

40 Days of Fitness

A daily devotional by Rev Garry Hardingham

DAY 35 – You Get What You Give

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work..
2 Corinthians 9:6-8

We are on the home straight!!

Today we move away from the deep theological stuff around the nature of the church and move to the only g letter dirty word most people know....giving! But, what we have learned so far about the nature of the church and the central act of worship should inform how, why and what we give. So, keep that in mind over the next few days.

It should not come as a surprise to anyone that generous giving is one of the cornerstones of Christian faith, and that there is great joy in giving. Indeed, a cohesive society is constructed on generous giving...even if it involves taxation. Surely no-one bemoans the government building a children's hospital raised on the funds of taxation. And I'm pretty happy I don't have to take my own rubbish to the dump anymore or walk down to Mazlin Creek for a bucket water everyday. And yes this is a forced giving, but how it's used and why it's used is central to the argument. And while accept there is always waste, there is much more that is good.

Throughout the centuries, Christians have given generously and sacrificially for the cause of the Gospel. Christians have funded schools, charities, and hospitals. Christians have given time and treasure to rebuild cities after floods and fires. Christians have given faithfully to their local churches, to missionaries, to neighbours in need, and have given consistently in ways that others will never know. Following the lead of our Saviour who gave all on our behalf, Christians are a giving people.

So, over the last few days of this study we are going to answer some fundamental questions, starting with the understanding that in the end you get what you give. Giving benefits the one who gives the gift and the one who receives the gift. If you read what Paul writes in our scripture reading today, you might get the impression that the more I give, the more I will receive. This is not what is meant here. There is no "investment" scheme in Christianity. After all, many of the Apostles gave everything, yet there are no records of them becoming extraordinarily rich in the process.

The blessing of giving comes in how we understand that true giving is not about financial return. Giving to the church is about our heart and our response to God who created the church

PRAYER

Giving God,
we receive so much from you,
and therefore have much to give.
Help us to share in the blessings of giving
as well as the happiness of receiving,
that your love may be more widely,
shared through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.