [ the importance of ] [ The Amazing Macedonians]**

**The wisdom of giving ourselves to the Lord and the wisdom of obdience to The Lord in our giving.**

**3. Confidence in God. Rich towards God.**

Mark 10:29-30 (New International Version)

*29"I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.*

To capture these principles of wise giving (as well as other themes of wise living), Book of Proverbs concludes with a look at someone who models wise giving.

This woman in Proverbs 31 is meant to model for us what wisdom looks like when it is lived out in everyday life.

**Picking up on some points from Julios talk last week :**

The need to Give ourselves to the Lord

This means :

- Submitting to God
- Each one of us seeking his will for ourselves
- Obey Christ's leading

**1. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [ Proverbs 9:10 ]**

***She was wise as she feared the Lord***

Wisdom is the ability to put the knowledge you have learned into practice in a way that is pleasing to the Lord.

**To have knowledge** and not put it to use in this way is very foolish, for it won't profit you or anyone else. It is as good as having nothing. In fact, it might even be worse than having nothing, for we are responsible for what we know. [ Ezekiel 33:30-33] .

So often, people think that the word of God is for another time or for someone else, but it

isn't; it's for now, right now, and for each of us, just as Peter tells us in 1 Peter 1:25:

Pink explains this “fear” well :

*When we speak of godly fear, of course we do not mean a servile fear, such as prevails among the heathen in connection with their gods. No, we mean that spirit which is pledged to bless, that spirit to which the prophet referred when he said, "To this man will I (the Lord) look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2). ...And nothing will foster this godly fear like a recognition of the Sovereign Majesty of God.*

## **2. Obedience**

### **Meet the Macedonians**

We should live lives spent in gratitude to God showing thanksgiving in countless ways. An expression of love. This comes from obedience.

#### **Proverbs**

**11:24** One gives freely, yet gains even more;  
another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

*Paul taught : He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly.*

**Note : they gave themselves first to the Lord....”** *Their first gift was the gift of themselves to the Lord! If we give ourselves to the Lord completely a lot of hindrances are removed*

For 2000 years Christians all over the world have been testing the sincerity of their own love by comparing themselves with the Macedonians.

The first thing is to give ourselves to God, without reservation, without regard to whether times are hard or easy, whether we are rich or poor.

They were giving with grateful hearts. Gratitude that leads to the Cheerful giver” [ 2 Cor 9 6-7].

1.\_ Giving was initiated by God's grace.

Verse 1 reminded us that it was the grace of God given to the Macedonians that so totally transformed their lives that turned them into givers. It's not just a human act, it's not just what noble humans do, we're talking about a level of giving and a level of sacrifice that is unique to those who have been transformed by God's grace, who have been saved and sanctified by the power of God and His gracious work.

2.\_ Their giving transcended difficult circumstances. You wouldn't think it would be a time or an occasion when they would be able to give because of the tremendous difficulty of their circumstances, namely persecution and economic deprivation and yet in verse 2 it says they gave in a great ordeal of affliction.

3. (Verse 2 again) he talks about their abundance of joy.
  4. It was not hindered by poverty. He mentions in verse 2 their *deep poverty*.
- %. Their giving was generous, it overflowed in the wealth of their liberality or generosity.

### 3. Wise Giving : Rich towards God

Confidence in God

*Give me neither poverty nor riches as my confidence is in God.*

Attitude of mind is important : Give Me Neither Poverty Nor Riches  
 Better a Little with the Fear of the Lord than Great Wealth with Turmoil  
 Wisdom shows us an even better way

#### **Proverbs**

**15:6**            Better a little with the fear of the Lord  
                          *than great wealth with turmoil.*

15:17            *Better a meal of vegetables where there is love*  
                          *than a fattened café with hatred.*

Barclay ( On Study on Corinthians ) :

“ The rewards the New Testament envisages are never material..It promises not the wealth of things but the wealth of the heart and the spirit..”.

### **Rich towards God**

*City Financiers are searching for a “safe haven for funds” the newspapers are full of this at the moment. How can we find a safe haven for funds.*

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. {Mathew 6.20}.*

### **CT Studd**

I love the story of CT Studd. He inherited a fortune at 25 and – his biographer says- on the same day sat down and wrote out four cheques giving his inheritance away – “ as coolly and deliberately as a business man invests in some gilt edged securities as being both safe and yielding good interest he invested in teh bank of heaven..” [ Norman Grubb: CT. Studd ]

He helped set up the Moody Bible institute, Hudson Taylor Inland Mission, George Muller orphan homes., George Holland Ministry for the poor in White Chapel, and the Salavation

army India work.

This is the testimony of his brother after becoming a Christian

*.... I can now understand, what I never could fully before, the self-denial of my brother and others who have given up home and comforts in order to preach the Gospel in China..... I see now it is truly their greatest pleasure to tell of the love of JESUS, to be always on His service – it is no hardship to them – they have given up a sham that they might obtain a reality.*

*Their sole aim now, and I pray GOD that mine may be for the future, is to be telling of the love of the LORD JESUS, and of the salvation which He is offering to every man who will only believe.*

*So I hope I have left you with some images for wise giving :*

### **The wise and noble wife**

1. She feared the Lord
2. She has no fear for her household
3. She can laugh at the days to come.. !

*She is in a position of confidence, and doesn't need to stress about the future (25). Her household is prepared for variable conditions and disasters, such as a blizzard hitting Judea (21). While "she can laugh at the days to come," she won't let her wealth make her too comfortable. The wife of noble character will never "eat the bread of idleness" and she "fears the Lord."*

### **The Macedonians**

Gave THEMSELVES to the Lord." That is the real secret, not just their money, but their very selves.

### **CT Studd.**

Realised that

1. The safest way to save is to give away and
2. The best way to keep wealth is to lose it by being rich towards God.

Attached to the talk is some guidance on Gift Aid.