



BEYOND BLESSED

*“Which Calculator Do You Use?”

Text: Luke 6:32-28

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Well, *Halloween has come and gone! It’s not really a “*Christian*” holiday of course, but owes its origin and date to the superstitions of Medieval times about the night before All Saints day - November 1.

But these days it’s a pretty *happy holiday for most of us in our culture and neighborhoods, judging by a few pictures from our Fall Carnival and Facebook. * If you look closely you’ll find a few Old Mission friends and faces! They all look pretty happy to me!

Of course it is a more fearful world these days than Halloween was when I was a kid in Kansas City. We roamed the neighborhood on foot, unaccompanied, and went to every door. That annoyed a few of our neighbors - but didn’t worry our parents! *

Now parents take their children by car, and look through the candy discarding anything unwrapped. (*There are some real-life cautions which are necessary in our less than simple age.*)

*Most of us do our best to insulate our children from fear and worry and we should. But it isn’t only children who need help with worries and fears! Fear can be a deadly emotion.

*Unless we are careful we can be like the driver I followed a few years ago onto the freeway, who came to a complete stop, afraid to enter the traffic flow. A voice from the car behind - *OK it was probably mine* - was shouting, **“The sign says yield, not give up!”*

Don’t live like that. Don’t surrender to fear. Don’t give up! Please do not hear me suggesting that there are never things to fear. There are, but we don’t have to let fear rule our lives. *Read the Book!

1 John 4:18 says, **"There is no fear in love. God's love drives out all fear."* And Psalm 23 says, **"I will fear no evil for Thou art with me!"*

Worry and fear are like two rungs on a rocking chair.

They give you something to do, but they don't get you anywhere!

***Think it doesn't matter?** I couldn't disagree more! Tuesday is Election Day. ***Are we going to settle for voting our fears? Or will we choose to vote with faith and hope in a better America?**

What kind of America do we want to build for those who come after us, like the saints whom we remember today did for us?

***On All-Saints Sunday today, I can't help but remember, with gratitude what my ancestors and those who went before us in this Church gave so we could have a living faith today!**

They trusted God's promise, as they gave their best for Him, they trusted Him to provide. It was just as it says in 2 Corinthians 9:8:

**"God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."*¹

As Jay Link says in his little book, To Whom Much is Given:

**"2 Corinthians 9 gives us the Christian methodology for deciding how much we personally should be giving back to the Lord."*²

And the words of 2 Corinthians 9:7 are ones we should remember:

**"Each one should give what they decide in their heart to give, not reluctantly, or out of guilt, for God loves a joyous giver."*³

Jay continues: **"Giving should come from our heart, not from our calculator; from our relationship with Christ, not a formula."*⁴

Not what is left over after our needs and wants are met.

¹ II Corinthians 9:8, adapted from the [New International Version](#) (NIV). Copyright ©1973-2011 by Biblica, Inc.® All rights reserved

² To Whom Much is Given by E. G. "Jay" Link. Copyright © 2009, Maitland, FL: Xulon Press; 1st edition

³ Op. Cit. II Corinthians 9:7, adapted from the [New International Version](#) (NIV).

⁴ Op. Cit., Jay Link, To Whom Much is Given.

Not a gift that won't require anything of us - but what every grateful heart wants - overflowing gratitude to God who gives so much to us.

And that's just what Jesus calls for in our text – giving hearts. So open your Bibles with me and let's look at these words from the ***Sermon on the Mount***, in Luke 6, verses 32-28.

Jesus said: **“If you love only the people who love you, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners do that!”*⁵

And this. **“If you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners do that!”*⁶

He continued: **“If you lend only to those from whom you expect repayment, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners will lend to sinners on those terms!”*⁷

Then He taught a better way. Doesn't He always? **“But love your enemies, do good, and lend without expectation. Your reward will be great. And you will be called children of God.”*⁸

Our standard is how God gives to us, in abundant measure. Not because of our deserving. **“For God is kind even to the ungrateful and wicked. So be merciful, as your Heavenly Father is merciful.”*⁹

And Luke 6:37 is a triplet that leaves no room for misunderstanding:

**“Judge not, and you shall not be judged.”*

**“Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.”*

**“Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”*¹⁰

Everything in equal measure.

And Luke 6:38 applies the principle to our financial giving.

⁵ Luke 6:32, based on the Good News Translation (GNT), Copyright © 1992 by The American Bible Society.

⁶ Ibid. Luke 6:33.

⁷ Ibid. Luke 6:34.

⁸ Ibid. Luke 6:35.

⁹ Op. Cit. Luke 6:36, adapted from the [New International Version](#) (NIV).

¹⁰ Luke 6:37, based on the [New King James Version](#) ®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**"Give, and it will be given to you: a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over..."*¹¹

With a caveat, that brings it home to our address:

**"With the same measure that you use, it will be measured to you."*¹²

It's a principle I call - **"Spiritual Multiplication."*

And it works like this. If you want to be valued, value others. If you want to love, love others. If you want to have blessings, bless others. If you want to receive generously, give generously.

I wish I could claim that I invented the whole *spiritual multiplication* concept. But - it was Jesus! Go figure! **It's there in our text.*

And It works in every area of life that I know. Remember the words from the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi said, **"Help me not so much seek to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive..."*

Sometimes folks feel they can't afford to give. But what Ann and I have learned for 40 years is the reverse - ***we can't afford not to give!***

**As long as we have given faithfully, God has always been faithful to us. When we honor God, God blesses us!*

A good way to summarize the message of the Bible is this: **"God gives."* He gave us life. He gave us his Son, who gave his life for us.

So today, I invite us all to remember the words of Jesus in our text, **"Give and it will be given to you! A good measure. For the measure we give is how it will be measured to us."*

From those to whom much is given, much is expected. Let us pray.

¹¹ Op. Cit. Luke 6:38a, adapted from the [New International Version](#).

¹² Ibid. Luke 6:38b.