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# Sari-Sari Stories

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A Newsletter of WIN - USA Ladies

## *The Practice of Godly Giving*

**Julie Atienza**

I was sitting quietly listening to the lively chatter around me. It was the first Deborah's Fire (WIN-LA's women's ministry) gathering that I was attending. We just moved from Halifax, Canada a few months back. At one point, one sister stood in front and shared a praise report. As I was listening, God spoke to me and said, "Give her your \$100 bill in your wallet." I reasoned with Him, "But she doesn't even know me?" He said firmly, "Give it to her." So, right after the gathering, I timidly approached her and handed her a folded bill saying something like, "Sis, a little something from the Lord". She thanked me for it and I let it go. In my heart, I told Him, "Lord, it's yours to give. Thank you for using me. I trust that you will take care of the needs of my family". You see, as a result of the move, our family had been without income for 5 months at that time. That very week, my Mom gave us Christmas shopping money. A few weeks later, someone gave us \$2000; then someone else gave us another \$1000. Several weeks after, God moved a mountain and I started on a new job. Not only did I get a higher salary, I was given a signing bonus and an increasing rate of annual bonus. As always, God did not disappoint. How true is His word!

*The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed;*

*Those who help others are helped.  
Proverbs 11:25 (MSG)*

I know that many of us have heard many teachings and read a number of books about giving. In fact, we memorized a few bible verses on giving. Can you complete these?

*'Give your gifts in \_\_\_\_\_, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.'*  
Matthew 6:4

*"For God loves a person who gives \_\_\_\_\_."*  
2 Corinthians 9:7c

*The amount you give will \_\_\_\_\_ the amount you get back. Luke 6:38c*

Perfect!

Yes, we all know it, but I guess the real question is, do we live it? Are we looking for ways to apply His words in our lives? Are we practicing Godly giving?

A few years back, my husband and I decided to give our second sofa set to a family in church. It was in great condition. The wife and two daughters recently landed as immigrants and the family just moved into a new apartment. It was around Christmas time and it dawned on me that they would also want a Christmas tree, which most likely is low on their priority list. We had two then: a 7-foot one and a 4-foot one. I loved our small tree. I gingerly decorate that every year with Philippine-made Christmas ornaments that I brought with us to Canada. So naturally, I was attached to it. I hesitated and started negotiating with God. "Can it just be the tree and not ALL the ornaments?" He was silent. You see, I did not need to hear from Him. I needed to obey Him. God wanted us to give that tree (with all ornaments and lights) away. So we packed it up and delivered it the very next day with the sofa set. One thing was

*"It's easier to take than to give. It's nobler to give than to take. The thrill of taking lasts a day. The thrill of giving lasts a lifetime."*

*~ Joan Marques*

## OneThe Practice of Godly Giving

*Continued from Page 1*

clear to me that day; I still needed to grow in the area of giving. I mean, if I was struggling with giving away an old Christmas tree, how can He trust me with more, much less wealth? Seriously!

Truth be told, giving is an area that we can all grow in. God is eager to partner with us in answering the prayers of His children. Either in formal ways, like giving to missions and supporting ministries; or through informal ways, like randomly providing a need of a family. While giving might be easy for some, Godly giving will always be a challenge for most. Why? It's because Godly giving requires a measure of dying to self. Let me explain.

### *Godly giving requires obedience*

We give what we determine in our hearts. (2 Cor. 9:7). True. However, we don't determine the amount on our own, we should ask Him. We should listen and obey. We do this when a plea is made in church and should also do it in our every day lives. Like when we're waiting in line to pay at the store and see a man counting every penny in his pocket. Does God want to use you to bless that man? Ask Him, it's His money anyway. It is not so much about the amount or value as it is about obedience. Godly giving requires obedience.

### *Godly giving is an overflow of love*

Godly giving is unconditional and with no strings attached. It is a result of an overflow of God's love in our hearts, and we loving Him back. We must give not to receive. We will for sure receive because that is His promise. Still, we ought to give without any expectations of anything from recipients, even of gratitude. Does that mean we no longer show appreciation or demand accountability? Not at all! We should express gratitude, of course. Organizational accountability

is still important. However, when we start requiring favors or special attention from the recipient, our giving becomes conditional and that is not borne out of love. The self is never the star, God is. Godly giving requires love.

### *Godly giving is done cheerfully*

Our act of giving should be done cheerfully. Sometimes we feel embarrassed that we are unable to give a higher amount or bigger gifts that our giving is sullied with sadness. Other times, we feel forced that our giving is resentful. Then there are those times that we just feel the burdened by giving that we give but we do it reluctantly. Please don't give that way. See, if we are truly giving in obedience and in love, we will choose to give cheerfully. Yes, it's a choice that we make. When we do that, we put a smile in God's face. God loves us all but *God loves* it when the *giver* delights in the giving. (1 Cor. 9:6 MSG). Wow! Isn't that wonderful? Godly giving is done cheerfully.

I'm sure we are all doing a lot of giving this coming Christmas season. I suggest that we all put this to practice and don't just give. Let's practice Godly giving and experience the delight of God. Then it will truly be the most wonderful time of the year.



*Julie is the wife of Pastor Hermen Atienza III, Associate Pastor of WIN-Los Angeles, California*

**. . . a sacrifice is a gift that cost us something, but we give it anyway - happily, even - because we trust God and find ourselves becoming more like Him with every offering.**

*~ Charity Singleton Craig  
How Much Is Enough?*

# What Can I Give?

Juliet Rizvi



As Thanksgiving and Christmas approach, many people begin to think about giving and receiving. Just where and when the custom of giving gifts to one another at Christmas began is not known for certain. Perhaps it all started with the men from the east who worshipped the child Jesus in Matt. 2:11. Or maybe the giving of gifts began because Jesus himself is the gift of God to mankind, and because he gave his very life for man's redemption, John 3:16

While contemplating Acts 20:35 one day, it caught my attention: "it is more blessed to give than to receive. But what can I give? With our present circumstances there is not much I can do.

The Holy Spirit softly whispered in my spirit; "Are you willing to give the Bible first place in your heart?" When you realize what the Word of God can and will do in the lives of people in your community. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So how do I put myself in a position of giving?

The witch trials of 1692 cast a shadow over Salem, Massachusetts, that has spanned centuries, this historic coastal city is now a highly profitable tourist draw, about 250,000 each year. For the most part, Salem's status as "Witch City" has been embraced, or at least tolerated, by those who live here.

And at this city's annual month long Halloween festival, we also launched street evangelism campaign for 3 consecutive Sundays and took the opportunity to minister God's Word in the busy streets of Downtown Salem. With several families who joined us, we soaked ourselves in prayer asked God to move in His powerful way in the hearts of these precious souls who are spiritually ignorant of the Truth.

The first Sunday went so well, many passersby gladly received the tracts, others even asked questions about what's written in the tracts. The next Sunday was very challenging as the crowds were doubled in number and people were unfriendly and refuse to even take the leaflets. The last Sunday was even tougher as it was 3 days before Halloween, the streets were packed with people who are preoccupied, watching adults and innocent children disguise themselves as witches, goblins, skeletons, and even the devil himself. Many often chalk this up as a time to have harmless fun. But as believers, we know that it's Satan's scheme to trick man into following him by portraying something as small and innocent. He does this by getting people to compromise on "small" things and before they realize it, he has infiltrated their spirits with many demonic forces.

While distributing bible tracts, God has reminded me also, that just because I don't see the end result of the seed I planted in someone's heart, it does not mean that what I did was nothing. Many people were saved through reading Gospel tracts including myself. It was in my college days when I received my first bible tract, Four Spiritual Laws. I know that the God that I serve is still the same God who works into the hearts of men.

As we give selflessly to the Lord's work, we become keepers of the flame. We help spread the gospel of hope. We meet people's needs. We assist people in growing spiritually. We enable our churches to shine as God's lights in the world. Such privileges fill our hearts with joy.

To give or not to give? That is the question. No, that is not the question. That may be the question for many people in our world, but it should not be for the Christian. Giving should be a natural part of our lives. We should want to give because of God's example of giving to us.

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*Juliet is the wife of Pastor Raheel Rizvi,  
Senior Pastor of WIN Massachusetts*



# The Perfect Gift!

Nickie Paulate

## *I Know*

I know  
That God loves Christmas  
And I know He loves me, too,  
Because He wrapped up Jesus  
For His gift to me and you.

This poem, taken from Christian Mother Goose Rock-A-Bye Christmas by Marjorie Ainsborough Decker, reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas.

More often than not Christmas usually means gifts - material gifts. We tend to lose the true meaning of the season - Jesus, God's gift to mankind so that man can have a right relationship with the Father. Giving is often done materially, but there is also the gift of love, sharing, joy, commitment, peace, forgiveness and hope. All of these have no monetary value but it's a gift that is far more valuable. We cannot put a price to it.

Christ showed us how to give. He gave Himself, the perfect gift that encompasses all gifts. This is the only gift that:

- \* has a lifetime guarantee
- \* long lasting, will not fade away
- \* satisfaction guaranteed, you will never tire of it
- \* strong and durable, built on a solid foundation
- \* will never break down
- \* trustworthy
- \* versatile
  - will make you happy when you're sad
  - takes away anxiety and fear
  - gives you peace and contentment
  - ready and waiting to forgive
  - will renew your strength when you're weary

- \* everyday He will surprise you with blessings and miracles

Amidst all of the hustle and bustle of Christmas, let us not forget our gift - Jesus Christ. He is the source of all we need. He is the only one Who satisfies.

So sit back and relax.

Enjoy your gift!

***Give it to someone so they too may enjoy His everlasting blessings. Give the gift of Jesus.***

He's free for the taking,  
courtesy of the Heavenly  
Father.



Sis. Nickie is the wife of Pastor Babes Paulate, USA Regional Director, International Benevolence Ministry Director

*Faith* IS NOT KNOWING  
WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS,  
BUT KNOWING  
*who holds the future.*

## Nut Marshmallow Fudge

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/3 cup evaporated milk
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 12-oz package semisweet chocolate morsels
- 1 cup coarsely chopped nuts
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows

### Preparation:

1. Line an 8" square pan with waxed paper.
  2. Combine evaporated milk & sugar in 3-qt saucepan. Place over moderate heat & bring to full rolling boil, stirring constantly (about 4 minutes). Boil 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
  3. Remove from heat; add chocolate morsels & stir until smooth.
  4. Fold in nuts & marshmallows. Turn into prepared pan. Chill & cut into squares.
- Yield: 3 lbs.



# Christmas Baking

## Snow Flurry Brownies

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup baking cocoa
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup vanilla chips
- 1/2 cup chopped macadamia nuts or almonds

### Preparation:

1. In a bowl, whisk together sugar, butter, eggs, & vanilla.
2. Combine flour, cocoa, baking powder & salt; add to sugar mixture & mix well.
3. Spread into a greased 8 in square baking pan.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 min or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out with moist crumbs (do not over bake).
5. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into diamond shapes if desired.