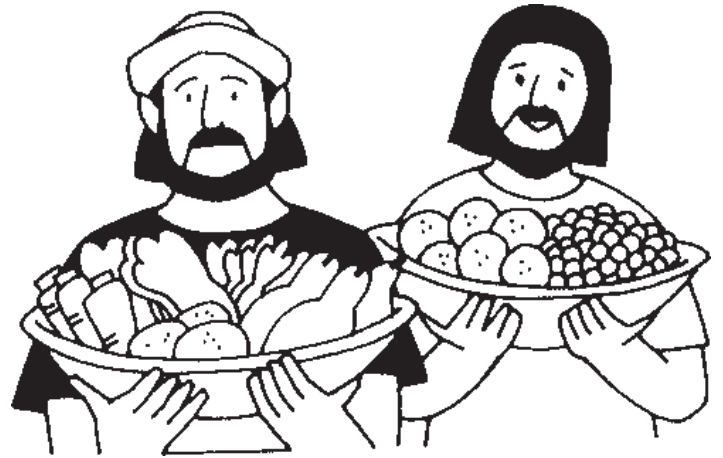


LESSON 5

Joy in Giving

The Greek word for "joy" is *chara* which means cheerfulness or calm delight. We can grow this fruit in our lives by trying to be cheerful no matter what is going on in our lives. This is not always easy! There are lots of times when things are not going well or we just feel sad about something. But if we want to do our best to please God and produce the fruits of the spirit then we have to at least attempt to find the joy in things. Part of this is just learning to be aware of the things we have to be joyful about.



Most of us have all our daily needs met: a comfortable place to live, good food to eat, family who care for us, opportunities to learn, etc. We can be joyful and thankful for all these things. Not everyone is in this situation however, and so one way God asks us to be cheerful is in our giving.

The story of the widow who gave all she had into the Temple treasury is an example of cheerful giving. In contrast to those who had plenty and threw in carelessly a little of what they had - she gave all that she had without grudging. These treasury boxes were in the court of the Temple and were shaped like an inverted megaphone and would make lots of noise when the rich put their money in. The widow on the other hand had only two mites which were the smallest piece of money in use and would have barely made a tinkle. Perhaps sometimes we think the little we can give is not worth giving because it is so little, but what is more important is the act of being cheerfully generous.

In the Old Testament, the people of Israel had to bring a tithe - a tenth - of all that their fields produced to the Temple each year. They were to do this with rejoicing and the tithes would support the Levites who worked in the Temple and didn't raise their own food.

Paul writes of the Macedonians who, although they were poor themselves, were eager to give as much as they could to help those who were in need in Jerusalem. Paul says that this willing, cheerful giving brings about many expressions of thanks and praise to God. We, too, should be looking for opportunities to help out those less fortunate than ourselves.

The people who are accepted into the Kingdom will be those who have been cheerful givers: *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in."* (Matthew 25:34,35)

Student Name: _____

WORKSHEET 5: JOY IN GIVING

ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE:

What do the following verses tell us about giving?

Luke 6:38 _____

Acts 20:35 _____

Matthew 6:1-4 _____

Leviticus 19:9,10 _____

WORD STUDY:

"rejoice"

Look up this word in a concordance. What is the Hebrew word and what does it mean? Look at all the occurrences of the word "rejoice" in Deuteronomy. In what situations are the people told to rejoice?

APPLICATION:

This lesson has focused on giving in a monetary way, but there are other ways of giving. Come up with three other examples of giving that do not have to do with money.
