

Any Plan(s) for the Lord this Year?



This sermon's topic might seem strange or odd to a percentage of people. They might ask why it is their duty to create or make plans for the Lord. If I can have a long lens to view peoples' list of activities for this year, it will be amazing how it will be filled with personal effects. Of the lengthy list, is there anything for the Lord? So far, as part of our preparations for the year, we have dealt with some of the issues that will make the new year(2023) ends with a difference. We have looked at issues such as operating within God's plan, abiding under the Great Shepherd, and experiencing the fullness of Joy, among others. The question remains, what plans do you have for the Lord?

I'm not saying the Lord is in need or that He wants anything from you. He owns the earth and everything it contains, including you.

"The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. - (Psalm 24:1NLT)

God is never in need, but He still requires certain things from you.

"And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment". - (Mark 12:30NKJV)

Now that it has been established that He lays demands for certain things from you, the question should be further stretched to include your readiness in giving the best of those things to the Lord.

If we want to be sincere with ourselves, it takes grace to give, naturally, we want to hold tight to whatever we have in our possession. We must always remember that giving provokes blessings. Giving is symbolically stretching forth a fist(a closed hand) and emptying its content into someone else's open hand. On the other hand, receiving is the reverse of the entire process. Technically, an act of giving normally precedes receiving, thus the two acts form a process that revolves in a cycle. The Scripture in [Luke 6:38](#) further confirms this process: **"Give, and you will receive.....The amount you give will determine the amount you get back"**

Let's look at some examples from the Scriptures of giving that provoked blessings:

- The story of the woman at Shunem who had no child. She provided meals and accommodation to Prophet Elisha anytime he came to that town. This act of giving provoked a blessing from the man of God, and she was blessed with a son by God. ([2 Kings 4:8-17](#))

- Here, the Widow at Zarephath and her son only had a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. Compounding the whole situation was the ongoing famine in the land at that time. Here came the man of God, Prophet Elijah insisting that she should make a small bread for him before theirs. She did as was told and blessings of abundance were provoked. The household never ran out of *food* supplies during the entire period of famine. (1 Kings 17:12- 16)
- Isaac was old, he couldn't see and wanted to bless Esau, the elder son. He asked him to prepare a portion of tasty food for him so that he can bless him before dying. Though his younger brother, Jacob deceptively received his blessings, Esau still got a *remnant* of the blessings. (Genesis 27:1-4)

God always wants the best!

It must be noted that our Lord always wants the *first of the best* of whatever you want to give Him. That was the reason Cain's sacrifice was rejected and Abel with his offering received God's favor (Genesis 4:4-5). In addition, what to give must not necessarily be in the form of money/cash, though they can be involved. What is most important is that it must be priceless and cost a "*great deal*".

“...No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing.” - (1 Chronicle 21:24NLT)

Furthermore, God asking for your best is not out of need but sometimes to humble you. To keep you away from pride that can lead to destruction. Pride kills!

Remember, King Herod failed to acknowledge the act of God and was destroyed by pride. (Acts.12:21-23)

Now, what are some of the things the Lord is demanding from you?

❖ **He wants the best of your love.**

There are distinct levels of love, He wants the highest level of love. This is the love that is greater than self-love, parental love for the children, and our love for the parents, and others.

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.” (Matthew 10:37NKJV)

❖ **He wants the best of your time**

He wants you to give Him the best of your whole life in all its freshness and vigor. He desires the best of your time for His service. The Scriptures state it clearly that the Lord wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Therefore, soul-winning as commanded, is the best service for our time.

“Again, Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.” (John 21:16NIV)

❖ **He wants the best of your giftings/talents.**

What is it that thing you are good at doing? Use that talent to praise God and advance His Kingdom. Psalm 103:1NKJV says:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!”

Please note, through using your talents, you might discover God's purpose for your life, the “*why*” of your existence on earth.

Very importantly, giving the best to the Lord is independent of age. God already knew David at an early age of fourteen(14), Joseph at a youthful age of seventeen(17) feared the Lord, and Abraham at an advanced age of more than a hundred(100) was ready to sacrifice his best(his long awaiting son) to God.

What is it that is so precious to you that you are holding or keeping away from God? Check yourself and surrender all to Him because He owns all, including you.

Is there any “return” in appreciating Him with your best?

We need to understand that there is nothing that can ever be done to repay the price He paid on our behalf. Despite all, His blessings, goodness, and mercies among others, abound. It is always best to act out of our love for Him and not for rewards. Here are some of the benefits of reserving our best for Him.

1. Generational blessings

“But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children.” - (Psalm 103:17NIV)

2. Shame and reproach will be far away from you

“...Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” - (Romans 10:11NLT)

3. Supernatural health will be yours

“So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.” - (Exodus 23:25NKJV)

4. He will be pleased with you

“But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why are you bothering her and causing trouble? She has done a good and beautiful thing to Me.” - (Mark 14:6AMP)

5. You are on course for amazing happenings

“However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” — the things God has prepared for those who love him.” - (1 Corinthians 2:9NIV)

6. Unmatched strength is guaranteed

“...But the people who know their God will be strong and will resist him.” - (Daniel 11:32NLT)

7. All your needs will be adequately addressed

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” - (Matthew 6:33NLT)

Finally, it is possible to give without loving but it is highly impossible to love without giving. When you love the Lord by keeping His commandments, giving your best will become easy and a thing of joy. Put Him on your plans, schedules, and others, *He makes all things work.*

I pray that the Lord in His infinite mercies, this year and beyond, will give you a heart and grant you the courage to give Him your best. You are blessed.

Jesus Christ is Lord