

In Position to Be a Blessing

Acts 20:35

1) This text shows us that we truly are blessed to be a blessing to others.

a. "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak..."

(Acts 20:35a, NIV)

b. "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." (Matthew 19:21)

c. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)

d. It is frustrating for people to be in position to help, but refuse to help.

2) **Don't Give Grudgingly**

a. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

b. In September we ask for can goods donations. Right after that, we ask for candy donations. Right after that we ask for toys donations. February, we will ask for a special offering for the "Souper Bowl."

c. "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give..." Depending on how life is

going for you, you may not give a lot each time. However, your decision should never be zero.

- d. Grudgingly giving comes when we start thinking “we got to give again.” “These people ain’t never going to come to our church.” “They need to go work.” “They probably not using their money right.” “They need to pull their selves up by their on bootstraps.”
 - i. That last saying is believed to have originated by a German author, Rudolf Erich Raspe, who wrote about a character who pulled himself out of a swamp by pulling his own hair. The saying was even understood as sarcasm up until about the 1920s. Therefore, the only right way to use this saying is to encourage you to help those in need because you understood the plausibility of this happening is impossible.
- e. Don’t be like the rich man and his barn: “20) But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ 21) “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.” (Luke 12:20-21, NIV)
- f. As the church, we are called to collectively do for our communities what the “Elon Musks” of the world won’t do.

3) Lose the “What’s in it for me” attitude.

- a. It will always be hard to give when you are only looking to get something out of it. "18) Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19) And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" (Luke 12:18:21)
- b. Majority of the time when you give, it seems thankless. Many times, there is no return on your investment of giving. If you are only giving for a return, you are not giving cheerfully and/or may not give at all.
- c. "8) When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. 9) "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor." (Matthew 26:8-9, NIV)
 - i. Yes, she did this because Jesus is worthy, but don't miss that she did not have an expectation of return.
- d. "5) Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6) saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." (Matthew 8:5-6, NKJV)
 - i. What a great text of Jesus power to "speak healing," but don't miss the Centurion is not asking that he be blessed, but his servant. There is not a lot in it for him.

- e. If you are going to give generously, the thought should always be how this will help the recipient.
- f. "35) For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36) I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.""
(Mathew 25:35-36, NIV)
- g. Yes, we should raise our children to say "Thank you," but teach them to give without expecting one. Learn to give when there is nothing in it for you.

4) Remember, you are blessed to be a blessing.

- a. "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35, NIV)
 - i. Think about how good you feel when you hear about the ministry Baconton does for the least. Your money will go where you can't.
 - ii. "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things." (Ecclesiastes 10:9)
 - iii. There is a difference in loving your money over people (1 Timothy 6:10) and knowing how your money can help people.

iv. The best way to tell God thank you for what you have is to bless others.

b. Different ways to bless others:

i. With your money: "If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord—and he will repay you!" (Proverbs 19:17, NLT)

ii. With Your Time/Service: "After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him." (John 13:17, NIV)

iii. With Your Voice: "8) Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. 9) Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." (Proverbs 31:8-9, NIV)

iv. With Your Vote: "1) I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 2) Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity." (1 Timothy 2:1-2, NLT)

1. "A vote is a kind of prayer for the kind of world we desire for ourselves and for our children, and I think our prayers are stronger when we pray together." – Pastor Senator Raphael Warnock.