

**REMEMBER**  
**August 11, 2013**

**Acts 20:34-36**

<sup>34</sup> *You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions.* <sup>35</sup> *In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."* <sup>36</sup> *When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed.*

Hold out your hand and make a fist (for one minute). Now relax your hand. Which feels better?

At the end of June, Rev. Kara began the sermon series on Shepherding. We have covered

- Showing Up – Everyone has need of us
- Hearing Them – We must truly listen with open minds and hearts
- Encourage – It is an acknowledgement of what we see in others
- Pray – Prayer centers us with God
- Help – Help out of love for God and one another
- Example – Open us to be the best that we can be

Today is Remember

In Acts 20:34-36, Paul writes,

You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is really hard to let someone serve or help you. Do you remember the story of Peter and the foot washing? Peter did not want to accept the gift of service that Jesus was offering. Did Peter want to be in control? It takes humility to receive. I like to think that I am an independent person. I try to be self-sufficient. It is very hard for me to accept help from others. Yes, I am humbled to accept what others offer me. I think most of us do like to be in control of our lives but we have to allow God and His servants in.

Shepherding is not that we as a church want to micromanage your life but we want to connect and assist you in whatever your needs are. I have a friend who was admitted to the hospital Friday night with chest pains. I found out Saturday by a Facebook post. I guess that means maybe we are not as close as I thought. This is an

example of how the shepherding program may serve you. We call ourselves a church family. Would you like your church family to be able to help you in a time of need? We want to give of our time to help you in a moment's notice if a need arises.

It is more blessed to give than receive. Pay attention to what is around you. Truly listen to the conversation. What are you hearing? Yes, sometimes you do have to hear the unspoken words and wishes. Take advantage of those opportunities to do the right thing. Is it convenient to do a favor? But is it right? God puts those instances in front of us for a reason. Sometimes we do wait a long time to find out the why.

When you take time to give of yourself you are becoming more like God. We need to show we are like Jesus in His willingness to serve others. Giving is not just about money. It is your time, encouraging words, your prayers, yourself.

One Christmas, Mama decided to change our Christmas morning ritual. In her wisdom, she decided that we would have Christmas the Sunday before. That went ok; it just didn't seem the same. And she never changed Christmas again. Well, Christmas morning Lynn and I ate breakfast at the Waffle House since breakfast at Mama's house was not to be that year. Let me back up a little, Anna and Heather were young. Remember when children are little; you have to have all things equal in number. Well, I had not shopped for them equally, so part of my purchases were at home to be taken back to the store after Christmas. Now, back to the Waffle House. Waiting to order, we noticed a little girl in the back room. Christmas morning, at work with her Mom. Only she had nothing to play with. Wait now, this is Christmas Morning. I thought of the toys I had at home. They were for her age. I went home, got the extra toys, and went back to the Waffle House. Lynn asked the Mom if she would accept the toys for her daughter. In all my years of shopping for Anna and Heather, I never made a mistake in the numbers. You know, I didn't this time. God knew who was going to get my extras.

Giving of yourself is like showing God's love. He wants us to be a blessing to others. Our actions can help spread and show God's love in our church and in our community. We are often rewarded by giving to others. Our rewards are emotional and spiritual. Giving warms our hearts.

I asked you earlier which felt better, a closed fist or an open hand. For me, an open, giving hand feels the best.