

spiritual concerns; we enjoy them in the present life; we can anticipate them for the future. "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty." There is a connection between our fidelity towards God, and His favor towards us; between the due devotion of our property to God, and its increase. But we should consider chiefly the spiritual results which flow from the exercise of Christian liberality. It has an effect both upon the feelings and the character of the giver. He is made happier and better in the performance of his devotions. How glad indeed some are when they can give! The Israelites were commanded when they brought their offerings, tithes and choice vows, to rejoice before the Lord: Deut. xii. 10-12. And on the occasion of the formal presentation of the material for the building of the temple; "then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly; because with perfect heart they offered willingly unto the Lord. They did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness."

Giving promotes happiness inasmuch as we are permitted to witness the good that is accomplished by our gifts, specially in what is done for the support and spread of religion. And how much better it would be for the rich to make donations than bequests. How much more blessed to give than to leave.

But giving not only increases happiness, it really improves character. It increases our faith and deepens our love. It leads us to take a deeper interest in Christ's cause, and to make greater efforts for its advancement. There are also higher future rewards to which we might refer. To the rich young man the Lord said, "Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." We have regarded giving as a means of grace. It is both a cause and an effect of revival. A low state of religion must necessarily result from a lack of liberality. God's *terms* of reviving a church in such a case, and his *time* for doing it is stated thus: "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Let our people try to fulfil the conditions we have noticed: (1) that all give as to the Lord; (2) that all really give, in proportion to their ability; (3) that they ask the divine blessing to accompany their gifts; and we may confidently anticipate the promised blessing. Our chief motive in giving should not be that we may get so much but because we have received. All should aim at proving the sincerity of their love. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich."

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