

SHINE Devotional

Week 40 – Lesson 1



The Commandment to Give

Scripture reading Luke 6:38

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that need meet with all it shall be measured to you again.”

Over the last four weeks, we have examined Acts 11 and have seen a three things:

1. How to get involved in missions.
2. Why missions work is important to God!
3. What missionaries do.

This week, I will share with you six reasons I will give to Faith Promise this year. The first reason is found in our Scripture reading today. Just like Jesus commanded us to pray, witness, and love, He commanded us to give. Luke 6:38 is not a suggestion. It is God’s plan for believers to get involved with giving. Jesus said, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever”* (John 14:15-16).

When I was a child and my dad said, “Clean your room,” I cleaned my room. When my dad said, “Pick the weeds in the garden,” I picked the weeds in the garden. When my dad said, “Go to bed,” I went to bed. I did these things for two reasons:

1. I feared my dad. He was a big guy. He wore a leather belt around his waist, and he believed in spanking disobedient children. (By the way I believe in it too). That is not the only reason I obeyed my father.
2. I also obeyed my father because I loved him. I wanted my father to be pleased. I wanted him to think I did a good job. By doing what he said, I proved my love to him.

Jesus said, *“If you love me, keep my commandments.”* One of those commandments is to give. The first reason I give is because I know this is God’s plan. This is His command. So, the first reason I will be involved in Faith Promise this year, is because of this commandment. When you obey His commands, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 40 – Lesson 2



The Commission

Scripture reading Mark 16:15

“And he said unto them, go ye into all the world. And preach the gospel unto every creature.”

How in the world can one man go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature? Jesus did not even do that, and He was God in human flesh! If He could not do that than, how can I? The answer is I can not. The commission was not given to the individual. This commission was given to the first local church. The first group of apostles were to tell other people about Jesus Christ. Those that got saved were to be baptized and become members of the local church. They were to be taught to go and tell other people about Jesus. Then they were to witness where they could and send others to where they could not go. Jesus said, *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). How did the church accomplish this? They told others about Jesus, trained them, and then sent them all over the world to preach the same Gospel message. We are told that, *“we are ambassadors for Christ”* (2 Corinthians 5:20). Liberty Baptist Church has the responsibility to give the Gospel to Las Vegas (our Jerusalem), to Nevada (our Judea), to the United States (our Samaria), and unto the uttermost part of the world. The only possible way we can do that is by faithfully preaching the Gospel here in Las Vegas and sending representatives (we call them missionaries) out from our church.

Over the last thirty years, we have given the Gospel to every home in the city of Las Vegas. We have distributed more than two million gospel tracts and have reached more than six million people. That is a great accomplishment! However, last year through our missions giving, we gave the Gospel to over twelve million people and thirty-five thousand people trusted Jesus Christ as Savior around the world. This is the way to fulfill the Great Commission. I want to be involved in that kind of work. That is why I will give to Faith Promise this year.

How about you? I encourage you to be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission through giving to missions. When you do, you will SHINE.

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Week 40 – Lesson 3



His Compassion

Scripture reading Acts 11:27-29

“And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:”

The church of Antioch lived in a time of trouble. Agabus, a prophet of God, proclaimed things weren't going to get better, they were going to get worse. Knowing there were troubled times ahead, the Bible says these believers gave. That seems contrary to nature. If they knew there was going to be troubled times, you would think they would stock up. Instead, they met together and took an offering to meet the needs of others. We should never let the fear of circumstances keep us from giving. *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”* (2 Timothy 1:7)

The truth is people need the Lord. John, the beloved disciple, saw a view of the final judgement of God on unsaved humanity. *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”* (Revelation 20:12 & 15) What a horrible reality. These are people who God loves. In His compassion, Jesus came, suffered, and died to pay the penalty of their sin, because He wanted to grant them access into heaven. He made the way. You and I are given the responsibility to proclaim that truth. Since we are limited on where each one of us can go, it is our obligation to send people where we cannot go. The rich man in hell pleaded with Abraham to allow Lazarus to rise from the dead and warn them about hell. *“[L]est they also come into this place of torment.”* (Luke 16:28) When I think about hell, His compassion makes me want to give to missions so that others will not experience that terrible torment. What about you? Get involved in missions giving and you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 40 – Lesson 4

Our Communication



Scripture reading John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

We communicate not just by our works but also by our deeds. Recently, I went to a city-wide prayer meeting with pastors. There were over 100 preachers present. I knelt at an altar and was having a time of private prayer with God. A fellow pastor in the city laid his hands on my back and asked permission to pray for me. He prayed that God would bless my ministry, use me, direct me, and lead me. I was genuinely touched by his prayer. When he was finished praying, he introduced himself to me. I have pastored here in Las Vegas for forty-three years, and he has also served in this valley for the last forty-three years. I had heard of him and he had heard of me, but we had never personally met before that day. His prayer for me was an action that demonstrated his love. He gave of himself that he might be a blessing to me.

There is nothing that communicates the love of Christ to others more than giving. *“But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”* (1 John 3:17) The greatest way we can communicate the love of God in our city and around the world is by giving to the work of God so that the money can be used to support missionaries as they travel and preach the Gospel. Jesus said, *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”* (John 13:34-35) We are commanded to love our brothers. We are commanded to love our neighbors. We are commanded to love our enemies. These commandments come from someone who loves the world. The Father sent Jesus to this world to die for their sins. He has given us the responsibility to proclaim that truth.

When we give to missions, we communicate our love to the Father, and we communicate His love to the world. I encourage you to communicate His love through your giving to missions. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 40 – Lesson 5



My Condition

Scripture reading Acts 11:29

“Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:”

The thing I love about Faith Promise offering is that it is personal. This is a commitment that is made between every man and his God. In Acts 11:29, the Bible does not say several men gave, instead the Bible says, “*every man.*” Someone once said, “The work of God would be fully funded if every member in the local church would give according to the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit.” These were difficult times for this new church in Antioch. Yet, the Bible tells us that “*every man*” gave. These were times of oppression.

The fact is not everyone was able to give the same thing, but everyone gave. In our culture today, there are people who are extremely wealthy and there are people who have very limited resources. Therefore, not everyone should give the same amount. God’s Word has always taught proportionate giving. The concept of the tithe is proportionate. The poor will give little. The rich will give more based on the percentage of their income. I will give to Faith Promise missions this year because my condition allows me to do so. I am an American Christian. I have a weekly income. It is up to me to make a choice on how I am going to use that income that God has granted to me. I have the ability to give. It is also your condition. The choice is up to you.

The question is, “What will you do?” I encourage you to get involved in Faith Promise this year. If God has given you the ability, I encourage you to pray and ask God what He would have you to give. Whatever figure He puts on your mind, write down on a prayer card. Give to missions. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 40 – Lesson 6

His Covenant



Scripture reading Acts 20:35

“I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Here is the sixth reason I give to missions: I am selfish. According to the dictionary, a covenant is “an agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do something specified.” God promised the Israelites if they tithed, He would bless them and give them material blessings. *“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,...I will not open you the windows of heaven”* (Malachi 3:10). He promised the disciples, *“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again”* (Luke 6:38). After he commended them for being faithful to support him in missionary endeavors, Paul told the Philippians, *“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:19).

Look at this promise God makes to the individual Christian: *“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work”* (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). What is God saying to the individual Christian? When you give bountifully, He will give bountifully back to you! He states that He is able to meet every need sufficiently so that you can abound to every work you want to accomplish. God has a covenant with His people when it comes to giving. Give, and God will take care of you. Jesus said, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:33).

I encourage you, get involved in Faith Promise missions and you will see God’s financial blessing in your life. As He blesses your life, you, as a believer, will SHINE.