



The Joy of Giving

Jesus is said to have taught: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' (Acts 20:35).

But our natural tendency is to live as though "that could never be right!" We normally see blessings in terms of what we get. But even applying our natural way of thinking the Christian can point out it is more blessed to give than receive. For example the Christian theologian Dr James Packer, in his book "Laid-back Religion?", points out that there are four sources of Christian joy.

The first is the joy of knowing we are loved. Christians know they are loved in a way no-one else does, for we know God the Father: so loved us that He gave His only son to die on the cross that we might have eternal life.

The second source of joy is the acceptance that our situation is good. We can know everywhere and always that our circumstances and experiences, pleasant & unpleasant, are planned out for us by our loving Father as part of our preparation for heaven.

The third source of joy is our possessing something worth possessing. As Jesus illustrates in the parable of the merchant who finds a pearl of great worth and so sells everything he has to possess it: the gift of God's free gift of grace is all we need.

The fourth source of joy is having something to give that's worth giving. The knowledge & love of Christ & the implications of the gospel are needed by all.

So the basis of Christian joy is not just a drawing on the wonderful personal blessings of the gospel for ourselves, but a generously blessing others with the grace that has been given to us. Joy shared is joy multiplied.

So I encourage you to ask God to help you with your attitude towards giving. As we all take to heart the grace extended to us in the Lord Jesus Christ by learning to extend it to others.

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