Stop Doubting…and Believe!

Hello all you Seekers of MORE of the deep riches of what our God the Father has to offer us in His Word! I wonder if any of us truly realize just how much dynamic Truth is right at our fingertips, and could radically change our way of navigating life. Oh that we would **SEEK** it out, and embrace it **without any reservations, or doubt**.

**Jeremiah 29**

11For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. [**12**](http://biblehub.com/jeremiah/29-12.htm)Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/jeremiah/29-13.htm)**You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart**. [**14**](http://biblehub.com/jeremiah/29-14.htm)I will be found by you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back from captivity. *(Put a marker here*) **[Q]** How many of us are, right now, captive to things that His Truth has the answer to, and could be released to experience His blessings?

First of all, we have to realize that what we just read was originally intended for His people, Israel. He longed to have them let go of their false gods, personal agendas, and personal dreams, and desires, in lieu ofdiscovering His. **[Q]** Since he was speaking to Israel here, was this meant for just them, or for us New Testament believers also?

 **Ephesians 1**

3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. [**4**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-4.htm)For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love [**5**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-5.htm)he***b*** predestined us for adoption to sonship***c*** through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— [**6**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-6.htm)to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. [**7**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-7.htm)In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance **with the riches of God’s grace** [**8**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-8.htm)**that he lavished on us**. With all wisdom and understanding, [**9**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-9.htm)he***d*** made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, [**10**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-10.htm)to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

[**11**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-11.htm)In him we were also chosen,***e*** having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, [**12**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-12.htm)in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-13.htm)And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. **When you believed**, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, [**14**](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-14.htm)who is a deposit **guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

If this section of Scripture doesn’t make you smile, then you may want to examine your your relationship with Him. We need to **BELIEVE** this point with every fiber of our being… **He wants only the best for us**. He has put everything we need at our fingertips. As we read in Jeremiah…He has a plan for us, just as He had a plan for Israel.

There is no excuse, in this modern era, for a believer not studying, with all of the study helps that we have at our fingertips. **[Q]** How will we explain this to our Lord someday?

**Verse 4:** **HUGE** Truth here… He chose us for this blessing, just as He chose Israel, before this world even existed. So yes…they came first chronologically, but we, just as they, are recipients of **ALL** He has, just as He wished for them, from the beginning. PROBLEM is, most didn’t want it then, and they still don’t want it now. **NOW…back to Jeremiah 29**

[**13**](http://biblehub.com/jeremiah/29-13.htm)**You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart**. **Seek** {**baqash**} baw-kash’… consult; beg; inquire; plead; demand.

 I want you to think about the intensity, and resolve, and determination that this particular Hebrew word is conveying; and which is suggesting as being the only way we will get deep into Truth. Most, who profess a love for Christ, do not show this type of resolve. He longs for an “I want to follow you at all costs…I want to know, and experience all that You have for me” mentality, attitude, and desire.

Jesus, and the Father, are not trying to play Hide and Seek with us, or hide anything from us that is for our benefit (and His). They have not only given us all that we need, in His Word, but sent each of us our own special tutor, or school teacher, to interpret it for us. His Name is the Holy Spirit; and He is the third person of the Fabulous Trinity.

**Verse 11**: He has plans for us…**great plans**…successful plans; but they will never be fulfilled, if we don’t SEEK Him with every fiber of our being…all day, every day. Those plans are for spiritual prosperity (not necessarily earthly prosperity, as some preach).

The oness’ is upon you and I to seek Him, to learn His particular plan for us, and to perform what He requires of us. He will then bless us, with whatever is at the end of that road of obedience. If you don’t go down the road, and choose to be obedient, you will never experience the blessings associated with accomplishing it.

Now, let me begin down the path of teaching you what I feel is a major roadblock to you and I grasping these great promises, and peace. It can be found in a section of Scripture that we read last week, and came from the lips of Jesus Himself…

**John 20**

26A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” [**27**](http://biblehub.com/john/20-27.htm)Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. **Stop doubting and believe**.”

**Doubting** {apistos} ap’-is-tos… not faithful because unpersuaded; not convinced (persuaded by God); by extension…rejection of God’s in-birthing of faith.

Jesus is telling Thomas that he needs to abandon his fleshly doubts, and fears; and grasp ahold of the fact that everything He had told them, prior to being crucified, would happen, and was 100% true. So, QUIT doing this doubting… **[Q]** And do what? (Believe)

**Believe** {**pistos**} pis-tos’… trustworthy; faithful; loyalty to faith. Same base word as…

**Faith** {pistis} pis-tis’… belief; trust; confidence; fidelity. Belief is the outworking of Faith.

In other words, Jesus is telling Thomas to unequivocally, and fully, trust Him. Thomas needed to think about Jesus’ track record. He had NEVER told him anything that had not happened just as He had said, or predicted; and had never once caught Jesus in a lie. Jesus’ track record was unblemished.

**[Q]** What is the polar opposite of doubt? (Belief)

**Proverbs 3**

5Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; [**6**](http://biblehub.com/proverbs/3-6.htm)in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight

**[Q]** Will you give me the liberty to mess with this verse a bit, just for illustration’s sake? (Listen to how the polar opposite of this verse would read, in Satan’s bible)

**Doubt the Lord, with all your heart, and lean on your own understanding, in all your ways resist Him, and you will make your paths crooked.**

Here is what I want you to consider this morning. When we DOUBT, we are saying that, after all that He has done for us, we still cannot, or will not, trust Him. I would consider that another slap in the face to Him; who was bloodied, beaten, mocked, and crucified out of His great love for us. Let’s put this into perspective here for just a moment…

**[Q]** What normally causes us to doubt certain people in our own lives? (Past performance)

I’m sure every one of us here can think of a certain friend, or family member, who is constantly late, when asked to meet you somewhere, or come to a party, or for a phone call. These are the type people that, if you have scheduled a luncheon date with others for Noon, you tell them 11:30, and hope, that possibly, they might wander in by 12:00.

Not only is this unthoughtful, but downright rude, and selfish, and it instills a distrust in you; and naturally causes you to doubt them in future similar circumstances. **[Q]** How could this type person alleviate your doubts? (By doing as they say, over a period of time, consistently)

None of us in this sanctuary, have one logical reason to doubt, or not believe Jesus, or His Word. **[Q]** Would you agree? (You had better agree, because He is saying to you, and I, this morning, just as He did to Thomas…”**STOP doubting, and believe!**”.

We can’t just talk…we have to perform. Jesus’ half-brother James explains this well…

**James 2**

14What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? [**15**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-15.htm)Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. [**16**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-16.htm)If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? [**17**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-17.htm)In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

[**18**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-18.htm)But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.”

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. [**19**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-19.htm)You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

[**20**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-20.htm)You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless***d*** ? [**21**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-21.htm)Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? [**22**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-22.htm)You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. [**23**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-23.htm)And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,”***e*** and he was called God’s friend. [**24**](http://biblehub.com/james/2-24.htm)You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

**[Q]** Where does doubt originate? (The Evil One…Satan himself)

 **Genesis 3**

1Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

Bottom line…**[Q]** What happened here? (Eve trusted Satan, and did not trust God. He interjected doubt in direct opposition to God’s promise, and she believed him, over God)

**[Q]** How do you think this must have made God feel? (Sad, betrayed, broken-hearted}

Every time we give in to doubt, in conjunction with God’s Word, we do this same thing.

Satan continually interjects doubt into every situation in our lives, in which we should be trusting God, in Faith. **[Q]** How does he do it to us?

**Galatians 5**

16So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. [**17**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/5-17.htm)For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever***c*** you want.

Our flesh, which is 100% evil, will cause us to doubt. As long as you listen to it, and consider it’s contrary opinion to the things of Faith, you will be miserable…unless you are dedicated to seeking after, and grasping Truth, through Faith, at all costs.

**Feelings defy Faith**, and will extinguish it, if you dwell on them long enough. **[Q]** Why? (Because our flesh naturally doubts God, His Word, and His promises)

**James 1**

2Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,***a*** whenever you face trials of many kinds, [**3**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-3.htm)because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. [**4**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-4.htm)Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. [**5**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-5.htm)If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. [**6**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-6.htm)But when you ask, **you must believe and not doubt**, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. [**7**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-7.htm)That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. [**8**](http://biblehub.com/james/1-8.htm)Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

Double-mindedness, in a professing Believer, has to break God’s heart. Listen to King David, the man after God’s own heart in this famous Psalm…

 **Psalm 119**

113 I hate double-minded people, but I love your law.

[**114**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-114.htm)You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word. [**115**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-115.htm)Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God!

[**116**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-116.htm)Sustain me, my God, according to your promise, and I will live; do not let my hopes be dashed.

[**117**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-117.htm)Uphold me, and I will be delivered; I will always have regard for your decrees.

[**118**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-118.htm)You reject all who stray from your decrees, for their delusions come to nothing.

[**119**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-119.htm)All the wicked of the earth you discard like dross; therefore I love your statutes.

[**120**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/119-120.htm)My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.

**Double-minded** {**seeph**} say-afe’… divided (in mind); half-hearted; skeptical

**Verse 113**: The opposite of double-mindedness is trusting, and cherishing His Word. The opposite of doubt is trust.

**Psalm 91**

1Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.***a***

[**2**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/91-2.htm)I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I **trust**.”

**Psalm 9**

10Those who know your name **trust** in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who **seek** you.

True Faith trusts. False Faith rarely does. True Faith believes (and trusts) that God has only their best in mind.

Our flesh will take us down, establish doubts, and keep us from experiencing the joy of fulfillment, which takes place when God does exactly as He promised. It can only happen if we will TRUST Him, and step out in faith, believing; followed by the appropriate actions, as opposed to wavering in doubt, and never acting.

In order to extinguish doubt in our lives, we need to use some self-talk, and say to ourselves… Self…shut-up; Self…sit down; Self…listen; Self…trust. Our flesh is like a wild animal. It must be tamed. It must be broken.

I heard this from another Pastor this week…”We live against the grain of our own natural senses”. Faith steps out believing, not doubting. The flesh will ALWAYS doubt. The Spirit will ALWAYS believe.

**[Q]** What might help us decrease doubt in our lives? (Keep a record of past victories; especially those that blew you away) Maybe we should all keep a little black book, full of those amazing things that happened, and shouldn’t have, all because we trusted Him) Maybe we could go through the exercise, when tempted to doubt, of sitting down and reading these victories out loud to Satan; reminding him of how awesome our God is.

God’s Word is so plain on so many subjects, and all it takes is a little Faith, and trust in Him, in order to begin experiencing these blessings blossoming in you life.

I could use so many examples, but here is one that the Holy Spirit brought to mind; and is so common in our modern Christian culture. It is the classic example of Faith versus Doubt; and until a person, or a family, learns to trust God in this area, they will never experience the feeling of knowing His promises, and full blessing that God shares in His Word.

Go to the last book of the Old Testament…Malachi.

**Malachi 3**

6“**I the Lord do not change**. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. [**7**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-7.htm)Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty.

“But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’

[**8**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-8.htm)“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

“But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’

“In tithes and offerings. [**9**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-9.htm)**You are under a curse**—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. [**10**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-10.htm)Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me** in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. [**11**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-11.htm)I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the Lord Almighty. [**12**](http://biblehub.com/malachi/3-12.htm)“Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord Almighty.

This may be one of the greatest areas of doubt, and disobedience, because of that doubt, which exists within the modern church today. It is inconceivable in my mind, that someone, who says they love the Lord, and confesses that they will follow Him at all costs, could even consider touching one penny of **His money**.

**Verse 7**: I think God is basically saying, if we grasp His intent here…”Trust Me, and I will bless you”. This is the only place in all of the Word of God, where God challenges you to test him. He is basically saying…”STOP doubting and believe…step out…and watch what happens in this area of your life, if you will truly trust me with your finances”. Stop doubting, and ACT. Don’t procrastinate. Quit listening to the voice of the Destroyer.

The latest statistics, which I heard a couple of years ago, is that only 6% of professing Christians tithe. That is deplorable. That is untrusting. That is dangerous. **[Q]** Do you realize that when God states that “you are under a curse, by not doing so”, He isn’t joking around?

**[Q]** Do you have any idea of the dynamic ministry that could take place in a local community, if every professing Christ-follower, in every church, would tithe…and beyond that, if every church would get their act together, and minister to others, outside their walls, as opposed to spending the majority of God’s money on themselves?

So many, who are unwilling to plunge head-long into trusting God in this area, have manufactured excuses why this practice is no longer relative to the New Testament church today. After all, they will say, “Jesus told us that we are no longer under the Law, and can do this giving thing the way **“we”** want”. WHAT A BUNCH OF BOLOGNA!!!

We are not allowed to do it the way WE want.

**Genesis 4**

1Adam***a*** made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.***b*** She said, “With the help of the Lord I have brought forth***c*** a man.” [**2**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-2.htm)Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. [**3**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-3.htm)In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. [**4**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-4.htm)And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, [**5**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-5.htm)but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-6.htm)Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? [**7**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/4-7.htm)If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

God demanded a blood sacrifice. Cain basically said…”I will bring what I want. You should be happy that I have brought anything at all”. He got cursed.

We all need to seek out the Truths of His Word, and study them, instead of listening to, and catering to our flesh, and others who would try to comfort us with untruth.

We would discover that keeping His Law is even more stringent in the New Testament, than the Old, and has never, at any time been laid aside.

**Verse 6**: I, the Lord, DO NOT CHANGE. Let me give you another example of how the New Testament commandments have gotten even more stringent, and demanding….way beyond the Old Testament Law.

**Matthew 5**

27“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’***e*** [**28**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-28.htm)But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

*(Put a marker here)*

Back in the Old Testament, as long as you did not commit the physical act of adultery with a woman, who was not your wife, you were free, and clear with God. BUT now, in the New Testament times, you definitely have been commanded to not only, not commit actual adultery, but Jesus takes it one step further. If you even lust after her, and never touch her, you are guilty. He is trying to teach us that it is a “HEART THING”.

Giving back to the Lord what is rightfully His, operates on exactly the same principle. It used to be that as long as you tithed, you were free and clear, but now, Jesus has taken it one step further…it is a “heart thing”, and on you.

**2 Corinthians 9**

6Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. [**7**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-7.htm)Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. [**8**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-8.htm)And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. [**9**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-9.htm)As it is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;

their righteousness endures forever.”***a***

[**10**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-10.htm)Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. [**11**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-11.htm)You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

[**12**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-12.htm)This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-13.htm)Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. [**14**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-14.htm)And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. [**15**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/9-15.htm)Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Paul is commanding us that we are to give generously, willingly, and cheerfully, not because some pastor, or Pseudo-Christian con artist, says you must, but because you want to, with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength.

This is where the flesh, and doubt, enters into the average believer’s heart. The first thing they hear their flesh saying is… **[Q]** How can you possibly give that big of chunk of your finances away? You will not make it. God may not come through, as He has promised. You, and your family, might starve. You do not have to do this. It isn’t fair.

**[Q]** Do you know whose voice that is, that you are listening to? (Satan’s) It is no different than what he did to Eve. Now you are allowing him to do it to you. He is saying that God isn’t fair, and He should not require this of you. He is saying that you cannot believe God, at His Word, because He is a liar, or deceiving you. He is dissing your God, or who you say is your God, and you are going right along with it, buying in.

Just for your information… **[Q]** Did God ever stop this Law of Tithing? (You can’t find it, and I can prove it) Jesus told us very plainly…

**Matthew 5**

17“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them**. [**18**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-18.htm)For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. [**19**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-19.htm)Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. [**20**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-20.htm)For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

The Law of Tithing never went away…it just got more stringent. It is now left to you to decide what the Lord is asking you to return to Him. He is trusting you with that. The real question here, to ask yourselves, is this… **[Q]** Do you trust Him?

My own personal testimony concerning tithing is this. I asked Jesus to forgive my past sins, and become Lord of my life on Sept. 23rd, 1978, and from that day forward, I began giving a minimum of 10% of any gross income that I have been blessed with to my local body of believers. I have never touched it for any other reason in 38 years, and have never once failed to lay this at my Lord’s feet, faithfully every time I am paid.

Beyond our tithe, Roxanne and I have continued to give special offerings on top of it; whenever the Lord lays it on our hearts. That can happen in hundreds of different ways. You may choose to give something to someone who is in need; or just to bless them. You may be asked to give in a special offering for a cause other than your local body of believers. We are commanded to offer to the Lord, not only our tithes, but offerings.

**[Q]** Does this make Roxanne, and I, super-Saints? (Hardly…it makes us normal, average, and faithful Saints…nothing more, nothing less) **[Q]** Have we been blessed? (Absolutely)

**Deuteronomy 12**

1These are the decrees and laws you must be careful to follow in the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has given you to possess—as long as you live in the land. [**2**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-2.htm)Destroy completely all the places on the high mountains, on the hills and under every spreading tree, where the nations you are dispossessing worship their gods. [**3**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-3.htm)Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places.

[**4**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-4.htm)You must not worship the Lord your God in their way. [**5**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-5.htm)But you are to seek the place the Lord your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go; [**6**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-6.htm)there bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, what you have vowed to give and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. [**7**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-7.htm)There, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the Lord your God has blessed you.

[**8**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-8.htm)**You are not to do as we do here today, everyone doing as they see fit**, [**9**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-9.htm)since you have not yet reached the resting place and the inheritance the Lord your God is giving you. [**10**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-10.htm)But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety. [**11**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-11.htm)Then to the place the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name—there you are to bring everything I command you: **your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the Lord**. [**12**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-12.htm)And there rejoice before the Lord your God—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites from your towns who have no allotment or inheritance of their own. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-13.htm)**Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please**. [**14**](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/12-14.htm)Offer them only at the place the Lord will choose in one of your tribes, and there observe everything I command you.

This is an amazing set of Scripture. It is no different today. God rejoices in our generosity to His cause, in whatever He may lead us to offer it. We are not just offering it to those who we have chosen, but actually to God Himself. He is keeping track.

**Verse 12**: I thought this verse was amazing! We are to rejoice in our giving, in front of our family, and friends. They will see, and learn.

**2 Corinthians 9**

7Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

**Cheerful** {**hilaros**} hil-ar-os’…joyous; By extension…disposed because satisfied; someone who is cheerfully ready to act because already approving (persuaded); won over; already inclined. This is where we got the English word…hilarious.

Let’s consider just two more sets of verses, before we close…

**Matthew 6**

24“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and money**.

**Matthew 10**

37“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. [**38**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-38.htm)Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. [**39**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-39.htm)Whoever finds their life will lose it, and **whoever loses their life for my sake will find it**.

**[Q]** Can we just agree together here this morning, that we are all going to strive to lose our life in him…lock, stock, barrel, and even pocketbook? I am not talking about with just your pocketbook. I am talking about practicing this principle with your whole life.