

The Love Factor of Giving

If I give all I possess to the poor...but do not have love, I gain nothing. ([1 Corinthians 13:3](#), NIV)

“Dad, question about giving to the church. Should I pay tithe on gross or net income?”

Teaching children about godly and charitable giving is one of the primary responsibilities of parents. Explaining Biblical principles on giving, then modeling those principles for your children, can have a positive, lifelong impression on them.

But sometimes when teaching our children, God is also teaching us. In response to my son’s question, I launched into the well-known Scripture verses on giving tithes and offerings to God.

- Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse ([Malachi 3:10](#))
- Abraham gave God a tenth (tithe) of everything ([Genesis 14:20](#))
- Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did ([Hebrews 11:4](#))
- God knows (and disapproves) when we don’t give Him our tithes and offerings ([Malachi 3:8](#))
- Jesus honored the widow who gave all the money she had ([Mark 12:42-43](#))
- We will reap what we sow – whether sparingly or generously ([2 Corinthians 9:6](#))
- God loves a cheerful, not reluctant, giver ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#))

Ritualistic Obligation or Loving Offering?

As I explained my spiritual perspective on giving, God’s Spirit nudged me with a sense of conviction. I was giving my son all the objective *reasons* for giving, but not the primary *motive* of giving. Like a teleprompter slowly displaying the

words, God played [1 Corinthians 13:3](#) across my mind. “If I give all I possess, but do not have love, I gain nothing.” Even if I give huge sums of money to the local church, to missions, to feed the poor and homeless, if I don’t do it from a loving heart, it is meaningless.

It is easy to get in the mindless habit of writing out a weekly offering check just like another one of the household bills. The ease and complacency of check writing, record keeping, and charitable contributions for [tax write-offs](#) has completely removed the love factor. How that must break God’s heart!

Instead of calculating *how much* we should give, let’s concentrate on *why* we give. Rather than performing the habitual routine of “giving,” let’s ask God to give us loving, charitable hearts. Instead of calculating a percentage of our income, let’s ask God how much we should give. Then as we prepare our offering, let’s thank Him for blessing us with the resources to give. Finally, as we give our offering, let’s ask Him to bless it as an expression of our love.

May God restore the love factor into our motives and routines of giving.