

Arise and Give

ARISE: 2018

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“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

Frequently Jesus used planting and reaping, sowing and harvest, to develop the story line of parables and illustrate profound spiritual truths. Likewise the Apostle Paul uses the abundance with which the sower broadcasts the seed to equate with the measure of increase in the time of harvest. The obvious outcome results in the contrast between one who sows a few seeds and the other who digs deep into the sack to sling hands full of seed to find root in the readied soil.

Paul likened the skimpy sower to a grudging giver, one who painfully releases each seed to an uncertain future return. On the other hand, the purposeful giver is one who has confidence in the productivity of the soil and cheerfully casts generous seed into the soil with great expectation of a bountiful harvest, having great faith in the seed and in the soil to produce what it was designed to deliver. This is the giver who understands the law of harvest and joyfully invests in a future return on investment.

There is tremendous joy in learning the blessing of giving. When we give purposefully according to our ability, and even more than we think is possible, we experience that abundance of return in so many blessings. The Macedonians were so motivated by the needs of fellow believers that Paul said, *“They gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people” (2 Corinthians 8:3-4 NIV).* Paul used this example of sacrificial giving and urged the Corinthian believers, *“See that you also excel in this grace of giving” (vs. 7).*

Planned sacrifice and purposeful giving will always result in increased blessings. It is often said, “You cannot out-give God!” When our giving is freely donated with a willingness to bless we are assured of God’s bountiful blessings in return.

The causes we value the most are those we support with our sacrificial giving. If we are moved by compassion or by inspiration it is easy to commit our finance and sacrifice our time to see every need supplied. We intentionally support the things that matter the most. Jesus said, *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21).* We may also find the opposite to be true, — where are heart is, our treasure will also be found.

In this most important harvest may we find ourselves planting with purpose and sowing with intention. We are not sowing a wild mix of bird seed to simply feed fowl. We are purposefully planting for an enduring harvest, faithfully expecting an abundant addition.

Arise and give!

Scripture:

“The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build ...” (Nehemiah 2:20).

1/28/18 Spirit Sunday (New)