

ARBC
Sunday, May 15, 2011

Father we thank you for this day, for your love, and goodness. May the words we say today lift you up. May we love you, and forgive each other. Be with us as we look into your word, empty of myself, cleanse me and humble me. In your name Amen.

What a week, it is good to be in the house of the Lord. If you come in a bit late you have missed a great blessing. The children have spent the last few months preparing for GPS and you need to be here tonight at 6 as they present the musical.

We have a lot of exciting things happening; June 5th is the 25 year anniversary of deaf Ministry.

July 3rd Patriotic Extravaganza. God only knows; when we started this word America we must never forget.

This is a hard subject for some; I call it Distorted Christian Thinking.

2 Corinthians 8:1-7 Paul is talking and he is comparing two churches; the church at Macedonia and the church at Corinth.

1: Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

That is his greeting. Now what is happening in the church?

2: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.

3: For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,

4: imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5: And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

We have this description of the church of Macedonia. Many of them were in poverty.

6: So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.

Now he is commending the church of a few things.

7: But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

What is “this grace”? It goes back to the Macedonia church and throughout their poverty they gave and it says gave beyond what they were able to do.

Some of you are thinking oh no is he preaching about The “T” word.

Some of us are going The “T” word, we have visitors and every time we come to church they are preaching about The “T” word. I have been preaching since last July and this is the first time.

Paul spoke the truth; he spoke about tithes and offerings. He would rebuke them. I am not here to rebuke you but I am the messenger. This is not from Pastor Tim but is from the Word of God and must not ignore this topic.

We are in fear of offending someone but it is there. How bad it would be for us as a church, congregation, a pastor, not to talk about this important aspect. Paul spoke to the church, he said some good things, you are knowledgeable, you know some good things, you have great faith, been diligent in your work, but you have lacked in the grace of liberality meaning giving. They have not learned how to give as they should.

One side of the spiritual development had not grown where they needed to be.

The same in our church, many Christians are like that. Strong in many areas but weak in the area of giving liberally to the church. I am calling distorted Christians; I want to talk to you about this matter of giving. If you are a tither you will rejoice with me, if you are not I hope you will say I see and now understand. Do we look at God or gold; or self or the savior? The I don't care Christian will say “I will do as I please” the committed one will say “I will do as God pleases”

It is impossible to preach the gospel without preaching on giving. “God so loved the world that He GAVE.” The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ his son. Jesus said “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” The Bible says more about giving; think about this, it talks more about giving than all of these other subjects. It's hard to imagine but it's true. Any preacher committed to preaching the word would be amiss if ignored this topic.

As we are moving forward I hope you will join me, as we all take a leap of faith. Many of you have read the book Radical. It is important not to expect the status quo. It is important to move forward on faith. As I was reading the book, I thought this was interesting. This young man does a lot of mission work, he spoke at a graduation ceremony, and before anyone could graduate from seminary, they had to begin a new

church start. Radical, different from what we are doing. We are doing a great job, spending what we are getting in but there is much work that needs to be done. We need another associate minister and to have that happen, we will need to cut in other areas. I would hate to see that.

This fall we will start a Sunday School class 7 week session called "Momentum". These are real numbers about ARBC from Nashville TN. The average income, for our zip codes, the family income is \$91,800; giving in 2009 was \$948,000 for offerings. If every family unit in this church increase by 1%, currently if we increased by a percentage the income would increase.

More of us have to step up to the plate. You will be shocked at what God calls some of us. I will ask a few questions.

Why Should Christians Give?

Because God gives. You and I were once lost. God says I would give my son to those who are lost. It broke God's heart but he gave his best, his son for you and I. He has given you your very life. Do you want to be like God? Then you must give as he gave.

Psalms 50:10-12

10: For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.

11: I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine.

12: "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.

Then God's word says

Haggai 2:8

8: 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts.

Does he withhold it and keep it for himself? No, God loves us. We should give because we owe God something. If he has changed us and blessed us, do we not owe him? I remember years ago, a long time ago, we had good friends, very well off and very humble. Her name was Fedora (like the hat) and she said, "God had blessed us but we know it can be gone just like that". Just like with Job, it can be gone and he has called us to be stewards. Take your money to the bank and let them hold onto your money. If they take your money and embezzle it, they will be put in prison.

David said, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."

With all that he has blessed us, don't you think we owe him something?

We should give because of what giving will do for us. He could have put Annistown Road Baptist Church on top of an oil well if he had wanted. We could have one rich person to take care of everything but God wants you to give because giving does something for you. I don't believe we should give until it hurts, I believe we should give until it feels good. Tithing is like walking, at first it is difficult but then as you mature and you give and give, it will become the joy of your life.

We should give because of the need. We have a great building, need for more staff, Ministry, but we need to give so people around the world will know of Christ. We are part of the largest missionary work in the world. The second disaster relief program in the world. I read "Decision Points" written by a past president. There is nearly a whole chapter about the work that SBCD did. It works because we work together. As you give to this body, we give to the convention that helps worldwide. We give to churches locally. Right down the road, a Spanish minister ran into some immigration problems so we helped there. We have a strong need to give to support missions. The money we spend on lunch, a new tie, etc only lasts for a while, but the money we spend on God's work lasts for an eternity.

How Much Should A Christian Give? 1/10th of our income should be given and anything over that should be given as an offering. The Bible says to bring it to the storehouse. Let's look in the New Testament

Matthew 23:23

23: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

What is he saying? The tithe has not died; you still need to give to the church as well as other things. God also pronounces a curse on the non-tither; he says he will punish you if you rob from God.

A pastor, in a rich fashionable congregation one morning said, "Many of you came to church this morning riding in stolen cars, wearing stolen clothes, wearing stolen jewelry, all because you paid for these things with the tithe money that you withheld from God."

If you are not tithing you are robbing God. God said it, not me.

Malachi 3:8

"Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings". You are robbing me in tithes and offerings. How wonderful to

join together as our church has committed to not be in debt. To give to people a tithe and beyond and not worry about it.

Where should the Christian bring their tithe?
Malachi 3:10

10: For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.

There are many people on radio and television asking for your support. Some are good, some not. The man on TV is quick about being saved but what about baptism or giving to your local church. I believe there are a few good ones out there, but be careful. Some of them will be gone, but friend the church of God will prevail and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The church will stand and last forever. Jesus died for her and we need to support her.

When should a Christian bring their tithe to the Church? We have online banking and wonderful convinces. The point is we pay our tithe from the first fruits. Mark it down. When you get your paycheck, disability, social security, your first fruit should be your tithe to your church. Your second is to you for savings and then the bills. If you get that order mixed up and you pay your bills every time, when you get to the end of the bills, you will still have bills and nothing left for you or God. We have it flip flopped. We give God first, you second, and then the bills third.

Lynn and I can testify that it works. We can take it way beyond and if we can do that, you can do that. God will bless us as a church as never before.

There is an old Japanese proverb that says, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Why not take the first step the next time you get your paycheck? You can have a good part in the best work in the world.

I have heard testimony from people here and other churches; I have heard a man say "if you will tithe and if God has not blessed you he will give you all of the tithe back". You can start now and God will bless you soon, not that we give to get but that we give to give and give and give. How much do you love Jesus? Adults as you work, everything is His. He gave all that He has for you and I. He will bless us if you will work the matter of giving out. Won't you do that? You start at the beginning and that means to give Christ first place; maybe you need to be saved. You don't hear "money money money" here very often but we would be amiss if we don't talk about.

Maybe you need to accept Christ, maybe you need to join the church, or maybe you need to pray. If you want to have someone to pray with you go over there, if you want to pray alone go over here. We will pray and as we sing, you need to make a decision for Christ. Recommit your life to him today.

Father, be with our time of invitation now. You know our hearts, lives, thoughts and you

know what decision we need to make for you. Give us the boldness to stand up for what is right for you. With every eye closed, and every head bowed, Dave will lead us; let's stand together on that first note.

(Singing...Words on Large Overhead Screen)

Pastor Tim: You and I can go to the fountain.

Give it to the Lord.

Sing it with God.

Oh let that be our prayer!

Amen, it's good to be in the Lords house, I hope you have been blessed. Please the next two Sunday nights, both are children; tonight our children's musical and then Sunday week is Awana graduation, that is a big night, come and support them.

Wednesday is fellowship and will be catered by Shanes.

Have you been glad to be in the house of the Lord today?

I look forward to seeing you tonight. I believe I see Dixon Neighbors' head back there (laughter) I can't throw stones.

Praying (Cannot hear him/her)

Amen