

Giving to God, part 2
“Living Together”
Deuteronomy 24:17-21

- I. Last week we started a conversation about giving, specifically “Giving to God.”
 - a. We said that giving to God requires a focus upward.
 - i. When we give we turn our attention to God.
 - ii. It’s one way that we acknowledge that God is sovereign.
 - 1. That is to say that God is in charge.
 - 2. That God is our redeemer and Savior.
 - b. That sense of God’s sovereignty makes our giving an act of worship.
- II. Today I want us to look at another aspect of “Giving to God.”
 - a. That giving to God requires a focus outward.
 - b. Look with me at Deuteronomy 24.
 - c. Notice the phrase that repeats itself in these five verses: “the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow.”
 - i. The heart of God has a special place for the alien, the orphan and the widow.
 - ii. When God takes sides, he takes the side of these groups.
 - iii. God takes the side of those who have no one else to defend them.
- III. We are servants of strangers and aliens.
 - a. Throughout the Old Testament the stranger and the alien are a major concern of the prophets – therefore a major concern of God’s.
 - i. Strangers are Israelite’s who’s needs you know.
 - 1. In the words of Deuteronomy, the fatherless and the widow.
 - 2. These are people within the community who’s needs are put before you and demand a response.
 - ii. The orphan and the widow were particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect.
 - 1. They don’t have family to provide for their needs.
 - 2. So it becomes the responsibility of the community of faith to care for and protect them.
 - iii. Aliens are non-Israelite’s who’s needs you discover.
 - 1. The foreigner (or the alien) is also particularly vulnerable in the ancient near east.
 - a. When you are away from your home country you are away from all of your social support.
 - i. If you become ill, if you run out of money, if you experience some kind of set back ...
 - ii. You are no one’s responsibility.
 - b. There are no protections for you safety when you are an alien in another country.
 - i. If you are robbed, attacked or beaten ...
 - ii. You are no one’s responsibility.
 - 2. God’s instructions change the way strangers get treated by God’s people.
 - a. Aliens (foreigners) get treated with the same concern and respect as Israel’s own people.

- 2. Our church knows that and responds with a way to get over the hump.
 - ii. Meals, a ride to the doctor, all of these are ways we show God's love to one another through giving – by giving “outward.”
 - iii. Many of our SS classes, small groups and classes are expressions of our giving “outward.”
 - 1. Your finances, your marriage, your life's purpose, your parenting.
 - 2. It's not just that these are classes people are interested in – they are expressions of our giving to one another.
 - a. Giving of our time and experience to one another.
 - b. The giving of our resources that makes these chances to share and learn and grow possible.
 - b. Our giving is how we care for those who are aliens (foreigners) to us.
 - i. There are those we'll never meet who need our help.
 - 1. Missionaries in Holland, Berlin Germany, Nepal, and Bangladesh are beneficiaries of our giving “outward.”
 - 2. Ministries like CareNet pregnancy center, the Religious Coalition, and Beacon House are supported by our “outward” giving.
 - a. Religious Coalition is a good example.
 - ii. We reach out like that because we believe that everyone needs to hear about Jesus. There is no better news than Jesus.
- VII. Why share all of this? Because you need to understand that your giving is more than just a way to pay off our budget.
- a. It's about ministry to people.
 - i. It's about sharing God's love by giving beyond ourselves (giving “outward.”)
 - ii. It's about witnessing to our faith.
 - b. It's about who's in your circle.
 - i. Giving “outward” means making that circle bigger.
 - ii. As big as God makes it.