

GIVING

The God-given ability, perhaps to earn but certainly to give, money or resources cheerfully to advance God's work. This includes systematic giving as well as giving to meet an immediate need. The gift of giving can be used, for example, to head up stewardship programs, financially support ministries, organize or work in programs to help those who are unemployed or are in financial need, to supply project needs such as curriculum, or to provide scholarships.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. A giver is one who plans to give. While giving is often done spontaneously, giving is a priority to those with this gift.
2. A keen ability to discern wise investments in order to have more money available to give away. The giver is inherently financially savvy.
3. A desire to give quietly without public notice. While givers appreciate an appropriate thank you, they do not wish to be lauded or exalted from the platform.
4. A genuine motivation to give as unto the Lord at His prompting, not by human appeals.
5. A desire to give high quality gifts because low quality gifts are considered wasteful in the long term.
6. An ability to test a person's faithfulness and wisdom by how he handles funds and resources; an ability to deduce what other people do with their money.
7. A tendency to practice personal frugality; to be content with the basic necessities of life.
8. An alertness to see financial needs that others tend to overlook.
9. A desire to use personal giving as a way to motivate others to give.

CAUTIONS

1. Giving too sparingly to their family. Givers want their family members to work for money and to appreciate its value. In attempting to motivate this respect for financial blessings, givers may be too frugal with their own family.
2. Family tension and resentment toward recipients can be created by givers who are too frugal with their families while giving large gifts to others.
3. Listening to unscriptural counsel on money management. Givers tend to attract people with wrong motives and unscriptural counsel and can be deceived.
4. Putting pressure on people who have less to give. Various methods may be used to encourage others to give, such as matching gifts or fund raising programs. In the process, givers may put excessive pressure on others to give.
5. Failing to discern God's promptings for a gift, giving instead to causes, projects, or people who appeal to them for personal reasons.

6. Judging those who misuse funds rather than advising them. Givers are very alert to how people use funds and how funds are misused. Givers can overlook the valuable ministry they could have in advising Christians on financial responsibility.
7. Controlling people or ministries with gifts. Givers may threaten, directly or indirectly, to withhold funds if a program is not administered the way they think it should be.
8. Corrupting people by giving too much. Those who receive gifts can easily look to givers rather than to God and can be tempted to do things with easily gotten money that is contrary to God's will.
9. Investing in projects that do not benefit people. These projects can build an organization while not benefitting those who are supposed to be reached through the organization.
10. Being proud and losing sight of the joy of giving. What was given from a cheerful heart can become a source of bondage – a duty or what is expected. A giver can be easily offended when an ungrateful heart or irresponsible action is detected.
11. Feeling frustrated when trying to meet too many legitimate needs with limited funds. No matter how much one gives, it will never be enough to meet the endless demand.