

The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105

November 4, 2007

Will a Man Rob God?

Steve Niemeier

Most of us have heard sermons with this title or we have read articles such as this with this title. Yet, this title which comes from the question that God asked the corrupt priests in **Malachi 3:8** still pierces the hearts of men today. He even answers this question by stating those priests have robbed Him by offering improper tithes and offerings. In fact, God states that the whole nation had robbed Him by offering improper offerings and tithes.

Of course, by now, many of you are probably saying, "Well the preacher is writing about giving again!" Let me say to you that this is exactly what I am writing about. While giving of our means and laying by in store and cheerful giving all are a private matter, there are Biblical examples that we need to heed in our giving.

Maybe you remember the story of the widow in **Mark 12:41-44**. She is the one whom most use to state how she gave more "percentage wise" than even the rich who gave much. This is true! However, have you ever noticed that Jesus was there watching how the people put the money into the treasury? We would not like it if the elders or even the treasurer watched us put our freewill offering in the treasury on the first day of the week would we? Yet we must remember that God is keeping track of our weekly giving, not only the amount but the type of heart one has in their giving. Yes, He knows when you get a raise at work and if you give Him a "raise" in your giving to His treasury.

Jesus stated that the widow in **Mark 12** had given her whole livelihood, while the rich gave out of their abundance. What kind of sacrifice does He see us make in our giving each first day of the week? Are we robbing Him?

Of course, there are other things that we should be giving in our living for Him. What does He see in our sacrifice of our time for Him? Are we dealing with Him equally as to say our recreation? How about our social time with others; do we deal equally with God by giving Him the same amount of that time? Could we even go as far as to say are we giving to God the same amount of time we give our family? We should never forget that God is watching us in our giving today just as He was watching in Malachi's day or the widow's day.

When we read of passages such as **Matthew 10:34-42**, **Matthew 25:31-46**, **Matthew 6:33**, **Acts 2:44-45**, **Acts 4:34-37**, and others like them, what do we think? If God compared our offering of money, time, and effort to those of our brethren in the early days of the church, how would we compare?

My friend, heaven is the land to which we all say we want to go. We know that to get there we have a way that God has given us. Remember **Ephesians 2:1-10**? God through His grace gave us the ultimate sacrifice, His Son, so that we could be saved. He spared nothing in His sacrifice for us! Yet we seem to forget this in our sacrifice to Him, do we not?

Have you ever heard someone say that they prayed to God and felt comfortable that God supported them in their lack of giving to Him? As we choose our employment, our social activities, the school activities for our children, our recreation, our vacation, our place to live, and all the other choices we make in a life time, do we consider that all of these choices have a bearing on our giving back to God? How does He see our sacrifices in these and other decisions we make?

Will a man rob God? Will you rob God? How would God answer that on your behalf? We pray not with these words: “*And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (**Mathew 25:30**).

Listening

Mike Benson

The preacher heard the sound of someone clipping their nails during the course of his sermon. The sound was disruptive to both preacher as well as congregation, so the preacher scanned the assembly in an effort to find the “guilty party.” Suddenly, the preacher discovered the culprit. It was the song leader, but he wasn't clipping his fingernails, but his toenails!

Before you laugh, let me ask a hard question. Is it any less disruptive, any less disrespectful, when we busy ourselves by playing with babies, talking, flipping through the song book, etc. during the time when God is speaking to us through His Word through the preacher (**1 Cor. 2:1-5**)? Christian, when the Word of God is being taught, are you listening?

“*He who has ears to hear, let him hear*” (**Matt. 13:9**).

“*The Lord executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.*” – **Psalm 103:6**

Family News

Virginia Bryant has a heel spur.

Elmo Ferrell remains in room 101-A at NHC.

For the latest on the **Fultz** family, go to www.caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn

Justin Fuqua, age 27, Leonard and Doris Fuqua's (former members here) grandson, died Tuesday in Knoxville. The funeral was yesterday.

Gary Hunt, whom we support in Brooklyn, New York, has decided to leave there. Please read his latest report for details.

James Hunt is at Skyline in room 411 with pneumonia. His phone number is 769-7411.

Cotton Read has a doctor's appointment Tuesday.

Laura Reed is now living with her granddaughter Leslie Smith at 1975 Shell Rd. The phone number is 826-1774. She is doing better.

Jessica Stubblefield ran away from home Wednesday night and is still missing.

Robert Wray continues to need meals. Attend the meeting up front tonight for details.

New Reports from men we support: **Ronald Chaffin**(South Africa), **Wilson Copeland** (China), **Gary Hunt** (NY), **Chad Lynn** (WV).

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).