

Creative Giving

When it comes to giving, most Christians express their thanksgiving to the Lord by writing a check or giving cash on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. But, be careful that this regular habit and practice does not limit your generosity. Let us look at two persons in The New Testament gospels, who show us how opportunities for generosity suddenly showed up without notice.

Here is the scene: Jesus was dying on the cross. Who was going to dispose of His body when He died and where was his body to be buried? Who would embalm the body, which was required by Jewish law? All these were critical unanswered questions.

Later, when Jesus “breathed His last breath”, Joseph of Arimathea, “a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews”, took a daring step. He risked his standing in the Sanhedrin by asking Pilate for Jesus’ body. With permission granted, he “took the body, wrapped it in a clean cloth and placed it in his own, new tomb.”

Another secret disciple, Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, and a man of wealth, recognizing that Jesus’ disciples had abandoned Him, bought expensive spices with which to embalm Jesus’ body. Both the tomb and the spices were critical necessities for Jesus’ funeral.

How aptly fitting and spontaneous were these gifts which revealed their love and devotion to Jesus! These were not your ordinary and customary gifts, to be sure, but gifts nevertheless. They were not pledged nor even anticipated, but these sacrificial gifts were out of the ordinary and meeting the needs of the moment.

Watch for ways you might give today, like Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did long ago. Guess what! Here is your chance. In May or June 2008, you will be receiving a \$600 check or more from the U.S. Government that you were not expecting. It is given to you by the U.S. Congress and President George W. Bush. These monies are part of the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008. What are your current plans for this windfall?

Your Stewardship Committee