

The Blessings of Generosity

I read an interesting article recently about a study that was done concerning money and happiness. The results were reported in the March 21, 2008 issue of Science Magazine. The focus was **not** upon how income affected happiness. It has been shown in the past that after basic needs are met, income level has a weak affect on one's amount of happiness. For example, there is no evidence that a multimillionaire will necessarily have more happiness than someone who is only able to pay for the essentials of life. As income soars, happiness levels remain relatively unchanged.

But, what about a link between giving to others and increased levels of happiness? That was the focus of the study I read about. Essentially, the study concluded that spending on others brings greater satisfaction than purchasing items for oneself. Most fail to realize that giving to others will bring them more joy personally than spending money on themselves. But, Bible believers should not be surprised by this study. The Lord Jesus Christ taught nearly 2000 years ago – "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:33). The question is: do we believe it and live accordingly?

It is God's plan for man to give. Man has been designed so that giving to others will bring him the greatest satisfaction. Parents know the pleasure that comes with providing to their children. Spouses realize that even an inexpensive gift given out of love is not soon forgotten and brings happiness long after the moment it is given. As children of God, we must comprehend the importance of giving to others in the name of the Lord. We should desire to bless others because God has blessed us so abundantly, both physically and spiritually. We shouldn't give in an attempt to earn a blessing just as we should not serve God with the thought of earning salvation.

Would you like to be more satisfied with life? Then try giving more! Consider the following Scriptures:

- "he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you..." (2 Cor. 9:6-8).
- "He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor" (Proverbs 22:9)
- "Give, and it will be given to you...For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).
- "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

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