

August Week #3 Devotionals and Consideration

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



We are required to impart of our substance.

WHAT DOES JESUS SAY?

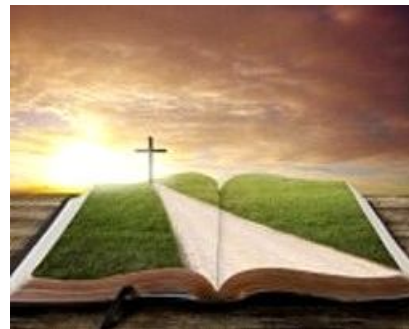
**And the people asked Him, saying, What shall we do then?
He answered and said unto them,
He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none;
and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.
LUKE 3:15-16**

**I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor,
every man according to that which he hath,
such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick,
and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.
MOSIAH 2:43**

**... LEARN to impart one to another as the gospel requires; ...
D&C 85:38a**

The three scriptures above come from the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants. Each one gives us instruction to **IMPART OF OUR SUBSTANCE**.

A selection from each of our sacred books emphasizes that this requirement is included in each book of scripture; therefore, demonstrating that this is not exclusive to any peculiar context.



The instruction in **D&C 85:38a** is that we should LEARN to do this. God knows that this isn't something that comes naturally to us. It isn't something we instantly know how to do. He desires to teach us by His Spirit and His Word. He desires that we would also teach each other those lessons that we have learned. Search and ask; He will provide the way.

Ask Him where to find those individuals that are in need of your assistance. He will point them out to you if you truly seek His will. They are all around you. The difficulty sometimes is that the ones in need likely feel uncomfortable asking for help. Keep your eyes and ears alert to everyone you interact with. If you think you spot a need, don't be afraid to respectfully ask someone if you can provide something for them.

Many times we have items in storage that we no longer need. They are good items; we just aren't using them right now. I was talking casually with a friend. In the conversation, I mentioned that I was considering trying to find a small window unit air conditioner to keep my attic bedroom cooler. A couple weeks later, I received a call that my friend had found one in their basement and I was welcome to use it. How thoughtful was that? I am now able to sleep comfortably. The air conditioner was of no use to my friend, but a huge blessing to me! I'm very thankful that my friend made the effort to help me and was not afraid to ask me if she could.



There are many existing organizations that will accept your donations of food items and distribute them to those in need. Having been a recipient of this form of help in the past, I have realized some things about the food which has been collected.

At times, I received food that was already expired. Yes, it's true! I have been given strange things that most people don't like to eat. There were items that I couldn't use because I didn't have other ingredients I needed to create a meal. Many of the food items were generic, poor quality, unappetizing or lacked nutritional value.

I, myself, have also donated things from my shelves at home to these organizations—items I didn't want or like.

When we choose to impart of our substance in this way, what should our mindset be?

Are we just cleaning out our cabinets, discarding our rubbish because it's convenient?



When we desire to “help” someone who is in need of food, we should try to provide for them the nutrition that they are lacking.

Hymns of the Restoration, **#377, GIVE OF YOUR BEST TO THE MASTER**, by Mrs. Charles Barnard, is a great inspiration for us here. In the first verse we sing the words, “Jesus has set the example.”

Here are the words to the third verse:

***Give of your best to the Master;
Naught else is worthy His love;
He gave Himself for your ransom,
Gave up His glory above:
Laid down His life without murmur,
You from sin's ruin to save;
Give Him your heart's adoration,
Give Him the best that you have.***

Now, thinking of giving our best to the Master, what should we donate to those collections? I believe it should be those foods that we love!

We can imagine that we are the one in need and give those items that we would be excited to receive.

What would we feed to our children to make them strong and healthy? Give those foods to people who don't have them. Consider that the children are in need of nutrition because their parents are unable to provide high quality items for them. Let's truly help them, not just make ourselves feel like we did.

When we casually shop for a \$20 house plant or a beautiful and expensive decoration for our home, do we ever consider the person that is in the same store desperately trying to purchase a few food items with that same amount of money?

Do we think about how difficult it is for them to scrape by in life on the limited funds available to them? Plants are wonderful and decorations are pretty, but do we REALLY need to spend large amounts on them? Meeting the requirement to impart of our substance might mean spending a little less on frivolous things and spending more time searching for God's purposes.

Putting God's desires into our actions is a self-discipline involving our money, our time and our effort. We are all capable and in need of being more thoughtful about this requirement.

Let's continue to consider what exactly God is telling us to do. I know He will continue to teach us what we need to do in service to others!

He never requires anything of us that we are incapable of accomplishing, along with His help!



WHAT IF I CAN'T?

Mosiah 9:60-64 And again, Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, every one according to that which he had; If he have more abundantly, he should impart more abundantly; and he that had but little, but little should be required; and to him that had not should be given. And thus they should impart of their substance, of their own free will and good desires towards God, and to those priests that stood in need, yea, and to every needy, naked soul. And this he said unto them, having been commanded of God; And they did walk uprightly before God, imparting to one another, BOTH TEMPORALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, according to their needs and their wants.



The picture above represents many people walking toward the Cross. The people depict all races and stations in life.

It typifies to me that when we all move toward Jesus, the Cross takes shape. Looking at the individuals, we see people; looking from God's perspective, we see the image of God's plan of redemption for us.

His plan requires people who do His will. The Cross where Jesus sacrificed His life for us has no meaning if we refuse to move toward Him.

Mosiah 2:32 For behold, ARE WE NOT ALL BEGGARS? Do we not all depend upon the same being, even God, for all the substance which we have; for both food, and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?

It has been said we are all equal at the foot of the Cross. It doesn't matter if we have or we have not. One is not more important than another.

God wants everyone to reside with Him in His Kingdom.

He has given us the requirements to do so in His Word. When we endeavor to follow His Word, He imparts to us the ability to act on His behalf. Acting on His behalf can bring others unto Him. So, we see His plan is marvelous!

Is it only monetary riches He has asked us to impart? Are we exempt from this requirement if we are not financially blessed?

Each of us is born with gifts and talents. They are given to us for the glory of God. He has assigned us stewardship over each gift or talent.

When we are good stewards, He amplifies that gift/talent and may even add another.

In order to be wise stewards, we must CHOOSE to use gifts and talents to His glory. They must be shared to reflect His glory.

Using our God-given blessings to help another is part of the Lord's plan to reach all people with His love. It is not necessary to have money to use our blessings for His purposes.



Here are some examples of how gifts and talents can be helpful to others:

- Pray with one who is upset
- Care for the sick
- Clean for the disabled or ill
- Organize clutter with a friend
- Help with home repairs
- LISTEN to someone
- Share uplifting music

- Visit the imprisoned
- Provide a meal
- Drive someone to the store
- Be with someone in the hospital
- Make a gift for someone
- Draw or paint a picture for them
- Check on their well-being
- Give a massage
- Mow someone's lawn
- Share garden harvest
- Cry with someone
- Do their laundry
- Write a letter
- Write a poem

There is much more we can do for others when God empowers us to minister to His people. Let's go to with our might.

Mosiah 2:40 And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, that ye remain from day to day; I mean all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts, that I give not because I have not, but if I had, I would give.

