

Acts 20:35 ... and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Jesus' words are not mentioned
anywhere in the Scriptures except
here where Paul told the elders
from Ephesus to remember them.

This is a season of the year for giving and receiving gifts. As a child I liked receiving gifts a whole lot more than giving them. In fact I didn't understand Jesus' words at all. The exact opposite seemed true. It was much better to get than to give.

Phil 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus set the example for us in giving. When he was on the earth he gave out of compassion.

For those who sought his word until they were hungry, he fed over 9,000.

For those who were crippled, sick or blind, he healed them as he preached.

For those who were seeking God, he showed the way.

For those who would know the kingdom, he trained men to preach the gospel.

For those who were in sin, he was a Savior.

Jesus taught his disciples to give by his example.

In 12:5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii, and given to poor people" 6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

John 13:29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.

Jesus taught his disciples to give by his teaching.

Matt 25:44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

We have examples of giving in the early church.

Barnabas sold some land and gave the money for the needy disciples.(Acts 4:37)

Ananias and Sapphira sold some land and lied about how much they gave the church.(Acts 5:2)

Our giving is to be from the heart.

2 Cor 9:7 Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.

How can we understand God
giving his son for us?

How is it possible to cheerfully
give your son to die?

It's something like asking about
the widow and her giving.

Mark 12:42 And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent.
43 And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;

She gave because she knew the purpose was important. The temple collections were given for the support of the Levites. In this covenant, you may liken them to teachers and preachers.

1 Cor 9:13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? 14 So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

Only when we have someone or something
that we truly love can we give with joy.

For someone like a husband, wife or child,
to whom we are deeply devoted, virtually
any sacrifice can be made.

People give kidneys, parts of their liver or
bone marrow so that someone else might
live.

Rom 5:7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

Most mothers will give nearly anything for a small child. They will work themselves to the point of exhaustion to make certain that child's needs are met. No sacrifice is too great for a mother's love.

Parents are choosing not to have children because they simply cost too much – in time, in money and most of all in discipline.

We see parents who do not love their children allow them to escape the discipline and they wind up lazy and selfish people about whom no one cares.

We often fail to comprehend how someone could care so little about their children.

Many times when we see another person in need, we are willing to give, perhaps a little.

After all, they don't mean much to us. The giving that goes into such little things does not indicate love exists.

I have often seen people invest tremendous time and effort in a project so great that they believe it must succeed.

Sometimes, it's care for others in hospitals, nursing homes, cancer wards, children's burn centers. Many times because of personal experience, we recognize a deep need for giving and we give with joy in our hearts.

We sometimes sing the song – “I love thy kingdom Lord, the house of thine abode, the church her blest redeemer saved with his own precious blood.”

When we truly love, we will give with joy. Without regard to our own situation because the need is great and we want to help

2 Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; 9 as it is written, "He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, His righteousness abides forever." 10 Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; 11 you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.

The only way they could give joyfully was when they truly believed in the project.

2 Cor 8:3 For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, 4 begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, 5 and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

Are you willing to give yourself to the Master and devote yourself to His cause?

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.