

So he began. To Foreign Missions, 25 cts. To Home Missions, Bible, Tract &c., 20 cts each. And the whole amount was *just one dollar and a half!* The man was amazed, for he *felt* that he had given about all that came from his church. I must insist upon it that every man will greatly over-estimate his charities, as he does all his good deeds, unless he keep an accurate account of them. Laying aside stately, or, whenever you have money come in, and conscientiously too, will make it all plain and easy. The charity call comes round (you wonder how it can come so soon again;) and you don't have to contrive how to raise the money, nor how little it will do to give. The money is ready in the box. Hand it over freely, and trust that the box will be filled again. Be sure and put into the box till you *feel* it—feel that you must go without this or that—feel that it is really a sacrifice. “With such sacrifices” as cost us self-denial, “God is well pleased.” None others are sacrifices.

3. Give to Christ and look to him for the reward.

My reader may blush for my old Puritan notions, and think me “behind the age,” when I solemnly warn my generation, that a vast amount now going under the name of charity is not charity. I fear it is a stench before the Lord. What kind of *giving to Christ* is it, when you pass your money into the Fair, into the Raffle, into the “charity ball,” into “the private theatrical,” and expect and demand that you get back the worth of your money, in sight-seeing, in the raffle, in the dance, or in the amusement? You buy amusements, and you have them. You seek your reward in these ways, and you have it; but you must not expect Christ will reckon it as charity. “Freely ye have received, freely give—hoping for nothing again.” It will be said we raise vastly more money in this way. So we do. But, *mala parva, mala dilabuntur*. Does it have the blessing of God coming down on the giver, and on the receiver, as if *given to Christ*? “Charities” raised in these ways may be investments, and you may get the worth of your money: but it is a misnomer to call them charities. And yet, are not multitudes congratulating themselves on their hopes of a great reward hereafter, because they give money by the handful in this way. If that only is charity which is given out of love and regard to the Saviour, how much charity have we going up with our prayers? It may be you give from patriotism—love for your country. I am glad of it. I rejoice in it; but why must you have your pay down in amusement, and raffles, and theatres, and dances? Why can't you trust Christ for at least a part of your reward?

4. If you would have giving easy, give cheerfully.

I have an impression that a kiss which your little child runs to give you is far sweeter than one given you because you sternly command it. And does not our Saviour so esteem it? “God loveth a cheerful giver.” Does he love any other giver? If you shrug your shoulders, and scowl, every time you are called upon for charity, you do not give cheerfully. Give grudgingly, and you lose it all. You have nothing but pain in giving, and you will have no reward hereafter. You would not grudge to give the Saviour a meal of victuals, or a warm garment, or to carry Him off eight or ten miles to preach, would you? You would not grudge to wash and bind up the wounds of Paul and Silas, bleeding from scourging, would you? Then why not meet every call that humanity makes, as Christ did—promptly and cheerfully. “I will come and heal him.” What I mean is, that you should cultivate the habit of giving cheerfully, and it will then be easier every time. Try being a collector one year, and see how you will find some all ready, handing to you cheerfully, wishing it were more, thanking you for calling, while others look and act as if you had come to rob them, and they must buy off with as small a sum as they possibly can. You feel that the hill of Zion which you are raking has become a fern pasture.

My dear brother and sister in Christ, I beg you not to sit for the picture of “the covetous man, whom the Lord abhorreth.” The pen of inspiration hath written but few texts more fearful than that.