
Spiritual Formation Part 25

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What Can I Give God? Part 2

So, *what can I do?* Give Him the gifts, all of them, repentance, faith, mind, heart, witness, all from your real authentic Christianity. As James 4:7-10, tells us, *submit, come near, wash, purify, grieve, mourn, wail, change, and humble ourselves*. Start slowly if you must, but give them without reservation and with much haste. Do not laugh at sin; guard against it. Do not accept the worldliness of the world. Rather, model maturity and character because you are being empowered by the Lord. We are to flee the world's influence while being the influencers of it. We are to flee the devil while being on guard of his tricks and trade. You may be thinking that only the weak and cowardly would surrender themselves—even to God. But, the fact is, only a coward will refuse to allow ultimate greatness in themselves that is only achieved by yielding totally to Christ. He is greater than those who are His (John 3:30)! The challenge to this call is the world's ways. Sin is so enticing we can easily slip off God's path. Thus, we need to be willing to give to Him so we get more from Him—more faith, more growth, more maturity, more character, and insights from our life and walk in Him. When we do, we can become more guarded against sin because a bigger picture is in our sight—Christ, His example, and our willingness and commitment to follow. When we see Him rather than our personal viewpoints and desires, we will grow, mature, and be prepared for anything!

Remember, we may be giving these gifts, but these gifts are for our benefit! It is like a child on Christmas who gets all the best presents and who has given little to others. This is what our Lord has done for us, He has given us the greatest gifts we could ever need or want. But, if we refuse to give to Him, we are the ones who lose out. We will be controlled by others, by desires, and by the past. We will allow our circumstances to get the best of us when we should be giving our best to Him so our lives mean something, no matter what happens. God does not want us to be controlled by the past or to be fearful or cowardly. Rather, we are to learn and grow from our experiences, but not be tied to them so they become our identity. We have been born again in Christ; our old life is old, and it is no longer who we are. Thus, we are to grow closer to Him and be an example to others who are still in the old life without being influenced and enticed by them. Our focus needs to be what is going on now, what God is doing, and how we can contribute to it. Not just *what can I get*, but *what can I learn and gain to be better for His glory?* Take comfort; God does indeed have a plan for you even when you cannot see it. His will for your growth in Him is clear. He wants you to be faithful and good so others can see in you a demonstration model for the new life that they can have, too. He gives you the ability, the power, and the strength to endure and to enjoy (Gal. 6:7)! The most important gift we can give God is for us to keep our eyes focused on Christ, with racehorse blinders on to block off the rest (Matt. 7:24; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:14; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 2:3).

In Matthew 22: 42, Jesus asks, *who do you say I am?* Once you recognize this,

you can start to pick out your gifts for Him, taking one at a time so they can build. Remember that Jesus is history, not fantasy! God's revelation is clear; it is filled with our best in mind. He desires to see us grow. He wants us to be powered by His Love and yearns to see us saved. When we are, He wants to see our gifts at work. When we lose sight of God, we venture into all kinds of heinous actions and corruptions. This is what brings on the wrath of God, because it hurts too many of His children, whom He loves (Titus 2:12). Have you allowed Jesus into all aspects of your life, surrendered and poured out to be His Bethlehem? Then Christ can use you to *form* others around you as Christ *formed* you, because we cannot do the work of God unless we are the people of God!

So, give Him the gift of your life. For Him to be in you, you must yield all of your rights and will to Him! Do not put off for tomorrow what you should do today. This applies to our spiritual formation and our response to His love for us. We are given the choice of what gifts to give; all are best. None are the *norm* for most of us. So, what are you going to do? The gifts you give will come back in greater fruition so you will be connected more firmly in Him and in others, all of which will echo throughout eternity. Allow Him to build and mold you; make the commitment, the resolution that will last all of your life until you are called home. This requires your trust and your heart and your will; you can do it, for He has done it for you. And, you will see His marvelous plan and purpose for you unfold in ways you never imagined, touching others because Christ has touched you.

Remember, we are called to become more like Christ. In order to best do this, we need to flee the world's influence while being the influencers of it! Let this coming New Year be the year that you grow further in your knowledge of Christ and the impact of your faith because you have been transformed by the power of God. The result will be a life that is a gift, a life that is holy, a life that is pleasing to Him and a blessing to others!

Here are Some Thoughts and Questions to Consider:

Read John chapters 14:1-6 and 15:1-8; 11-14 and James 4:7-10, knowing you are Christ's friend and are called to abide in Him.

1. What do you need to do to be focused on building your life on His precepts?
2. This is something you can do now and at the being of each New Year: Can you benchmark some goals? That is, can you draw up a spiritual action plan for the coming year? Just as a business plan is essential to establishing vision and building a business, so is establishing a plan to build your faith.
 - a. What is this plan's vision and goal?
 - b. How will you accomplish this goal?
 - c. Who will help you be accountable?

3. What can you do to see that these goals become realities and not end up on a piece of paper in the trash?
4. Consider you cannot change how others treat you, but you can change how you treat and react to how others treat you!
 - a. So, how do you treat others?
 - b. How do you react to others?
 - c. Are these actions in line with the character that Christ calls us to?

Resolution #48 *Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of* (J. Edwards). See more of [The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards](#).

Remember to place **Joy** in all aspects of you life and expectations. If you are having problems, take a serious look at *despair* and where it will get you. There can be no delight without joy! You can have no true confidence without joy. Keep in mind that what we suffer through, what we go through, what we give up is of no comparison to what we gain! Christianity and suffering are the ultimate in delayed gratification!