

Giving With the Wrong Spirit

Introduction

Read the following or relate it in your own words.

Giving is an important part of our Christian life. And, it is very important to learn to give in the way that God would have us to give. Giving with the wrong spirit is not true charity, and sometimes causes more harm to us and to others than we know.

The Scripture

Read the Scripture to the group.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” —1 Corinthians 13:3

A Real Life Example

Read the following or relate it in your own words.

Sharing a Lunch

On a bright sunny day, the school group was having lunch at the park. Cindy, Jane, and Lucy were sitting at the same picnic table, and were talking about the missionary offering being taken up by the young people at church. It was getting close to the time when the collection box would be opened, and they were wondering how much would be in it.

“I’ve given seven dollars so far,” said Jane, a little proudly. “How much have you given, Cindy?”

“Oh, I’m sure I don’t know, but not nearly that much,” replied Cindy. Inwardly she thought, “I wish I could give more than I do, but I don’t have very much to give. I suppose it doesn’t really matter how much because I know that Jesus just wants me to give what I can. Jane has told me that her parents give her extra money to give to the offering, but I don’t believe that my parents could afford to do that. I think that I can love those poor people as much as Jane, even though I cannot give as much. I will certainly pray for them.”

Just then Cindy noticed that Lucy was not eating at all. “How come you are not eating today, Lucy?” she asked.

“My mom was really sick with the flu this morning. She was not able to get out of bed, so she did not make me a lunch today,” Lucy replied.

“Oh, that’s too bad,” said Jane, as she put a chip in her mouth.

Cindy thought of a verse that she had been memorizing. *“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”* —1 Corinthians 13:3.

Then Cindy thought, “I cannot give so much as everyone else, but certainly here is an

opportunity for me to love someone.” She said, “Lucy, I had such a big breakfast that I am not so very hungry. My mom has cut my sandwich nicely in half. Please, take the other half. And, here, take the cookies also.”

Questions for Discussion

1. Why do you think Jane’s quiet little boasting of what she gave to the collection did not display a true spirit of charity?
2. How do you think Jane’s words made Cindy feel?
3. Cindy comforted herself with what thought?
4. When it was discovered that Lucy did not have a lunch, which girl really had a true spirit of charity? Explain your answer.
5. How did 1 Corinthians 13:3 help Cindy to be charitable?
6. Can you think of any more real life situations, which would show a true spirit of charity, rather than a boastful or selfish spirit?

Conclusion and Resolution

Read the Scripture again. Read or explain the conclusion in your own words. Ask the group to suggest what specific changes that they can resolve to make in their daily lives that will help them to implement needed changes in this area. Ask them to especially consider things they have learned in the Bible to use as scriptural guideposts to a more competent and productive life.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” —1 Corinthians 13:3.

If we give in the wrong way, and have a proud spirit about it, and boast to others about what we give, our gift is worthless. When we make others feel badly by what we say, we can be sure that we do not have true charity, for true charity never wounds anyone. And, true charity is never selfish.

Teacher’s Notes
