Part 1 of 3

Learning the Principle of Giving Your Time, Talents and Treasure

"If any of you wants to be My follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow Me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" Mark 8:34-36 NLT

Why is it important for a believer to learn the principle of giving? One of God's core attributes that He displays to us is giving. God gave His Son, He gives us new life, and He gives us abundantly more than we can think or ask. Ask any extravagant giver and he or she will say, "You can't outgive God."

God's attributes are given to us as we draw close to Him. One of the first attributes you receive as a new Christian is a change to being a giver. Upon being born-again, God will begin changing you into a giver almost immediately. This is because the Salvation experience is based on the premise of giving. *His giving nature is imparted to you when His Spirit comes to dwell in you at Salvation.*

You will be compelled to give because the Spirit within you understands the extraordinary value of what God has done for you.

The very essence of the Salvation experience is the gift of eternal life. Jesus is the most valuable gift ever conceived or ever given. When God touches you in Salvation, your heart will be changed in the area of giving. You will want to give of yourself even if you don't know how to give or have never been a giver.

Jesus put it plainly in Matthew 6:24 when He said, *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

Giving is a God-given strategy to eliminate greed from your life. When you give, you directly counteract the spirit of mammon that wants to hoard resources and maintain control. Giving is an action that builds trust between you and God. Through giving, we affirm that our money belongs to God. It's a declaration that we will use our resources to partner with His work in the earth. We become a steward of the resources God has entrusted to us.

Greed has stopped many Christians from fulfilling God's will for their life. As we work towards financial freedom, we must guard against all forms of greed (Luke 12:15). The goal of building wealth is not to hoard material things for ourselves. Instead, the idea is to yield ourselves as a vessel, a conduit, so that our resources flow through us to serve God's plans and purposes.

If you're not giving tithes and offerings already, start. Then, ask God how you can give above and beyond with your time, talent and treasure. One caution to consider: Sometimes our giving can

become corrupted with a "give to get" motive, which is greed in disguise. It's a very subtle influence by the spirit of mammon, so check your heart for it. Remember, "Live to give."

"The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25

How can we make sure that the spirit of mammon never gets us off track? Let's dive into what the Bible says about mammon and provide encouragement for how to break a spirit of mammon in your life. If we want to experience the true riches and power God offers us, we must break any hold mammon has over our lives. We can do this by putting our trust in God, not in material prosperity. **To be continued in Part 2**

Information and Revelation
Transformation

Heavenly Father, Your Ways are higher and much better that my ways—You have an eternal perspective that I do not have. Thank You for giving me eternal life through Jesus—I can know You and be known by You. Thank You for Your giving nature that You imparted to me when Your Spirit came to dwell in me at Salvation. Thank You for giving me an abundant life that is greater than anything that I could even think or ask. Thank You for wooing me into the Secret Place where You impart Your attributes to me.

LORD, help me walk in the fulness of what it means to serve You only and not give place to the spirit of mammon that wants me to hoard resources and maintain control. Help me step into Your strategy to eliminate greed from my life, which is to give as You direct me to. Help me better understand what it means to properly steward the time, talents and treasure You have given to me, for everything I have belongs to You. Help me to give extravagantly because Your Spirit within me understands the extraordinary value of what You have done for me. I ask these requests and give my praises to You in Jesus' name. Amen.

By David E. McFadden
"Let's Make Disciples Together!"