

## Why Do We Give?

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This is the season of giving. We just finished Thanksgiving and now we are preparing for PRESENT giving, right? Sometimes the holidays can be a bit overwhelming, especially if we feel like we don't have a lot to give. So I think we should look at our concept of giving to learn where it comes from and why we do it. I'm sure it does not exist to make people feel bad.

### Giving and Receiving

When my husband spent his first Christmas in America he was shocked at the quantity of gifts under the tree, and the amount of money my parents spent on Christmas gifts. He continued to be shocked every year. The way he was raised, you give a gift from the heart, because you want to express a feeling of appreciation for someone. It doesn't matter what it is, it's the thought that counts.

The way I was raised, you ask people what they want; you try to get people things they want or need that they wouldn't buy for themselves. If you can surprise them with something really special that they're not expecting, that's even better. It was not really about the money spent, but more about doing your best to give the other person happiness.

I don't think one way is better than the other, both are good, but I wanted to highlight this contrast to show that people have different ways of thinking about giving. We also have different abilities to give. My parents had the ability to spend more money when they got older, but we were just starting out and did not have the financial resources to buy a lot of gifts. (That was completely understood and accepted.)

However, disparity like this can sometimes make a person feel bad, sort of unworthy – but like I said, I don't think it's meant to do that. However, as we navigate through life the disparity between those who have more and those who have less causes a lot of stress and conflict in a multitude of ways. It's a motivating factor behind war and crime and all sorts of social ills.

Even though many wealthy people give, and many less fortunate people rise above their circumstance, the problem remains. Do we give only because others have a need? Do we want to receive only because we have a need; or is there a more fundamental reason?

### The Source of Life is Giving and Receiving



Everything from the smallest particle to the largest entity exists and acts based on the principle of give & take action (the cycle of give/receive/respond). People and things come together in relationship because of a common base. There are intentions that create the forces that bring things together.

*“God’s universal prime energy directs His eternal dual characteristics to form a common base for their mutual relationship. They then engage in give and take action. Based on the forces generated by this give and take action, God’s dual characteristics construct a foundation for their eternal reciprocation. ...In the created universe, the dual characteristics that make up each being are empowered by universal prime energy to establish a common base. They then engage in give and take action. Based on the forces generated by this give and take action, the dual characteristics construct a foundation for their continued reciprocation.” – Exposition of the Divine Principle, p 22*

The Origin of our universe, regardless of whether we call it the Big Bang or the intentional life force we refer to as God, gave everything of itself to initiate the process of creation. That first act of giving unleashed the standard and principles of give and take action through which the entire universe came to

function and exist. We have the ability to study and understand the universe because principles, laws and order exist around this give and take action.

### It's all about relationship



Everything in the universe exists in some form of relationship, so relationship is a really important thing to understand. Giving is all about creating a relationship, otherwise you would be giving in a void – there would be no purpose. The Big Bang had a purpose, an intention, and that purpose was relationship.

Existence, development and multiplication is the result of give and take action. Giving is the force that initiates, and that force elicits a response. In other words, a response is expected from the

initiating force. However, the response is determined by how the giving is perceived.

Let me give an example of how perception can change things. When my oldest son was 7 months old he innocently bit his great-grandmother on the arm while playing on her lap. It hurt and her reaction was to slap him and angrily yell, “you little devil!” Of course he cried, not understanding what the problem was. He got excited as they were playing together and suddenly all went wrong.

In contrast to this, when my youngest son was one year old a similar situation happened with a different result. Son #2 ran to the arms of a visiting friend of mine, and in his excitement he bit my friend on the thigh. My friend was a wise man. He held my little son close and looked him in the eyes with a smile and said, “Oh, this is how you express your love!” Then my friend hugged my son and both were happy.

### How God Perceives Us



Through this second experience I saw the nature of God. God perceives our genuine good heart and completely accepts it, responding in kind with appreciation and gratitude. Like the parent who puts their children's scribbled artwork up on the refrigerator, or the parent who beams and brags when their child graduates from college. God is excited and expectant throughout our growth. God keeps giving endlessly, but in that giving there is only an expectation that the response or result will be good because what has been given is good.

We hope and expect that our child will be healthy and grow up to be a happy and loving human being. That's exactly what our Heavenly Parent expects.

### What went wrong?



Because we can see that there is so much pain, suffering and disparity in the world, we have to acknowledge that something went wrong in this process of giving and receiving. If we look at the causes of war, crime and other social ills we can see that it boils down to a relationship problem and often a perception problem.

For example, certain factions in the Middle East perceive the western world as a threat, so they attack. They want us to counter attack so that they can continue their vengeance. It's a tangled mess of distorted perception and misdirected relationship skills.

When we study the allegory of the fall of man we can see that this was also the case in the beginning. The Angel had a wrong concept about of the intention of God's love, he felt a lack of love, was jealous, and so decided to take love for himself.

This pattern of misperception and misdirected relationship was established in human history. Misdirected give & take action has given rise to the disparity we experience in the world. We are so used to it that we think of it as normal – some have more, some have less, if you work hard you can get more we say, but that is not always the case.

### Why Giving is the Solution

God needed to create, to give of himself, because if he didn't he would have self destructed. In our own life, if we were to completely stop having give and take, no relationships, we would go mad, we would self-destruct.

We need to talk, we need to share, we need to invent, explore, create, do things that produce a result or stimulate action. Even just thinking is give & take action – but after awhile that's not satisfying enough so we need to write down our ideas, create something or talk to someone.

Giving is the initiation of relationship, it's where it all starts. Receiving and responding is the natural other side of giving. It's necessary in order to stimulate more giving. Both parts of the relationship are equally necessary.

It's actually a perfect system that allows everyone and everything to be taken care of. But unfortunately, we know that in the world we live in everyone doesn't get taken care of. There is a problem that can only be solved by more giving of what is true and good.

All of human history has been marred with insufficient giving, warped giving, and misguided taking. This has created a history of conflict in human relationships. On the one hand we see incredible progress because of people who have been successfully learning, growing and giving of themselves. On the other hand we constantly have to deal with the forces of destruction because of people who abuse others, or abuse things.

### Why do we hold back?



“What if no one ever gave?” I’m not just talking about giving donations, gifts or helping someone. Think about it, if no one ever gave of themselves in any way, no one would create anything, no one would do business, no one would even speak to each other much less make love. Humanity would cease to exist.

Fortunately we are so inherently programmed to give of ourselves that we have not self destructed, but there is an imbalance. We hold back, everyone does, some more than others. I did this just the other day while in the check-out line at a store. When asked if I wanted to give a donation to some local charity I rotely responded, “Not today.” Later in the car I thought, *Why not today? I could have given.*

What prevents people from giving? Fear, lack of confidence, insecurity, neediness, not knowing how or what to give – these are all products of immaturity and social conditioning. There is also greediness, lack of concern or care, heartlessness – and these are

signs of a damaged heart.

That's why the only solution is to give more. This is why Jesus said,

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous....” Matt. 5:43 – 48*

And Mother Teresa expounded upon Jesus words by saying,

*“I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love.”*

Through their examples we can see what giving true love can accomplish. Another example is the life and work of Rev. & Mrs. Moon who have established countless organizations to serve others, address social ills, and foster peace.

### Our Potential to Give

I believe humanity has not reached its full potential to give, to create, to produce absolute goodness because we lost the understanding of our own value. Way back in the very beginning we didn't grow into that complete awareness of ourselves as co-creators, absolute beings of goodness with unlimited potential to express and share. Instead we've developed complex patterns of holding back based on our fears and insecurity.

Throughout his life Rev. Moon constantly pushed people to discover their inherent goodness and their ability to love others. He believed that we have the potential to solve the problems in the world and create a world of true love where all can dwell in peace. Peace happens when everything functions in proper giving and receiving/responding relationships.

### **How can you give?**

As we move forward in the GIVING season, let's think about how we are originally designed to give of ourselves. Let's not be afraid, insecure or needy; let's not focus on material and monetary value. Let's focus instead on the HEART that this season is meant to represent. The HEART that gave everything of itself to create a world of goodness, and let's strive to do likewise.

## OUR POTENTIAL TO GIVE

- Discover your inherent goodness
- Explore your full potential to give and create
- Contribute to solving problems
- Don't hold yourself back

*The kingdom of Heaven is within you because you are created by love, and you have the ability to give and take in order to continue the cycle of true love.*