****C3 Questions

*C3 exists to glorify God and edify the body by knowing and delighting in the Father through the joy and love of the Spirit and unity in the Son.*

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

Got Milk?

Do you regularly return the first fruits of your finances to God? If not, what is preventing you from doing this?

This is a great opportunity to ask you C3 members to share how they practice the discipline of giving. If they are comfortable, ask them to share specifics with the group in order to show how giving can be done practically for Christians. This can be especially helpful for young believers to hear from mature ones.

Malachi 3 seems to motivate obedience to God by promising blessings. Should the promise of blessing motivate our obedience to God? Why? (Hint: Acts 20:35)

* God motivates obedience all the time in the Bible by blessing. CS Lewis put it like this:
  + "If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." (Weight of Glory)

And does the kind of blessing (material, spiritual, eternal, etc) change your answer? (Matt 6:1-4/Luke 6:35)

* + However, the *kind of blessing* we pursue makes all the difference in the world. Jesus condemns seeking material blessing as the primary reward of obedience (Matt 6:33). That is a mercenary obedience. He also condemns seeking the praise of men as the reward (Matt 6:1-4/Luke 6:35). Those are improper motivations for obedience. However, Jesus often encourages us to seek the blessing of knowing, loving, and delighting in God more as the reward of blessing. Joy in God is the proper and right reason to obey God (John 14:21/Heb 12:1-2). That kind of happy obedience glorifies God.

Where’s the Beef?

Read 2 Cor 9:6-12 and 2 Cor 8:1-9. How does Paul describe what our attitude should be in giving? What should our attitude not be?

* Our attitude in giving should be...
  + 8:2 - abundantly joyful
  + 9:3 - generous and extravagant (beyond their ability)
  + 9:3 - voluntarily and free
  + 8:4 - eager and urgent
  + 8:8 - sincere love
  + 8:9 - Christ-imitating
  + 9:7 - from the heart
  + 9:7 - cheerful
* Our attitude should not be...
  + 8:8 - constrained by a commandment
  + 9:3 - not regretful or begrudging
  + 9:3 - not out of a sense of duty or compulsion

In these two passages, does God bless saints because they give or so that they can give? In other words, does God's blessing the reward of giving or the resource for giving?

Paul makes it clear in these two passages that God blesses believers *before* they give so that they can give generously. In 2 Cor 8, Paul says it was the grace (gift) of God towards the Macedonians that enabled their joy to overflow in generosity. And in ch 9, Pauls says God gives sufficient grace so that we can accomplish every good work (v8). God provides both seed and bread to allow for a harvest of righteousness (v10). In fact, God enriches in every way so that we can be generous at all times.

What is the ultimate purpose of Christian giving? (Hint: 2 Cor 9:11-12/1 Pet 4:10-11)

The ultimate purpose for all Christian giving is that God be glorified and thanked as the Giver of all things. God gives to us and we acknowledge that reality by cheerfully returning to God a portion of what He has entrusted to us. That overflow of joy in God is extended to others in acts of extravagant generosity. When God is seen and proclaimed as the source of all of this love, He is glorified as the strength, grace, and riches provider. His generosity is enjoyed and magnified through our generosity.

Are You Satisfied?

How does generosity with money demonstrate satisfaction in God?

Does the way you use and give your money display that Christ is your true Treasure?