

## It's OK to be Liberal II Corinthians 8:20

Liberal or Conservative? These words are like price tags which are used to judge a person's worth. It is my desire to show the areas of your life where you should be a staunch liberal. I realize that are many ways in which a Christian ought to lift the banner of conservatism.

- The way we interpret the Bible. It is the only written word from Heaven. II Timothy 3:16 says it all.
- The deity of Jesus Christ. He is the way to God, the truth about God and the life from God.
- I know that my ideas about family life are very conservative. I believe that Hebrews 13:4 teaches us that married love should be loyal and lifelong.

In these days being conservative in matters such as I have mentioned causes some to say, "Well I don't want to be called a fanatic. I think you have to be **balanced** in your thinking." That sounds good, but the Christian faith is at various points **narrow not broad**. The high view of Jesus and the Bible are radical in today's culture. There is much to be said about Caleb who wholeheartedly followed the Lord. See Joshua 14:9

In the same way we strive to be conservative and fundamental we will be less than Christian if we are not liberal in other matters.

- In accepting others. Jesus was accused by the religious conservatives of his day of being too liberal in his associations with the low life segment of society. They said of him, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." Luke 15:1-2 He was accused of being a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Matthew 11:19
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- In forgiving others. Before Peter heard the story of the unmerciful servant, he asked Jesus, "Should we forgive a person seven times?" The Savior responded in essence, "You're too conservative, you are too tight. You are not even in the ABCs of forgiveness." Then Jesus raised the bar to seventy times seven which may have been an idiom meaning innumerable times. Read Matthew 18:15ff.
- In giving. This is one of the toughest areas of a believer's life to master. It calls for a loving heart to be liberal in giving to the Kingdom. A lot of people are willing to give God credit, but not many want to give him cash.

The text of this speaks of a liberal response to the needs of the poor saints in Jerusalem. See II Corinthians 8:20 KJV

How does liberal giving relate to God?

1. It reflects His kind of love. John 3:16 and I John 3:1 and II Corinthians 9:14.
2. It expresses a love encounter with Jesus. Share the conversion of Zacchaeus, Luke 19, especially verse 8.
3. God wants to train us to be liberal. Study the discipline he placed on the infant nation of Israel in Deuteronomy 15:12-1
4. Liberal giving brings glory to God through His children because they trust Him for their provision.
5. It releases power from God according to the prophet Malachi, Malachi 3:10-11.

For eighteen years I was the pastor of the FBC in San Francisco, CA. One feature in that large auditorium is the mighty Austin organ. It was a gift to the church after the devastating earthquake of 1906. John D. Rockefeller was the donor. But there was a time when that man was not so generous. In fact, he was dying at the age of fifty-five. He was living on milk and crackers, unable to enjoy his vast wealth. According to his own words he had not been able to enjoy one hour of uninterrupted sleep for five years. He was weakened by a blood disease and racked with pain from an ulcerated stomach. He supposed that since he was going to die, he might enjoy doing something that he had not done until then. Among the things he did was one activity which he credited with much of his miraculous healing. He lived after that another thirty-five years. That one thing was liberal giving. Within twelve months of his acts of giving he was virtually well and spent the rest of his life a whole man. The gift of the Austin organ was one of those experiments. "A wise man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25