

Choosing a Good Bible-Based Church or Assembly (II)

It's time to look elsewhere, if you are made to feel uncomfortable, guilty, or downright miserable at your place of worship because you are not in a position to give as expected. Some churches and assemblies give you the notion that having a fulfilled life in Christ is contingent upon your willingness to lay down a big chunk of your money. This distasteful *sermon* is usually given to fund unworthy causes or to satisfy the leader's huge appetite for worldly possessions. Let's be real! It is false teaching to assure givers that they will reap a hundred-fold or more of what they have given. Likewise, making *Giving* or *Pledging to give* a condition to receive a miracle and/or have their prayers answered, and by that, pressurize them into laying down their money by all means (credit card, debit card, loans, etc).

Sadly, many believers are victims of these places, because of their love for God and the pursuit of *signs and wonders*, with some failing in their family responsibilities. Bills are left unpaid, children are going hungry, while spiritual leaders live lavish lifestyles they normally can't afford, off their victims' giving.

The blessings of God are not for sale, beloved. He does not need your money to bless you. He is not after your money. Think about this for a minute: How is it possible that the Custodian of all things (Haggai 2:8, Psalm 50:12) who gives and owns all we have, is in dire need of them to that extent? The Lord summarized His self-existence when He said, even if He was hungry, He would not tell us, for He owns everything on earth (Psalm 50:12).

It is good to give to propagate the Gospel. It is great to give to those in need (Proverbs 19:17). However, God needs your heart first. When you have given Him your heart, then you can give as you desire. Give, because you want to be a good steward of what God has blessed you with - not because you are expecting a hundred-fold of what you have given, in return. God may choose to reward you - that is true; but HOW He rewards your giving (if He chooses to), WHAT He rewards you with, and HOW SOON He rewards you, are His prerogative. If you have something to give, give as your heart desires. If you do not have much to give, give your widow's mite. If you do not have anything to give, give God praise. He would rather you give cheerfully - never grudgingly, and certainly not out of compulsion (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Your salvation is personal, beloved. Do not ever give up on God and forfeit your relationship with Him because you are compelled to give.

Shalom!