
COUNSELS ON STEWARDSHIP



*"God is able to make all grace
abound toward you; that ye, always
having all sufficiency in all things,
may abound to every good work."*

—2 Cor. 9:8.

A Compilation From the Writings of
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1—COWORKERS WITH GOD

“HONOR the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” Prov. 3:9, 10.

“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” Prov. 11:24,25.

“The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.” Isa. 32:8.

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. He who gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree.

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as His coworker. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but He knew that man could not be happy without acting a part in the great work. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, He bestows upon man the best means of cultivating benevolence, and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor and to advance His cause. By its necessities a ruined world is drawing forth from us talents of means and of influence, to present to men and women the truth, of which they are in perishing need. And as we heed these calls, by

labor and by acts of benevolence, we are assimilated to the image of Him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing, we bless others, and thus accumulate true riches.

It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded upon the principle of restoring in the fallen race the divine image by a constant manifestation of benevolence. This work began in the heavenly courts. There God gave to human beings an unmistakable evidence of the love with which He regarded them. He "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. It testifies that, having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. Christ's self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. That man might be saved, He gave all that He had, and then gave Himself. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle there illustrated is to give, give. This, carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but, carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death.

The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness, and encourages liberality and benevolence. It should not be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God in His providence is calling His people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral

darkness is covering the world. Many of God's people are in danger of being ensnared by worldliness and covetousness. They should understand that it is His mercy that multiplies the demands for their means. Objects that call benevolence into action must be placed before them, or they cannot pattern after the character of the great Exemplar.

THE BLESSINGS OF STEWARDSHIP

In commissioning His disciples to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Christ assigned to men the work of extending the knowledge of His grace. But while some go forth to preach, He calls upon others to answer His claims upon them for offerings, with which to support His cause in the earth. He has placed means in the hands of men, that His divine gifts may flow through human channels in doing the work appointed us in saving our fellow men. This is one of God's ways of exalting man. It is just the work that man needs; for it will stir the deepest sympathies of his heart, and call into exercise the highest capabilities of the mind.

Every good thing of earth was placed here by the bountiful hand of God as an expression of His love to man. The poor are His, and the cause of religion is His. The gold and the silver are the Lord's; and He could rain them from heaven if He chose. But instead of this He has made man His steward, entrusting him with means, not to be hoarded, but to be used in benefiting others. He thus makes man the medium through which to distribute His blessings on earth. God planned the system of beneficence, in order that man might become like his Creator, benevolent and unselfish in character, and finally be a partaker with Christ of the eternal, glorious reward.

MEETING AROUND THE CROSS

The love expressed on Calvary should be revived, strengthened, and diffused among our churches. Shall we not do all we can to give power to the principles which Christ brought to this world? Shall we not strive to establish and give efficiency to the benevolent enterprises which are now called for without delay? As you stand before the cross, and see the Prince of heaven dying for you, can you seal your heart, saying, "No; I have nothing to give"?

Christ's believing people are to perpetuate His love. This love is to draw them together around the cross. It is to divest them of all selfishness, and bind them to God and to one another.

Meet around the cross of Calvary in self-sacrifice and self-denial. God will bless you as you do your best. As you approach the throne of grace, as you find yourself bound to this throne by the golden chain let down from heaven to earth, to draw men from the pit of sin, your heart will go out in love for your brethren and sisters who are without God and without hope in the world.—*9T 253-256.*