

## We are all in the same sandpit

Since the day we took our first steps and we grasped at understanding, we were told and told by our parents to **share**. For those that are parents, you know this isn't easy to impart. The heart of giving and sharing is not developed overnight.

But why share? On the surface, the motivation might be to defuse the uproar between the 2 kids in the sandpit, where both have a bucket but one has both spades (saying "they're mine"). So it may well be to simply bring peace, or, to enjoy watching them playing and laughing without a care in the world. What would you say to them about why they should share? Wouldn't you ask them whether it is fair that one should have more than one spade and the other have none? That you can only use one spade at a time? "Why not let the other use it so you can both have fun?"

This simple illustration is a lead-in to understand that we, as adults, live in a much bigger sandpit, and instead of buckets and spades, we are dealing with "bread and butter", people's lives, differing needs and incomes. The parent now is our Father God. The message is still the same, because the heart attitude to the kids in the sandpit ultimately comes from the same source.

In Luke 3, we find John the Baptist, commanding the crowds to produce good fruit. They asked what they should do, and verse 11, he began by saying "*the man with 2 tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same*".

Sharing is a form of giving. **Sharing is giving** something you have more of, to someone else who does not have enough of that thing, so that each will have enough to fulfil their individual needs. Sharing takes on different forms.

In Exodus 17:9-13 while Joshua fought the Amalekites, Moses stood on top of the hill at Rephidim, with the staff of God in his hands. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. To know this, Moses must have lowered his hands. Of course he grew weary, but Aaron and Hur were there to share the burden "... *so that his hands remained steady til sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.*"

Sharing their strength met the need and gave them victory.

*"We share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in His Glory " Rom 8:17*

*"and our hope for you is firm because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort." 2 Cor 1:7*

Sharing is not one way. Because it is giving, then all the scriptures on giving apply.

Luke 6:38 is an obvious example. Blessings (multiplied) are promised to those who give.

In 2 Cor 8, Paul is encouraging the Corinthian Church to bring to completion their desire to give (to "*share in the service of the Saints in Jerusalem*"). We see in verse 10 that the first thing that must happen before anyone can give, is that you have a desire to do so.

Without this desire, the willingness will not be there, and therefore, in God's eyes, the gift will not be acceptable. If the desire is not there, then it is most probable that you have a greater love for your own well being and your possessions than you do for the Kingdom of God and your Family in it.

In other words, your heart and its confidence is still planted firmly in the World. A bit harsh? Let's call a spade a spade. Our enemy is Lucifer and his demons. The enemy of God is self-centred people.

If you are struggling with this, you need to renew your mind thru the Word and seek the Father's heart attitude to the needs of others. Matt 6:21 Rom 12:2.

He is Jehovah Jireh, Our Provider. He is not a magician or a counterfeiter, He uses us to do it.

Verse 12 goes on to say, “*the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have*”. The Lord sees how much you give in relation to how much you can give.

Don't let the enemy stop you from giving because a couple of dollars isn't enough to give.

Remember:

- (a) you may not be the only person to give or to share with that person. God does not have to meet our needs thru one person. Your \$2 might bring the total to the amount believed for. Their miracle.
  
- (b) the example of the 'poor' widow who gave the “two very small copper coins (2 lepta)” in Luke 21. Jesus said in verse 3 “*...this poor widow has put in more than all the others*” 100% in fact. The others gave out of their wealth (abundance/excess), while she gave out of her poverty (her needs). Could a rich man do that??? Jesus says it is difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Matt 19:24 comparing it to a camel going thru the eye of a needle. Whether literal or referring to the claim that it is the **gate** within the gate in Jerusalem, which opened after the main **gate** was closed at night. (a small gate in the gate, really for foot traffic) A camel could only pass through this smaller **gate** virtually on its knees, if it was stooped and had its baggage removed. A rich man needs to come to his knees and let go of his wealth before he can enter the Kingdom Remember too, it is about measure or proportion, not the amount! You will be blessed according to the measure or proportion you use. Luke 6:38 2Cor9:6
  
- (c) to receive more to give more you must apply the supernatural law of 'sowing and reaping', and the sowing comes first! “*then he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness*” 2Cor 9:10

Returning to verse 12, please note that it does not say “*if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable*” FULL STOP. The addition of “*according to what one has*” is not there just to encourage those with little to give, but it also implies that those with much should not give little. “*for whoever gives sparingly (proportion) will also reap sparingly*”

Verse 13, gives more advice to those who would give more than they can afford (or beyond their ability), because this would put you in the same position as that of the one you are trying to help. *Our desire is not that others be relieved while you are hard-pressed, but that there might be equality*”. Yes, it is a scary word! We are not expected to give only a little off the top of our surplus, for the very purpose of the surplus is to give. See verse 15.

Verse 14, “*At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their (not necessarily the person you gave to) plenty will supply your need. Then there will be equality....*”. This tells me that those in need now can be in surplus later AND those in surplus now can be in need later. It also speaks of having an abundance in one area of your life and at the same time, a need in another, so we can cater for each other's needs with our individual surpluses. Please Note: These scriptures are speaking of needs, not desires.

Verse 15 expands the use of 'equality' by quoting Exodus 16:18. Exodus 16 speaks of the Lord supplying the 'manna' and quail to the Israelites in the wilderness. Here the Lord is also teaching them trust and obedience. Ex 16:4 says “*the people to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions*”. In Ex 16:16 (regarding 'manna' which means 'what is it?'), “*Each one is to gather as much as he needs. **Take an omer (about 2 litres) for each person you have in your tent***”. Notice here that your needs include the needs of others. Ex 16:17,18 “*Some gathered much, some gathered little (our incomes) and when they measured it by the omer (when they added up the needs of all those they were gathering for), he who gathered much did not have too much and he who gathered little did not have too little, each one gathered as much as he needed*”.

Now, we are all in the one Family, but we are not all living in the same tent. We all have daily needs, but we gather (earn an income) to different levels. Some of us meet our needs and have a surplus while others struggle to meet the most basic of needs. You can see where the surplus belongs!

Ex 16:19 Moses said “*No one is to keep any of it until morning*”. In other words, gather and share, using what you need, and Trust the Lord for tomorrow's needs to be met too. Verse 20, “*however, some of them paid no attention to Moses. They kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell*”. Do not hold on to funds for a security for they will be eaten away, rot and smell in the sight of God. Ever feel whatever you earn goes into a purse with holes in it? Share, be liberal and generous, with your Family, the Family of God and outsiders and trust all your needs and desires with God our Father (Dad).

In conclusion, in everything there needs to be a balance AND common sense. When giving, you should ask the Lord for direction as to whom and how much. There are times when the Lord will wish to store up your surplus, for example Joseph and the Egyptian famine, but we can find an example here in Ex 16: 5, 22-27. The Israelites gathered for only 6 days. Because of the Sabbath, they gathered twice as much on the sixth day. But here, because it was as the Lord had directed, there were no maggots and it did not rot or smell.

Our Father “*Loves a cheerful, prompt to do it, giver.*”

Paul, in Eph 4:28, urges even those who steal to stop and work instead “*doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have **something to share with those in need***”.

Before we go any further, we should look to the Word to see what it says about **uses of money**. I believe it is best summed up in 2 Cor 9:10. “*He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food*”. We know that our money and possessions can basically be divided into needs, and what you don't need (desires or pleasures), and surplus if any. But here, Paul is saying that it is split into needs (bread) and the remainder to give (seed) to the needs of others. In other words, **it is all for needs**. Seriously, have I twisted the Word here? That is what it says. Notice here, that God supplies “seed to the sower”, not “seed to sow”. Only givers can expect more to give.

Verse 10, continues: “*...will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness*”. We see here that apart from ensuring that those who give will have enough to keep giving, He will provide a store of seed and increase that store of seed. We know that this seed is to sow. Why this store of seed? You can't give it unless you have it.

Verse 11, “*You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous in every occasion.....your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying, the needs of God's people, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.*”.

Hmmm

Are you getting this?

You don't have to do it.

You have a choice.

To do your own thing or be on God's team meeting needs and causing Him to be Glorified.

Obviously a more beneficial way to spend your excess. What does your fears say and what is your Heart saying?

But what of desires and pleasures?

In James 4:2 “*You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with **wrong motives**, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*”.

On the one hand, He is encouraging us to ask of God, but on the other, don't expect to receive for pleasures.

If your needs are met, and you shouldn't ask for what you don't need, then it **must be for the needs of others**.

But our God is the loving Father, He still provides our desires. “*You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing*”.. Psalm 145:16 “*Delight yourself in the LORD and He will **GIVE** you the desires of your heart*”... Psalm 37:4 **You know, GIVE, a GIFT**, something that you don't have to work too hard to get.

**Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce (agricultural); so then your barns**

*will be filled with plenty (needs) and your vats will overflow with new wine (what you don't need)". Prov 3:9-10*

God is who He is

One of His names is El Shaddai. Our God more than enough. The God of more. More than we ask or can even think of, and more than we deserve. He wants to be that God to each of us.

Our pleasure should be to please God, not ourselves.

To love pleasure is a sign of Godlessness 2 Tim 4:3

*"He who loves pleasure will become poor"* Prov 21:1 ..... opposite of those who are givers.

Giving is an action of Love.

1 John 3:16-18

*"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. **If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Do not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth.**"*

*"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share." 1 Tim 6:17-18.*

Timothy is speaking of the rich who do not put their hope in God. We believers, can also be rich, in good deeds and blessed to be a blessing. We should not be reliant on it, or trust in it (or hang on to it too long)

Heard the saying "money is made round to go round"?

2 Cor 9:10, says *"He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will also supply and increase your store of seed"*. It states that the giver will be blessed to a point where he will have an increasing store of finances (or be rich) SO THAT he can be generous on every occasion.

But the 'rich man', even tho he may have similar finances, is not a giver. He has not sown the seed portion of his income. He has withheld that part of his income that God intended for the needy, the expansion of the Kingdom and God's children. *"He has hoarded wealth"* to live in luxury and self indulgence, for **SELF** not others.

James 5:1-6 sees James give a warning to the rich stating that *"you have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter"*, speaking particularly to those who hear in the last days.

The acts of the believers during the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the time of "Acts", which saw revival, miracles and wonders, are an example to us who stand at the dawning of a similar but greater time of revival.

This is a clear picture of what we need to be prepared for.

*"They ( the believers) devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the Apostles. All the believers were together and had **everything in common**. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. **Every day** they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved Acts 2:42-47*

*"All the believers were one in heart and mind. No-one claimed that any of his possessions were his own, but they **shared everything** they had. With great power the Apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and much grace was upon them all.*

*There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time, those who owned lands or houses, sold them brought the money from the sales and put it at the Apostles feet"* Acts 4:32-35

These scriptures show us where our hearts and focus should be at, sharing, giving, unity, trust, love for one another, equality, fellowship, one in heart and mind as we come together, allowing the mighty power of God to flow thru us, manifesting in great signs and wonders.

Remember, *"You are not your own, you were bought at a price"*.

Everything belongs to the Lord, including our bills and loans.

We are stewards.

It would be easy to want to hang on to what we have and to increase it.

That is what you do in this world.

But we are not of the world.

We are ambassadors, citizens of Heaven, here on assignment for the King. (of Kings)

Is Jesus Lord over my life?" of course!!

How much of it?

Is he Lord of your car, house, bank account, furniture, your state of the art new TV, your clothes etc etc??

Is He Lord of your tomorrow? Something different.

It is your choice

You need to take your stand for God or Self.

Ananias and Sapphira didn't die because they didn't give it all, that was their choice, it was because they let their fellow Christians (in the presence of the Holy Spirit) believe that they did. A deception, a show.

All of us 'Big Kids' should learn to share.

There are massive rewards in both finances and benefits to the needy and to Glorifying God, apart from the Kingdom to come.

When you help God shine in His glory He will radiate on you.

You CANNOT OUTGIVE GOD.

You give what is in your hand and He gives you what is in His. He has a much bigger hand.

"One man gives freely, yet gains even more; Another withholds unduly but comes to poverty.

A generous man will prosper; He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Prov 12:24-25

Kevin Cramp

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Well, thank you for getting to here.

Firstly, if you are not YET a Believer, be assured that God, the Father of Christ Jesus and YOU and I, accepts you, loves you, has a plan for you Jer 29:11, has predestined you Rom 8:28-30, has a purpose for you Phil 2:12,13, and only 2 things stand in your way to receive everything, I mean everything here and there, including ETERNAL (think about it, new body and all) Life:... that is confessing that Jesus, we hear and read about, is your Lord, the Son of God, (the very thing He was crucified for), and (the hard part), believing in your Heart (not just your head) that God raised Him from the dead. This is Salvation. Then you can ask (aloud) for Him to forgive you and give Him permission to come into your life, in your walk. Thats it! Only forgiven people go to (are included in) Heaven. Romans 10: 9-10

But, the Word of God is a supernatural law, like gravity (from God) is a natural or physical law.

It works the same on everybody.

While you search for the truth you can still line yourself up with God's living Word and receive the benefits of it at least here.

Are you asking 'is this guy dyslexic? What is the Christ before Jesus thing?"

Jesus is 100% Man (his Humanity), Christ is 100% God (the Supernatural), whichever comes first.

Now, I speak to Believers.

The above has some soft parts, some warm parts and some more "in your face" bits.

I believe I need to give you some more encouragement.

In fact, this addition after my name above, was added after initial posting, at the leading of the Lord, because it doesn't quite say it bluntly enough.

You are not an animal. ('where did that come from?')

An animal's life choices are *mostly* 'blueprinted'.

It is automatic. They don't have to go to school to learn what to do.

Birds don't have to google nest building, dogs, for how to bring up pups, and even spiders on web making.

THEY DO NOT HAVE A SOUL, they have limited choice.  
But you and I do. Because He made us in His image, like Him.  
Why? To give us a choice.  
The Angels do His bidding. They are not His children but created servants.  
They are not created in the same way as us.  
Where am I going with this?  
I am asking the same thing!

The worship team of angels are now in hell here, kicked out of heaven for choosing Lucifer, not God.  
just a clue.....remember this

Lucifer (the world) is the only rogue angel here, with limited freedom to do his own thing, thru Adam's authority.

***God is looking for worshippers amongst us.*** By our own CHOICE.

I believe appreciation is the root of worship. One leper from the 10 came back to Jesus to thank Him.  
Does this ring a bell???

I, Kevin, believe that as much as 10% of us Christians, will choose to be on God's Worship Team.  
This is why Man was created, that we have a Relationship with Him and Appreciate Him for who He is and what He does for us.

This life is temporary.

This world was created to accommodate Lucifer and the fallen angels and we were put here with them, on purpose. (To force a choice)

Soon the 6 days of work will be complete and the day (1000 years) of peace, the rest day, will be here.  
You can not change anything after you die, or once the Lord has collected us who are still alive. Our Matt25.  
At the end of this will be Judgement Day, where we will each stand before God to give an account.  
Then the universe will be wiped and a new 'heaven' and new Earth will be created, minus sin, and God will come to live with us, FOREVER.

This life that we live is the 'school of life' to prepare us for the Eternal (Zoe) Life that God our Dad has prepared.  
Just like we go to school as children to prepare us for that adult life that we can't wait to be part of.

'Dad' asked me once, 'Are the children of the Queen (use King) more important than you? Why do they live in the Palace and not you?. Because they are related to the 'King'.

The only ones who will live in the Palace are the children (Sons of God) , and the Servants, those who excel.  
Everyone else lives in the suburbs.

A servant can be like a Son.

Even if you don't have a relationship with the Father, excelling at His Service will get His attention.  
His servants get to see the King's face and the King gets to see theirs!!

Everyone is born a child of God. *Some believe* in Jesus, ask forgiveness and are Saved, receiving Eternal life.  
Not everyone is a Son. You need to choose that too. To pay the price of having a relationship with Him.  
Only Family are invited to the Wedding. Those related to the Father. See Matt25 10 virgins.

We are there.

This article is about CHOICE.

It is NOT about whether to give or not, who to and how much..

You can CHOOSE to please GOD or please yourself.

Once you have chosen GOD you don't need an article like this to encourage you to be a part of what He is doing.

Again, it is not about giving, sharing, who?, how much? Etc.

Are you on God's team or not?

Are you a Kingdom person or is your life this 'world'? (like Lot's wife)

Are you a citizen of Heaven?

Is your hope and trust in God, your Dad, or what this 'world' offers?

Even more, Do you want to be a Son? (girls included)

God your Dad says.....'your choice'.