

# Forward

## The Giving Ladder

October 13 & 16, 2016

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(2 Peter 1:5-8) For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### 1. The Initial giver.

(2 Corinthians 8:7-8) Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving. I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches.

#### 2. The Consistent giver.

(2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NLT) Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

#### 3. The Intentional giver.

(Malachi 3:10 NLT) Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!

#### 4. The Surrendered giver.

(1 Corinthians 29:14) But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.

#### 5. The Lifetime giver.

(Matthew 6:19-21 MSG) "Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being."

### Generosity That God Rewards

(2 Samuel 24:18-25)

That day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." So David went up to do what the Lord had commanded him. When Araunah saw the king and his men coming toward him, he came and bowed before the king with his face to the ground. "Why have you come, my lord the king?" Araunah asked.

David replied, "I have come to buy your threshing floor and to build an altar to the Lord there, so that he will stop the plague."

"Take it, my lord the king, and use it as you wish," Araunah said to David. "Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and you can use the threshing boards and ox yokes for wood to build a fire on the altar. I will give it all to you, Your Majesty, and may the Lord your God accept your sacrifice."

But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it, for I will not present burnt offerings to the Lord my God that have cost me nothing." So David paid him fifty pieces of silver for the threshing floor and the oxen.

David built an altar there to the Lord and sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings. And the Lord answered his prayer.

### God responds to our giving when:

#### ✓ We give our first.

(Proverbs 3:9-10 NLT) Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income, and he will fill your barns with wheat and barley and overflow your wine vats with the finest wines.

#### ✓ We give our best.

(Colossians 3:22 MSG) Don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best. Work from the heart for your real Master, for God.

#### ✓ We give freely.

(Matthew 10:8) "Freely you have received; freely give."