Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church 2080 West Grand Blvd.

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“True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia”[[1]](#footnote-1)

 **Sharing Your Possessions**

**Goal: To learn what true community is and to practice biblical-based Koinonia.**

**Lesson Objective**: To experience koinonia or fellowship by sharing possessions with believers who share a common life in Jesus Christ and also sharing possessions to support needs for unbelievers.

**Scripture:** “Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Hebrews 13:66)

**Overview:**

God provides believers with material resources and opportunities to share with others. The Word of God provides the foundation for us to be obedient to His command for sharing. God has been gracious to us and He wants us to give willingly to the needs of others. When we offer open- handed help to the community, God blesses us for our kindness. We find in Acts 4:32-35 that when all the believers were in unity, in mind and heart, they sold all that they owned and laid it at the disciples’ feet. As a consequence, no one was in need. This is a perfect example of sharing our possessions.

This month’s lesson emphasizes the practice of biblical-based Koinonia by sharing our possessions with fellow believers and unbelievers. The idea of sharing our possessions is often interpreted as an occasional practice among fellow believers who have a common life in Christ. However, the Word of God teaches that God expects believers to share possessions with others. When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” [Romans 12:13 ESV]

It is easy to develop a fondness for people who have a generous nature and are willing to give. Believers are expected to give a portion to others who are in need. (1 John 3:17) Upon understanding that our possessions are God’s blessings, this enables us to share with others out of joyful hearts. As the Gentiles of the early church received the gospel, they were naturally inclined to share their material possessions with those in need of material substances. “This practical demonstration of care and concern for other members of the body of Christ is a very important expression of New Testament fellowship or koinonia.”

*Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,*

 *storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may*

*lay hold on eternal life.* [1 Timothy 6:18- 19, NKJV]

**SHARING: AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE**

Too often, it seems, the act of giving to those in need is presented as an optional matter. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were instructed to leave some of the harvest for the poor and strangers. [Leviticus 23:22] When Naomi and Ruth the Moabites returned to Bethlehem as destitute widows, Ruth gleaned and gathered in the fields after reapers among the sheaves so that they might eat. [Ruth 2]

Heartrending needs of homeless children and starvation in foreign lands are presented to appeal to our sense of compassion for benevolence. While such needs should stir up concern within us, this should not be our only motivation for giving. Rather, the primary motive should be our love and obedience to God with a desire to reflect the love of Christ in what we do. What we do for Christ will last. It is what we do for Christ that is beneficial, “You Can’t Beat God Giving”. Should we always receive and never give?

*As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.*

 [2 Corinthians 9:13 NLT

Our attitude about giving to others is very important to God. “As we consider this New Testament Scripture, two truths readily stand out. First, we are commanded to share with those in need and second, it is a joy to share our possessions with others.”

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.* [1 Peter 4:10]

**A JOYOUS EXPERIENCE**

“For God loves a cheerful giver.” This passage of scripture is often quoted during times of collection of tithes and offerings. This can mislead us into thinking we have personal ownership over our remaining possessions and can minimize what we are expected to share with others. God expects our giving to others in need to be a joyous experience. Any personal sense of possession does not acknowledge God as the source for our provisions and His right to expect us to be joyful in sharing our possessions.

We enjoy shopping for nice gifts and giving them to people who delight in the joy of this expression of endearment. As we acknowledge the joy of our relationship with God, we too experience a joy in knowing that what we do is pleasing to Him.

**GOD IS GLORIFIED**

Many people do not acknowledge that their possessions are blessings from God, but instead see themselves acquiring a family legacy as earnings for self- possessions. This omission of God’s blessings contributes to a spirit of selfishness and self-righteousness. This attitude also undermines God’s role as the provider for us which is not pleasing to God. God is the perpetual source for everyone’s ability to recycle His provisional gifts through us. This experience is a way to glorify God. Remember and know that God has given us every resource that we possess. We are, thus, stewards of our resources. As stewards we are responsible for the management of them and how we use our money, resources, and time for the Lord to include caring for and sharing with others.

We find in Acts 4:32-37 that all the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions were theirs, but they shared everything they had in appreciation for being His vessels. Not only that, we find that this God-given capability to give enables the receiver in need to humbly receive the blessings from God. For those of us who are givers, we should never fail to let people know that God is the ultimate the source of the blessing. The glory belongs to Him for His love, compassion, and provision. Every conscious deed and thought, in obedience to God, is way to glorify Him and to experience growth in relationship with Him. What a privilege it is to please God through the fellowship of sharing with those in need.

**Discussion Question #1:**

Read Matthew 6:19. What lesson do we learn?

**Discussion Question #2:**

Read Matthew 25: 41-45. Jesus identifies with the poor and those in need. How does this impact the way you think about helping the sick, the hungry and the incarcerated?

**Point to Ponder:**

Since all of our possessions belong to God, what is He asking of you?

1. Bridges, Jerry. True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia. Colorado Springs, CO, NavPress (2012) Print. 2 Ibid, 85 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)