



## Discovering Your Design:

*Preparing Christ's followers to change the world*

## GIVING

**DEFINITION: THE SPIRIT-GIVEN ABILITY TO SHARE YOUR RESOURCES GENEROUSLY WITH THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED.**

- the word literally means to share with someone else, and it commonly speaks of sharing with those who are in need (see Luke 3:11, Ephesians 4:28, Acts 2:44,45).
- Paul adds that this gift is to be shared generously - the word can mean simplicity, purity of motives, singleness of purpose or liberality (cf. Romans 12:8).
- the example of the Macedonians teaches us that wealth is not a requirement, because they gave out of their "extreme poverty" (2 Corinthians 8:2).
- the gift includes our resources not just our money.
- the gift can be exercised individually, or corporately, as needs become known.

**Biblical References:** Romans 12:8; II Corinthians 8:1-5; Acts 4:32-37

**Contribution:** this gift builds up the body by encouraging those whose needs have been met through a generous gift, and as it contributes the resources necessary for God's work to continue.

**Biblical Examples:** Barnabas (Acts 4:37), Macedonian believers (II Corinthians 8:1-5)

**Characteristics** - People with this gift :

- have resources to share and give them generously
- find great joy in sharing their resources - they are cheerful givers (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- often give anonymously (Matthew 6:3)
- respond to needs
- are good stewards - mindful that to whom much is given, much is required
- "R. G. LeTourneau said the key question is not how much money I give to God, but how much of God's money I keep."
- continue to live at the same lifestyle even when their income goes up

**Cautions:**

- don't squelch the gift by being stingy and hiding it under the banner of being a good steward
- don't use money as a means for power
- don't think giving your money wins you any favor with God
- don't think having the gift will make you rich
- guard your heart from the love of money
- stay cheerful as you give to the Lord
- watch your motives as you give - remember you are to have pure motives as you give

**Christian Responsibility:** as Christ's followers we are to be known as givers not takers. The Old Testament and New make it clear that we are to give of our resources to the Lord as cheerful givers acknowledging that all we have is from Him. (Malachi 3:8-10, Luke 3:11, I Corinthians 16:2).