

## Why Is Giving So Important?

The *International Sunday School Lesson* for Sunday August 3, 2008  
James 1:17-27

*“Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change”* (James 1:17—NRSV).

*“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”* (James 1:17—KJV).

My early scripture memorization was from the King James Version of the Bible; and over the years, I have found it helpful to read and study original languages and different translations. New translations sometimes make Biblical truths penetrate your mind in new ways. Sometimes I have felt embarrassed, because somehow I had missed an obvious Biblical truth that only became real to me through reading a different translation.

Many years ago, I memorized the King James Version of our text: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). The truth was so obvious that I never gave much thought to its depth. Recently, when I read the New Revised Standard Version of the text, I was impressed with the truth that “Every generous act of giving . . . is from above.” Have you ever thought about the fact that God inspires your “every generous act of giving”? God fills you with His love and generous Spirit, so He can bless the Church and others through you. Thank the Lord for enabling and guiding you and others to give, so through your giving He can give “perfect” gifts to meet the needs of others!

So we will not miss this important truth, God inspired Paul to write, “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord . . . it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone” (study 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).  
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## Questions for Further Thought or Class Discussion

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Think about your answers to the questions below before your Sunday school class meets, discuss in class, or use for further study. In some cases, I do not always write the questions to have a definitive right or wrong answer. In most cases, the questions should encourage everyone to think about how to apply biblical truths to their daily lives. Before beginning to answer the questions below, read the entire Scripture lesson in your favorite translation or compare translations. Write your thoughts in the space provided and take them to your Sunday school class for discussion.

1. What is the most surprising truth that you have learned from the Bible recently?
2. Give three reasons why you believe memorizing scriptures from the Bible is important.
3. What three gifts do you enjoy that came from God to you through other people?
4. What do you need to do that will make it easier for you to share with others the gifts that God has given you? What gifts do you have that need to be shared with others?
5. Describe how you feel when you receive a gift from someone, especially from God. Describe how you feel when you give a gift to someone; a gift you know came to you from God (either directly or indirectly). Describe how you think the other person must feel when you give them a gift. Why is gift giving so important to God and to us?

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