

WHEN MAY I STOP GIVING?

What! More pleas for help, more money yet!
When will it ever cease?
I've given, given, given much,
Yea, more than my increase.
May I not keep a little back,
Instead of giving all?
And must I hear the pleas that come,
And answer every call?

Must I keep giving week by week,
From the meager store I own?
Must I sacrifice still more and more
For every nation, tongue, and zone?
"Oh, no, discouraged one," I seem to hear
A voice from heaven say,
"Just give until your Father stops
His blessings day by day."
N. P. NEILSEN

War had overrun Macedonia again and again. Armies in those days did what armies are still doing today. They lived off the territory through which they passed. The believers of Macedonia were in straitened circumstances, "in a great trial of affliction," and in "deep poverty." Yet this is what they did: "First save their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Then they pressed upon Paul, "with much entreaty," to receive their gifts. His teachings had taken effect. The Macedonian call had not been answered in vain. The churches in Macedonia had captured the spirit of their Master, who, "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich." 2 Corinthians 8:1-9.

"By its necessities a ruined world is drawing forth from us talents of means and of influence, to present to men and women the truth, of which they are in perishing need. As we heed these calls, by labor and by acts of benevolence, we are assimilated to the image of Him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing, we bless others, and thus accumulate true riches. The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven." Counsels on Stewardship, pages 13, 14.

Yes, when we gladly, willingly, and freely give, we are burning out the dross of our old selfish nature and letting Christ be formed in us. As one has said, liberality starves selfishness." It conforms us to the image of His dear Son. Is it important that we give, give, give? The blessings do not cease with present character development.

We have heard several versions of the oft-repeated story of a certain woman who was a church member. One night she dreamed that she was being escorted by an angel through the mansions above. She paused at one beautiful palace after another. With wondering eyes and anxious heart she listened while the angel spoke. "This beautiful home is for Deacon Jones."

"But he was so poor."

"Yes, but this is what we have been able to build from what he sent ahead."

Thus the conversation went. Finally they came to a small and unassuming place.

“This is for you,” said the angel. Sorrow and disappointment crossed the woman’s face. “It is all you sent ahead when you were down on earth.” She awoke. How thankful she was that it was only a dream!

In some way our liberality is treasure laid up for us in heaven; where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. The more we give, the more we will love heaven.

“Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed.” Counsels on Stewardship, Page 13.

The newspapers recently told a story which from a human viewpoint illustrates this reflex blessing. A man had been going out of his way to befriend what appeared to be a lonely, needy, old man. One day he received notice to come and receive \$100,000 left him by the old man as a reward for his kind attentions.

Perhaps the greatest reflex influence from manifesting the spirit of benevolence is found in the blessing revealed in this passage:

“It is in working actively to supply the necessities of the cause of God that we bring our souls in touch with the Source of all power.” Testimonies, Volume 6, Page 27.