



## LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

### “Giver: Giver Part Two”

Ps. James Lowe – Dec. 14, 2014

#### WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- What was one of your favorite toys as a child?
- What was one of your favorite activities as a child?
- What is one of your favorite pastimes at this time in your life?

#### WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org/media/>

**Introduction:** God is a giver. He gave when he created the world. He gave humans free choice. Even after we rebelled, he gave us promises of redemption. He gave his Son to be an atonement for our sins. He gives his Holy Spirit to those who turn to him through his Son. Love gives even to those who don't deserve it. God is love and is the ultimate giver.

#### **The Example of Paul as a Giver**

Acts 20:17-38 ESV *Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. And when they came to him, he said to them: “You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.*

### **Givers Are Serving**

Paul, who had suffered so much for the sake of the Gospel, did not cease to care about other people and their needs. He continued to serve them in spite of the cost to himself. Indeed, Paul had been beaten, suffered shipwreck, was incarcerated, experienced hunger and sleepless nights, and more. Yet he never ceased to give his life away in service to others. He sought to never be a burden to others, and instead be one who carried the burdens of others. Paul gave himself as a servant to others.

### **Givers Are Saving**

Paul was moved with concern for the salvation of all people. He didn't limit his concern to people of a particular ethnicity or social status or geographic location or any other such delimiting factor. He gave his life to seeking and saving the lost. He did not hold back from communicating the Gospel for fear of the workload it would mean for himself, or for fear of possible persecution, or for desire for his own comfort. Paul gave himself to saving others with the Gospel.

### **Givers Are Shepherding**

Paul didn't merely reconcile people with God through the Gospel. He continued to care and labor for their spiritual growth and development. He taught them, encouraged them, corrected them, exhorted them, and comforted them. He prayed for them and ministered to them in the power of the Holy Spirit. In all things he sought to be a living example whom they could follow. Paul gave himself to shepherding others.

### **Conclusion**

Paul lived an extraordinary life as a giver. His number one motivation was not the people, or a value system, or personal ambition, or a cause. It was God himself. When God revealed himself to Paul through the Lord Jesus Christ it radically affected Paul. He came to know God as incredibly patient, merciful, and gracious. Paul came to realize that he had been a terrible human, but that God reached out to him anyway. God changed Paul's heart and his whole outlook on people.

### **PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.**

- How are you serving people? How can you improve in your service?
- How are you reaching people with the Gospel? How can you expand your ministry to the lost and wayward?
- How are you shepherding people; that is, caring for their souls and helping them grow spiritually?

### **PRAYER (10-15 minutes)**

**Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.**

- Pray that God will give us strength and health to serve people well.
- Pray that God will open doors for the Gospel and grant us wisdom and boldness to communicate the Gospel well.
- Pray that God will soften our hearts with his compassion, so that we might care for one another's souls in meaningful ways.