

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” – **Psalm 119:105**

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Let This Mind Be in You

Earl Lanning

Paul exhorted the saints at Philippi to “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*” (**Phil 2:5**), then proceeded to discuss the sacrifice Christ made as He left heaven, took upon Himself the form of man and became obedient even to the death on the cross. In writing to the church in Corinth on the subject of giving he used Christ as the ultimate example of giving as he stated, “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich*” (**2 Cor 8:9**). In verse 7, he had exhorted them to abound in this grace (of liberality) also.

In exhorting saints to “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*” Paul was simply exhorting them to be Christians in the true sense of the word. *Vine’s Dictionary of New Testament Words* says this word “Christian” (Christianos) is “a word formed after the Roman style, signifying an adherent (active supporter or disciple) of Jesus.” A disciple is a learner or imitator of their teacher, so as disciples of Christ we are to imitate Him; or as Paul said, “*Have this mind in you which was in Christ.*” Does our giving indicate that we are true disciples of Christ? Have you even given this thought serious consideration? I’m convinced that relatively few people have. If they have they wouldn’t be satisfied with giving only ten percent – or less – of their gross income. Nowhere in the New Testament are we taught to tithe (give ten percent), and in the Old Testament where tithing was required it was only a portion of their giving. They had sacrifices and offerings that were required in addition to the tithe which was to support the priestly tribe of Levi (see **Num 18:20-24; Neh 12:44; 13:10-14**). When they failed to bring in their tithes *and offerings*, God said they had robbed Him (**Mal 3:8**). Do we rob God? If so, will we “*love His appearing*” (**2 Tim 4:8**) when He comes as the righteous Judge?

Brethren, let’s give serious thought to Christ and what He was willing to give for us; and, having done so, “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*”

Characteristics of the Christian's Giving

Earl Lanning

In every age God has required gifts, offerings, and sacrifices of His people. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous (right or just in God's sight) (**Heb 11:4**). Although we are not told specifically what God instructed Cain and Abel to offer, we are told that Abel's offering was "by faith;" and since faith comes by hearing God's word (**Rom 10:17**), we know God had given them instructions as to what He wanted.

Since we are not under the same law as Cain and Abel, it is not important for us to know exactly what instructions were given them, but we do need to make certain our giving is also "by faith." So let's examine some instructions in the New Will and Testament of Jesus Christ:

1. Upon the first day of the week we are to lay by in store *as God has prospered us* (**1 Cor 16:2**). The Israelites were reminded that it was the "Lord your God" who gives you power to get wealth (**Deut 8:18**). James says every good and perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights (**James 1:17**). How well off would you be if God reversed this and prospered you by eight or nine times the amount you lay by in store??

2. The approved example of the Macedonians indicates our giving should be: *liberal and willingly* – having first given themselves to the Lord (**2 Cor 8:1-5; 9:13**).

3. We are to *abound* in this grace of giving (**8:7; 9:5**). Abound is defined as, "To exist in plenty, to have in generous measure."

4. Having a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has (**8:12; 9:2**). Jesus made special note of the poor widow who gave two mites (**Mark 12:41-44**), which was all she had.

5. In our giving we are to *sow bountifully* (**9:6**). This passage says we will reap in proportion as we sow. Do you ever wonder why you do not have more than you do? If so, think of this principle and study **2 Cor 9:8-13; Prov 11:24; Psalm 112:5-9; Mal 3:8-10; and Phil 4:18-19**. Do we believe God?

6. Give *cheerfully as we purpose in our hearts* (**9:7**). Have you ever been guilty of thinking, "With the cost of living raising as it is, there isn't much left to give to the Lord"? God has never accepted "what is left," regardless of how much or how little it is, always requiring the firstfruits (**Lev 23:10, 17; Exo 23:19**). This "purposing" must be the first item in our budget, not the last.

Does your giving contain these characteristics? Think about it!



News and Notes

Copies of a 5-Day Bible Reading Program for 2010 are on the table in the foyer.

New class material for the approaching quarter for both Sunday and Wednesday is on the front pew. It is for both the teen and adult classes.

Members:

- * Margie Frizzell has a broken bone in her spine.
- * Thelbert Frizzell continues to have blood pressure problems, though adjustments to his medicine have helped some.
- * Estelle Hayes has had a cold all last week and feels weak.
- * Fran Pickens is having a rough time right now.
- * Cotton Read is improving and returning to a normal routine.

Friends and Family:

- * No news known.

Absent: Katie Greene (Pennsylvania), Chris Gertsch (Dresden), Vernon and Claudia Guest (New Jersey).

New Reports: Wilson Copeland (China).

Note — The articles by one of our elders, Earl Lanning, first appeared in *The Lakeview Lamp* over fifteen years ago. They are needed just as much – if not more – today as they were then. So are other articles from the past. This coming year I am planning on including more of them in the bulletin from past bulletins. If you have any articles from past bulletins – or any other source – that you feel would be beneficial for all, then please share them with me. Thank you. — TN



“I will keep Your law continually, forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty, for I seek Your precepts.” – **Psalm 119:44-45**