

Speaking to the soul



Giving

**Jesus said “Give as freely as you have received!”
Matthew 10:8**

Everything we have ever received has been a gift. Look at your family, home, car, job, friends, education, talents, opportunities – and your very breath – they are all a gift. We like to point to our hard work and effort and suggest that we deserve many of the things that we have, but the truth is

that even our ability to work hard is a gift from God. Everything is a gift from his hands.

Jesus reminded his newly recruited disciples that they had received freely and so should be willing to give freely to others. He was sending them on an incredibly tough mission. He told them that he was sending them out as sheep among wolves. Wolves are famous for their ability to tear sheep apart. The mission was clearly going to be brutally challenging, but Jesus told his disciples that they should be ready to embark on it because they had received so much. This was now their opportunity to give to others as freely as they had received themselves.

When the people generously gave their gifts for the building of the first Temple, King David prayed to God: “But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!” (1 Chronicles 29:14). Giving is the natural response for anyone who recognises the generosity of God. I thank God for the people I have known who have lived this out so powerfully. They have always been willing to serve, however difficult the circumstances. Some have worked in creches, others have worked in youth groups, served lunches for the elderly, visited the sick, done gardening work, cleaned their church building and done a thousand other tasks. And they have done these things cheerfully and effectively knowing that this was their response to a God who has always given freely and generously to them. That’s a great way to live a life! What is more, that’s exactly what Jesus invites us to do.

QUESTION

Are you willing to give as freely as you have received?

PRAYER

Lord God, thank you for your incredible generosity to me.
Help me to respond in a way that will glorify you. Amen