

## THE BEAUTY OF FREEWILL

“And they brought yet unto him freewill offerings every morning, And all the wise men....came every man from his work which they wrought; and they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which Jehovah commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, let neither man nor woman make more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much” (Exodus 36:3-7).

**SUFFICIENT AND TOO MUCH!** This incident in the Old Testament is a wonderfully beautiful moment in the history of God’s people. This people responded in such a tremendous way as to provide more than enough to accomplish the task at hand. Questions come to our minds as we contemplate the beauty of this occasion: Was it because of the exceptional leadership of Moses? Was due to the greatness of the cause? Or perhaps the material prosperity of the people of God at that particular time? Hard to say. No doubt a combination of many things.

However, there is a statement made earlier in the account that seems highly significant to us. “And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and brought Jehovah’s offering” (Exodus 35:21).

**A HEART STIRRED UP** and a willing spirit...herein lies the beauty. A devoted, consecrated Christian seeking self-improvement and God’s approval. A group of these working together in any area is quite simply, a church of Christ.

**DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT INSTRUCT US IN GIVING?** Giving is an act designed by God to develop Christ-like characteristics in His people. Our Heavenly Father gave His Son. The Lord gave Himself for His people....the church. To give is so admirable that the devil can hardly speak effectively against it. He can, though, afford to encourage the practice if at the same time he is able to corrupt the motives.

The following plan of New Testament giving is simple, appealing, and especially effective when put into practice. **1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Matthew 6:2-3; Matthew 6:33.** Read these carefully.

<b>Periodic</b>	“Upon the first day of the week” (every week)
<b>Personal</b>	“Let each one of you” (individual)
<b>Provident</b>	“Lay by....in store” (treasury)
<b>Proportionate</b>	“As he may prosper” (percentage)
<b>Preventive</b>	“That there be no collections when I come”
<b>Purposeful</b>	“Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his own heart”
<b>Voluntary</b>	“Not grudgingly nor of necessity”
<b>Confidently</b>	“God is able to make all grace abound toward you...”
<b>Confidentially</b>	“Not before men to be seen of them”

If every member of the church of our Lord conscientiously followed this simple plan, the church would perhaps be found in much the same dilemma as Moses!

The gimmicks used today among even our own brethren indicate a lack of confidence, or perhaps even a lack of knowledge, of these scriptures. Giving is a spiritual exercise...an act of worship... not to be taken lightly. It must be done and it must be done right.

To whom and for what we give, thus becomes important. It would appear that many are willing to give huge sums to the church if the church is to spend it upon them. Thus churches are apt to become entertainment and health spas. It may be a pleasant and tax-free way to arrange for these activities, but surely this is not what the Lord gave himself on the cross to accomplish!

**Carl G. Hecker from *The Northeast Contender***

## ALL THINGS I HAVE I GIVE

In Exodus 3 we find Moses tending to Jethro’s flocks and God appearing to him in the burning bush calling on him to go to Egypt and demand that Pharaoh release the children from bondage. And Moses said, “Who am I?” (Exo. 3:11). From that point Moses sought ways to convince God that he could not

serve God as His messenger to Pharaoh. He mentioned shortcoming after shortcoming, problem after problem, difficulty after difficulty as to why God should excuse him from entering this task. But when Moses seized the serpent and it became his rod again he was taught that what was weak faith had now become power in the hands of God’s child. What had been a humble shepherd’s crook had now become the rod of God. This rod that had fended wolves and steadied steps was now to be used for the Lord. Opportunities used become blessings multiplied, but opportunities wasted become disadvantages to the cause. What is that in thine hand, Moses? Only a shepherd’s rod but a rod that will show the power of God and the glory of His name.

What is that in thine hand, David? Only a sling but a sling held in the hand of a soldier of the Lord is a mighty weapon indeed. It was mightier at a distance than was Goliath’s sword. “In the name of the Lord” was his motto whether tending his sheep, slaying the lion, or defying the Philistine. “In the name of the Lord” was his call to victory. What is that in thine hand, David? Only a sling to be used for God.

What is that in thine hand, Joshua? Only a spear but a spear to be held aloft in obedience of God’s commands. When the second attack was made on Ai and the Lord said, “Stretch out thy spear,” Joshua was obedient to the Lord’s command and the victory was secure. And happy was he to be used as an obedient servant of the Father. What is that in thine hand, Joshua? Only a spear but a spear to be used in the army of God.

What is that in thine hand, Gideon? Only a handful of soldiers in the face of thousands. But armed with pitchers, lamps, and trumpets they defeated the mighty Midianites. By following God this 300 turned an embarrassing defeat into a glorious victory. For God could take a few and make them mighty under His banner and for His purpose. What is that in thine hand, Gideon? Only 300 soldiers, only a few but a few with God is worth more than many without Him.

What is that in thine hand, Peter? Only a casting net to be used in the sea. But Christ called him for a more useful and lasting purpose in fishing for the souls of men. No instrument is too small, no instrument is too insignificant to be used for the cause of the Master. Anything we have, anything we are, must be to the glory of God. What is that in thine hand, Peter? Only a casting net to be set to God's purpose.

What is that in thine hand, young boy? Only a few loaves and fishes but what are they among so many? Nothing is impossible with God. What is that in thine hand, Mary? Only a box of precious ointment. What is that in thine hand, Dorcus? Only a needle.

My friend, what is that in thine hand that cannot be used for the kingdom and glory of God? An axe, a shovel, a hammer and nails? Can you not see the things that can be done? A pen or pencil to write God's truth for readers? All things I have I give. What is that in thine hand, my brother? That is what we give to God. *Shan Jackson*

## ILL

**Sunday:** Millie Robertson, Taylor Nemechek (PM).  
**Wednesday:** Jared Nelson, Millie Robertson. Those battling cancer: Kathleen Camp's sister-in-law; Bo Marcum's sister, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Janice Carter, Allen Scott, Kim Clark, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

## SYMPATHY

Our sympathy is extended to the Michael Simmons family in the passing of his grandmother, Lillian Crabtree on January 23 in Madisonville, KY. The Simmons family departed on Thursday to attend the funeral on Saturday.

## POT LUCK DINNER

Our monthly Pot Luck Dinner will be held next Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> following our AM worship. Plan to come, bring a dish and enjoy the good food and company!

## ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 63; Sunday PM, 47; Wednesday PM, 48.

# Those To Serve

January 29, 2006

**BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Nemechek**

### MORNING WORSHIP

**ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Joel Nelson**  
**SONG LEADER..... George Thomas**  
**OPENING PRAYER ..... Gary Cole**  
**PRESIDE..... John Dodson**  
**ASSIST.....John James**  
**ASSIST..... Joe Brewer**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... Ken Greer**

### EVENING WORSHIP

**OPENING PRAYER .....Jeremy Keifer**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... Myron Nebergall**  
**LORD'S SUPPER..... John Dodson**

### WEDNESDAY 1st

**SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter**  
**INVITATION .....Ted Thrasher**

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Sunday

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM  
Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

**Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher**

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