

Spirit led giving = 100% in this case!

Mark 12:41-44, the Bible tells us...

* Jesus was sitting by the treasury WATCHING what everyone was throwing in.

* The Bible acknowledges that many rich people gave generously (saying, "...and many that were rich cast in much.")

* Next it tells us that Jesus saw a POOR widow throw in two mites.

* Jesus was so moved by her faith and generosity, that He called His disciples over to point her out.

* Jesus told everyone around that the POOR widow gave MORE than everyone else. Others gave from their surplus, while she gave 100% of her livelihood.

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Spirit led giving = 50% PLUS in this case!

Luke 19:1-10, the Bible tells us...

* Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus' house for a meal.

* Zacchaeus was so moved by the Presence and ministry of Jesus that he said he would give HALF of his goods to the poor, and repay FOUR TIMES any amount that he stole!

* Immediately after Zacchaeus stated these things, Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house".

The Poor and Afflicted Macedonians

Spirit led giving = BEGGING to give, even from their POVERTY!

2 Corinthians 8:1-4, the Bible tells us...

* Paul testified of the outpouring of the Grace of God in the lives of the Macedonian Christians.

* Paul told of their "great trial of affliction" and "deep poverty".

* Paul testified of their generosity that was abundantly evident, even under these conditions.

* Paul spoke of how these Macedonians BEGGED to GIVE.

"Spirit Led Giving" Is God Honoring Giving

In any aspect of the life of a Christian, God wants us to be led by His Holy Spirit. The same is true of OUR GIVING.

Now we have a glimpse of what Spirit led giving looks like; we should pray seeking God's guidance and give as the Spirit leads.

After writing of the abundant generosity of the church at Philippi, Paul encouraged them with the following...

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

In the context of Philippians chapter 4, one must wonder if Paul would have written this to believers who were not generous givers?

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"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16)

"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." (Galatians 5:18)

There is a vast difference between "free will giving" and "Spirit led giving". Here is a simple way to explain the differences...

"Free Will Giving" = I am free **TO GIVE**... I am free **NOT TO GIVE**.

"Spirit Led Giving" = I am free **TO OBEY**... I am free **TO DISOBEY**.

It should be very clear that these two giving methods are not at all the same. One is self-driven, self-motivated, and selfish. The other is Holy Spirit driven, love-motivated, and sacrificially selfless.

"Free Will Giving"

Most Christians would affirm that the Bible tells us to "walk in the Spirit" and "be led by the Holy Spirit", so then where does the notion of "free will giving" come from?

FREE WILL GIVING VS. SPIRIT LED GIVING

This concept almost exclusively is derived from one verse of Scripture taken out of context. The following passage, when read alone, appears to validate the notion of “free will giving”.

*“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)

On the surface, this certainly looks like it is an endorsement of “free will giving”, but is it really? We will briefly look at some definitions of the Greek words that God Himself chose. These definitions should provide additional insight into the actual meaning. We will also look at the context of this verse within the entire chapter.

The Greek word translated “*according*” is...

Strong's G2531 - kathōs - “according as - just as, even as - **in proportion** as, **in the degree** that - since, seeing that, **agreeably to the fact** that...”

The Greek word translated “*purposeth*” is...

Strong's G4255 - proaireō - “**to bring forward, bring forth from one's stores...** to purpose”

The Greek word translated “cheerful” is...

Strong's G2431 - hīlaros - “cheerful, joyous, **prompt to do anything**”

Thus this verse teaches that believers should be prompt and joyful in their giving, proportionally to what they have.

What About The Context Of The Rest Of The Chapter?

When we look at the rest of this chapter, it becomes impossible to justify any type of “minimal” giving or giving “nothing” at all. To conserve space we will summarize some of the other verses in 2 Corinthians 9...

Verse 6 - This verse tells us if you give little, you will be blessed little, and if you give much you will be blessed much. Reading verses 6 and 7 together goes a long way in contextualizing verse 7.

Verses 3-5 - Paul says that he sent brothers in advance to make sure that their generous gift was prepared for when he arrived. Paul wanted to make sure that neither the Corinthians or himself were embarrassed by them not having a bountiful gift ready.

Is it possible in this context that “Every man” giving “according as he purposeth in his heart” could include the possibility that every man would purpose to give little or nothing?

Clearly, in the context of the entire chapter, verse 7 is not an endorsement or an allowance for minimal giving.

“Free will” ends where “Spirit Led Giving” begins.

“Spirit Led Giving”

As the verses at the onset of this teaching indicate, Christians are supposed to be led by the Holy Spirit. When we are led by God's Spirit, we are truly free.

Our “free will giving” ends when we decide we are going to obediently follow the leading of the Holy Ghost. Once we choose to obey the Spirit, we have surrendered our “free will” to the will of God!

What Does Spirit Led Giving Look Like?

This is indeed a critical question, and it is one that is rarely asked. Are there examples in the Bible of people being led by the Holy Ghost in their giving? If there are examples, what does Spirit led giving look like? How does Spirit led giving compare to giving according to the Law?

We will briefly examine these questions in the following paragraphs.

There are a number of Bible examples of this type of giving. Since God does not change, it is important for us to understand how the Spirit leads God's people in all areas. If the Bible presents an undeniable and unwavering pattern of proper New Covenant giving, we should expect similar leading in our own lives.

So what do these Bible examples of Spirit led giving look like? This question can be summarized in two words...

...EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY!

Bible Examples Of Spirit Led Giving

The following examples are Biblical accounts of giving that pleased God.

The Widow's Mites