

Lord of Our Resources  
Sabbath School Lesson August 20, 2005  
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Source: all is from Him (it is not mine); contrast Nebuchadnezzar

Attitude: I am content (I need nothing more)

Motive/Purpose: I will live to honor Him/bless others (get to give) (if in the getting I must forget others for a while, it is not from Him)

Deut 8:7-18 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land  
thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.  
forget not the LORD thy God  
all that thou hast is multiplied;  
thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth  
thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.  
remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may  
establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

James 1: 16, 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the  
Father of lights

Phil. 4: 11-13 in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.  
I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound

Heb. 13: 5 be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said,  
I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Matt 6: 19-21, 33 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,  
lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and  
where thieves do not break through nor steal:  
where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.  
seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness

Matt. 24: 45-47 his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

1Cor. 9: 11-14 they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. This spirit finds its highest manifestation in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. In our behalf the Father gave His only-begotten Son; and Christ, having given up all that He had, then gave Himself, that man might be saved. The cross of Calvary should appeal to the benevolence of every follower of the Saviour. The principle there illustrated is to give, give. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 2:6. {AA 339.2}

On the other hand, the spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan. The principle illustrated in the lives of worldlings is to get, get. Thus they hope to secure happiness and ease, but the fruit of their sowing is misery and death. {AA 339.3}

Not until God ceases to bless His children will they cease to be under bonds to return to Him the portion that He claims. Not only should they render the Lord the portion that belongs to Him,

but they should bring also to His treasury, as a gratitude offering, a liberal tribute. With joyful hearts they should dedicate to the Creator the first fruits of their bounties--their choicest possessions, their best and holiest service. Thus they will gain rich blessings. God Himself will make their souls like a watered garden whose waters fail not. And when the last great harvest is gathered in, the sheaves that they are enabled to bring to the Master will be the recompense of their unselfish use of the talents lent them. {AA 339.4}

(Extract of study "The Foundations and the Sabbath")

Christ's lordship was affirmed by His going down, by His giving. This humble work of service is the spirit of the Sabbath. This attitude affirmed the true meaning of the day, in contrast to false beliefs about it (John 5:16, 17; Mark 2:23-28). We now confess His lordship by acknowledging in all areas of our lives His OWNERSHIP by creation and redemption. All we are and have is His, twice purchased. We are stewards, ordained to show in our own lives His spirit of humble service by using what He has given us to meet the needs of others (Heb. 3:6; Matt. 10:8; Isaiah 58).

He has ordained signs by which we show our acceptance of the reality of His ownership, of who He is, and who we are in relation to Him. These signs are revealed in the law of firstfruits, summarized in Exodus 34:19-22. By returning to God the first portion of time and substance we thereby acknowledge that He is Lord of all. The Scripture shows God consistently requesting of man the firstfruits of his time, of his increase, of his harvest, and of his children. These were all called the Lord's, holy to Him. These were a specified proportion of time and increase. The proportion was a seventh of time and a tenth of increase. The specific part was the first seventh of time and the first tenth of increase.

The Sabbath is seen to be the first seventh when it realized that the seventh day was so numbered, not by man, but by God according to the days of creation. Man was not yet in existence on the first day. Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day. When the sun was going down on that day, one can imagine God explaining the increasing darkness to them: "The setting sun signals the end of this day, and the beginning of your first full day, the seventh day of creation. That day will be especially Mine, holy to Me. I want you to give that day to Me."

And instead of the restricted, ritualistic limits many have imposed on these as on other ordinances God gave us as reminders and lessons, the firstfruits are to show by giving the part that the whole is also sanctified to Him (Rom. 11:16). With this understanding we see yet two other aspects of what Christ did. First, when the Son declared, "Lo, I come" (Ps. 40:7), when heaven sent "the first begotten into the world" (Heb. 1:6), when the Father "gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16), this act signified that all of heaven was dedicated to the salvation of man, sanctified or set apart for that purpose (John 17:19). And secondly, the "firstborn son" of Mary (Matt. 1:25; Luke 2:7) became, by means of His earthly birth, life, death, and resurrection, "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), "the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1:15). Of this dead race He became "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20, 23), "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18). The race, in giving back to God its Firstborn, by an act of the Firstborn Himself, was thereby dedicated in whole back to God. Those who by faith see the race thus "in Christ" in heaven are said to have "come unto ... the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:22, 23). (see Exod. 34:14, 19-21.)

*Who has ever made a gift to him, to receive a gift in return? Source, Guide, and Goal of all that is—to him be glory for ever! Amen. (Rom. 11:35, 36, NEB)*