

The Secret Blessing

✘ In Genesis 13, Lot chose selfishly and moved his family to the choicest land-near the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose inhabitants sinned greatly. Abram, Lot's uncle, generously let him go; and for his generosity, God blessed Abram and allowed him to settle his family in a safe area.

Later, God used Abram to rescue Lot from the evil cities before He destroyed them. Abram learned the blessings of being generous and following God's plan.

We often think of giving as being limited to money or things. We need to give our time or talents to the Lord as well. The abilities the Lord has given you can be offered as a special gift.

On occasion, the most important thing we can give to help others is our time. Giving with a cheerful heart comes when we give our time, money or talents as if we were giving them directly to the Lord.

Though others may not receive these thankfully, God will add His blessing to our willingness to give.

A missionary learned this when he agreed to minister to the congregation of a poor church. Not expecting a significant offering, he nevertheless was excited to meet and talk with the people on the front porch after the service.

As he was leaving for the night, a woman approached him and handed him two \$1 bills. "This is all I have but I want to give it to you so you can tell others about the love of Jesus," she said. The missionary carries the two bills to this day to remind him of her perfect example of sacrificial giving out of a heart of love.

We never should give with the intention of gaining something

in return from the Lord. We should give only as an act of love. The study note for 2 Corinthians 9:11 from the Fire Bible: Global Edition puts it this way:

“In order for us to express true generosity outwardly, our hearts must become rich in true love and compassion for others. We should always pray and ask God to give us this kind of heart for others. Giving of ourselves and our possessions results in (1) supplying the needs of those who are lacking in some way, (2) praise and thanksgiving to God (v. 12) and (3) love from those who receive our help (v. 14).”

This month consider your attitude toward giving. How can you give of your (1) time; (2) talents; (3) money/resources?

Hide the Word in Your Heart memory verse: “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7).

Adapted from *Principles 4Life* (Life Publishers International), available free of charge at .