



# Biblical Foundations

## Giving and Receiving

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*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

— Luke 6:38 (NIV)

In the dusty streets of a large city lived a beggar procuring alms and rice from those passing by. Most days he was unable to get enough food for a meal or enough coins to buy some firewood for cooking and warmth. At night, he slept under the sky with only a rag to cover him. His life was difficult, but he had grown used to it over many years.

One day, the beggar heard the news: the emperor was coming to town for a rare visit. “I’m sure the generous emperor will see the state I am in and grant a large gift,” he thought. “The richest of all men will bestow some sympathy and relief on me in a manner that will undoubtedly surpass the paltry gifts of the regular citizens.”

He made plans to sit along the emperor’s route so the emperor would be sure to notice the beggar’s misery. The evening before the procession, he gathered all his belongings and reserved his spot on the street.

Around midday the next day, the royal caravan approached and stopped right in front of him. While the beggar had expected no more than a small gift from the emperor’s servants, he was speechless when the cavalcade halted beside him and the great ruler emerged.

The emperor approached the beggar, shook the poor man’s hand, and touched him gently on the shoulder. Looking into his eyes, the emperor said, “Tell me, kind sir, may I have a little gift of rice?” Confusion swirled through the beggar’s thoughts. What had the emperor just said? The emperor motioned to the man’s rice bowl. “Can you please spare some grains of rice?” the powerful man persisted.

The beggar could hardly believe what was happening to him. He had only a few handfuls of grain to his name, but here was a request from a man who had everything.



The beggar slowly took up the bowl and stared at the little amount of rice. He knew he could not deny the emperor's request. Barely able to hide his indignation, he reluctantly counted out five grains of rice and dropped them into the emperor's hands.

The emperor thanked him, shook his hand once more, and went on his way. Confused, hurt, and angry, the beggar watched the caravan disappear into the horizon, leaving him with less than he'd had before.

That night, while he was preparing his rice for his dinner, he noticed something shiny in his bowl. He looked closer, and a thrill shot through him as he dug a small gold nugget from his bowl. The gold nugget was enough to buy him a few months off the street.

"Is there more?" he wondered and sifted through the rice in search of more gold. He found four more gold nuggets inside his rice bowl.

As he stared down at the small fortune, he understood: five gold nuggets, one for each grain of rice he had given the emperor.

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As Jesus told His disciples, grace is often rewarded with grace. Whether we give away something of value or show kindness to another, we may receive back what we've given.

Smile at a stranger and see if he smiles back. Perform a random act of kindness and see if the joy of giving surpasses the cost of the act.

Have you ever seen a child perform a selfless act? Did you feel like doing something special for that child to reward his kindness? Do you think God sometimes does that for us?

Giving and receiving. When we give, we receive far more than we gave away. It may not be in the form of money. But what we receive often carries far more value.

Give in good measure, for with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.