

1 Corinthians 13:3 -- "If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

Williams (pp. 117-118) writes:

The words, "he that giveth, let him do it with liberality," suggest that while all Christians have the responsibility to give of their substance to the Lord's work, there are some individual members of the Body of Christ whose special charisma is giving. Apart from this refuting the misconception that Christians should not own wealth, it points up the fact that the ministry of those who "give" is quite as important as that of those who "go".

Liberality is a "grace gift". If those whose special gift and enabling it is to give generously, then the work of those whose gift it is to serve will be unhindered. Here again we observe the complementary roles of the gifts in action.

Another thing that is made abundantly plain in Paul's exhortation is that the disposition of a man's heart is just as important as the exercise of his gift. Giving must be done not grudgingly but with liberality" (APLOTETI, literally, with singleness of heart). In other words, "it's not only what you do, it's the way that you do it!" A truly Christian giver gives without thought of return or hoping for public recognition (cf. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

If the gift of generosity is employed, it will forward the work of the church in any generation. its exercise by Barnabas in the first generation of the Church stands in bold relief against the avarice and duplicity of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 ff.).

Ryrie (p. 91) states: "The gift of giving concerns distributing one's own money to others. It is to be done with simplicity; i.e., with no thought of return or gain for self in any way."

Edgar (p. 330) says:

The term giving (METADIDOUS) is the only clue to this gift. It means to give, impart, or share. We can only guess at the specifics. It probably means to share and give to others. This might include so-called offerings to the church; however, no such offerings are described in the New Testament. Giving to the Lord is described in the New Testament only when it concerns offerings for the needs of the brethren.

There are many questions we might ask. For example, does the gift of giving (assuming it is a gift) imply the possession of the wherewithal to give? It is most likely that this gift refers to an ability to recognize needs and a desire to give beyond that normally expected. However, all Christians are to do this.