

Lord, when we strive after healing in the world and nourishment for those who hunger, we find you at our side. Whenever we long to see your face, help us not to avoid the corners of our communities where you most often dwell. Stir our hearts that we might seek and find you today in those places where you have promised to be Amen.

## *I will offer up my life in spirit and truth*

Pouring out the oil of love as my worship  
to You

In surrender I must give my every part

Lord receive the sacrifice of a broken heart  
Jesus, what can I give

### *What can I bring*

To so faithful a friend

To so loving a king

Saviour, what can be said

What can be sung

As a praise of Your name

For the things You have done

Oh my words could not tell

Not even in part

Of the debt of love that is owed

*By this thankful heart*

Lent is traditionally a time when we give up something. Many minds turn to chocolate! Or at least giving it up. I like to think of Lent as a time for giving up so that I can get closer to God and to strengthen my relationship with him. I have chosen Lent as a period to think about giving. In a similar way when the word 'giving' is mentioned our minds immediately turn to money. Yes, the series does Bible teaching about money. This is an area which can make us cringe. We hear horror stories like the one I heard where a particularly forceful and angry priest looked into the collection plate and sent it round again! However, let's begin at the most important place:.....

with our loving, giving God. That is always the starting point. We never start with time worn phrases such as "see how dodgy the church finances or look how broke the Diocese is." We start with the Giving Father. Flowing out of our relationship with Him we look at our money and our possessions. Then we move on to our hearts and our attitudes to others. Giving touches the way in which we give ourselves to others in love, forgiveness, openness. On Passion Sunday, the day when Jesus set his face towards the Crucifixion, we look at giving our lives in practical service to others as living sacrifices. We finish the series on Palm Sunday with giving ourselves to the world in mission.

We will be welcoming visitors for parts 4 and 5. As usual I would like you to scribble in your booklet, and fill in the blanks in reply to what you feel God is calling you to do. I want to see our giving as a grateful reply to God for what he has done. I'm linking it to the big lesson I learnt from our series on Ephesians. Say this "Ephesians" prayer :

***"Thank you, loving Father for what you have done for me in Christ. Thank you that my identity as a child of God, chosen before the world began makes me strong and enables me to be generous. I want to give back to you what you have given me because I am so grateful for your love."***

## 5th Sunday Palm Sunday Giving ourselves in World mission - A special look at giving in Mission with the Karen community with visitors David and Mary from Crosslinks

### Readings

Luke 18 vs 28—44

Matthew 28 vs 16—20

Romans 10 vs 11—18



Jesus gave his disciples the Great Commission to go into the world to make disciples. The last aspect of giving in our mini-series is **to give ourselves in mission to the world.**

This can take many forms:

- Get a prayer letter from a mission organisation. Pray regularly for overseas mission
- Find out something from one of our international church members about their country. Pray regularly for them and their country.
- Come to the night shelter and meet some of the men and women who sleep in the Welcome Centre hall each night
- Get involved with a local organisation such as Galeed House in Darnall (ask Margaret Vivian for details)
- Watch the News prayerfully
- Think of joining a short term SOMA mission team

March 25th **Giving ourselves in service –**  
Street Pastors with Trish Watts from the Rock fellowship

*AND SITTING DOWN, JESUS CALLED THE TWELVE  
AND SAID TO THEM, "IF ANYONE WANTS TO BE  
FIRST, HE SHALL BE LAST OF ALL, AND SERVANT OF  
ALL."*

Readings Romans 12 verse 1– 8 Matthew 23 vs 1–12

**Philippians 2:1-4**

*If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; **do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others***

**Matthew 25:40**

*"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'*

**Is there an area of service you could give yourself to? Not sure?  
Then have a chat with Philip or another member of the church leadership  
Do you lack confidence? Remember that if God calls you to do something then He will equip you.**

So how could YOU be involved?

Could you be a Street Pastor? Prayer Pastor?

Help with office management?

Or support financially by either regular giving or a one off gift

Contact Tricia Watts - Sheffield Street Pastors  
@ 0114 263 4591 or 07722 391 820



Two days ago, I (Don) took a team of medical personnel to the village of Mize, about a 20 minute drive from the Iris base in Pemba.(Mozambique) (**Irismin.org**) . The Mize church is headed by Pastor Joao Juma, a joyful brother who has planted and oversees about 30 churches in the area. Our makeshift "clinic" was a slightly shaded area alongside the Iris church building. As has become usual, dozens of adults and 70 or more children gathered—many seeking medical attention, others socializing...and children playing on the recently constructed playground . After a couple of hours in the heat and dust, I gave Pastor Juma some money to send an older boy to the market to buy some biscuits and juice powder as a rare treat for these impoverished and malnourished children. When the drink was prepared, Juma instructed the children in their Makua tongue to form two lines to receive their biscuits and then proceed toward the playground to receive a cup of juice. He then began to pray in exuberant thanksgiving for this gift, and the children joined in loudly and enthusiastically. The two bags of biscuits were dumped into a clear plastic bag and Pastor Juma was about to begin distributing them. He asked me whether we should give two or three biscuits to each child. I looked at the bag and then at the two long lines and imagined how disappointing it would be if the biscuits ran out before the children at the end had received any. "Two," I said; and Juma nodded in agreement.

I was only a few feet away, observing the various medical stations and answering questions, and watching the kids scamper happily toward the playground clutching their two biscuits. Then I noticed the bag of biscuits was still very full. Juma noticed my look, raised his hands in a gesture of surprise and began giving three biscuits to each child. A few minutes later, I looked again. The bag was still full and we both began to grin. Our God was doing something marvellous before our very eyes! A few minutes later, I looked again. The kids who had quietly taken their place at the back of the line and waited their turn were rewarded with handfuls of biscuits. And still the bag was full. Juma gave more biscuits to every child in sight and then went around to the several dozen adults and gave them large handfuls of biscuits. And when we couldn't find anyone else to give biscuits to, Juma held up the bag, which was still as full as at the beginning; and we both praised God for His miraculous provision and love for "the least of these...."

4<sup>th</sup> March **Why give?**

**We have a generous God who did not spare his son.**

All that I have is God's.

Today's Bible readings: Deuteronomy 8 vs 11—20

Romans 8 vs 31—39

Gospel (optional) Matthew 25 vs 14—30



*This is the front of London's Stock Exchange. It has a Bible verse from psalm 24 above the main entrance. Originally the Exchange was set up on Christian principles, particularly important was the idea of trust and honesty.*

**We seemed to have slipped away from these ideals in public and private life.**

**Psalms 24:1** — "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."

**Think about these questions:**

**How I see my possessions, e.g. house, money etc . Do I see them as given to me by God?**

**How much is my giving led by my Christian faith?**

**Am I filled with gratitude because God has given His only Son to die for me?**

*On Mothering Sunday we remember and give thanks for our mothers.*



A mother's love is also a picture to help us to remember God's passionate love for us and a call to us to return that love in worship to

Think about your home or the home where you grew up. Which room (or memory) would you really like God's love to fill? Where do / did you have most quarrels or fights with your family or friends? Tell God how sorry you are for your part in these troubles and place a heart in that room or memory to ask him to heal it and fill it with his love in the future.

Our mothers and grandmothers have done things for us that shine like jewels. What is the most precious thing they've done for you?

*For many people there is a lot of bitterness tied up with motherhood and childhood. Pray for them*

Ask God who he would like you to care for this week. Write their name and how you're going to show God's care for them on a piece of 'papyrus' and place it in the Moses basket, just as Moses' mother took care of Moses by putting him in a place of safety. Commit yourself to care for that person in that way. When you've actually done it, you can take that papyrus out of the Moses basket—perhaps you could set yourself the challenge of achieving it by next week?

18<sup>th</sup> Mothering Sunday  
Giving our love and  
opening our hearts

Bible readings 1 Peter 1 vs  
13 -22

John 15 vs 9-17

**This is Jesus' cry as he looked  
at Jerusalem**

"how often I have longed to gather  
your children together, as a hen  
gathers her chicks under her  
wings, but you were not willing."

*From the Old Testament and the  
heart of God*

Can a mother forget the baby at  
her breast and have no compas-  
sion on the child she has borne?  
Though she may forget, I will not  
forget you!

See, I have engraved you on the  
palms of my hands; your walls are  
ever before me.

**1 John 3:1** *See what kind of love  
the Father has given to us, that we  
should be called children of God;  
and so we are. The reason why the  
world does not know us is that it  
did not know him.*

**Love One Another Bible Verses**

**Romans 13:8** *Owe no one any-  
thing, except to love each other,*



Father, we thank you for the fam-  
ily of the church,. Thank you for  
those who are mothers within our  
Christian family. May they know  
your blessing and strength as they  
care for others.



Father we pray for the millions of  
mothers who long to feed their  
children and help them grow  
strong and healthy but cannot  
because of war, famine and natu-  
ral disaster.

Take my life and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my moments and my days,  
Let them flow in endless praise.

**From our Lent book:**

"Let us then invest with the Lord what he has given to  
us, for we have nothing that does not come from him:  
we are dependent upon him for our very existence. And  
we ourselves particularly, who have a special and a  
greater debt, since God not only created us but pur-  
chased us as well; what  
can we regard as our own  
when we do not possess  
even ourselves?"



**Check these verses out:**

**Haggai 2:8** — " 'The silver is  
mine and the gold is mine,'  
declares the Lord Almighty."

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** —

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price."

**Deuteronomy 8:18** — "Remember the Lord your God, for it is  
he who gives you the ability to produce wealth."

**Romans 11:36a** — "For from him and through him and to him  
are all things ..."

**1 Corinthians 4:2** — "Now it is required that those who have  
been given a trust must prove faithful."

**God Owns Everything, and We Are His Managers**

## 11th March Giving our money

Readings for Sunday: Deut 14:22-29  
2 Corinthians 9 vs 6–15  
Gospel (optional) Mark 12 vs 41–44



The Bible standard is one tenth of what we have.

### **Some other teaching in 2 Corinthians:**

He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly.

God is able to provide you with enough abundance so you will always have enough to give away.

As you give there is a harvest of righteousness in your life

Your generosity will enrich you and be honour to God.

Look at the story opposite and see how this teaching worked out in a small village in Mozambique just four years ago.

What worries do you have about giving money?

Here is a prayer for each of us:

**Lord, teach us to value our possessions in the right way. Help us never to think more of them than of people. Make us ready to use them freely for the good of others and to share them generously without grudging. Thank you for the beautiful things that we enjoy possessing. May our enjoyment be whole-some and right and may we hold lightly to all we own. For the sake of Jesus Christ, who became poor that we might be eternally rich. Amen.**

### **Check out these verses:**

Gen 14:19 (Abraham's give of 10%)

Gen 28:20-22 (Jacob decision to give 10% to God)

Lev 27:30 (Tithe of everything is the Lord's)

Mal 3:7-12 (Holding back tithes & offerings is stealing from God)

Proverbs 3:9-10 (Honour the Lord with your wealth & first fruits)

Hebrews 6 vs 10

A letter to the church from the treasurer can surely be one of the most boring pages in this booklet. So can I, instead, tell of my recent harrowing experience.

On a recent trip up the valleys in Wales I became hideously lost in the Rhondda, somewhere between Tongwynlais and Merthyr Tydfil, believing I was turning towards Gilfach Goch. Imagine being lost in an area where there, are so few vowels - where the signs are so long buy the time you read them you're in the next town. Then I, remembered a simple fact that always works in this part of Wales. The valleys go up and down - and if you follow either direction you can't go wrong. I just aligned myself with the houses and found myself on course.

Some time ago we had a series of Sunday mornings on Paul's letter to the Corinthians. You may remember we encountered a church that was in all sorts of trouble. Factions, whacky services, religious confusion and sex all featured in their list of difficulties that Paul tackled.

As we turn to the theme of giving we look again at Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. In the middle of his ongoing efforts to support a church full of human frailties Paul drops in the idea that **giving is a crucial way of getting us on track with God.**

In 2 Corinthians chapter 9, Paul writes about the brass tacks of giving and mission, but then in verse 7 he writes "God loves people who love to give". If you read the chapter you'll find him presenting giving as a way of keeping the troubled Corinthian church, and ourselves, on course, suggesting that giving to God's work is a way of aligning ourselves to God's purpose. Our diocese calls on us to give to the work of the Church of England. Few folks realise that the church takes in money from churches not to spend on that particular church. They put it in one pot and then share it out, so that even the poorest church, the neediest estate, the toughest areas - even places abandoned by every other agency - all such places are within a parish and receive the missionary outreach of the Church of England. To do this we need to raise just over £8 million across the Diocese of Sheffield. This year we are £92,000 short. Every church has to work at the finances if we are to sort this shortfall and maintain the ministry of the church.

Christ Church is a contributor to this, but **we actually receive more support than we pay in.** As we think again about giving, can I encourage you to consider whether this is a time to consider monthly giving. If so, we can easily set that up either making a standing order through your bank or encouraging you to try the envelope scheme, committing yourself to give to the mission of the church each week.

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