



## CHAPTER 5

### Be a Giver ... Not a Getter

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("Rafe")

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## **It's Your CHOICE – Be A Giver ... Not A Getter**

### **BE A GIVER . . . NOT A GETTER**

We can easily understand the difference between one who is a **giver** and one who is a **getter** (aka a taker). By definition the direction of the benefit from the activity of the **giver** flows from the **giver** to another. The opposite is true for the **getter**. The direction of the benefit is toward the **getter** himself or herself. But notice that both the **giver** and the **getter** are doing the action. The **giver** and the **getter** are both making **CHOICES**. The **giver** chooses to direct a benefit from himself/herself to another. The **getter** chooses to obtain a benefit to himself/herself from another source.

Here is a simple question. Which person is more selfish, the **giver** or the **getter**? The answer is obvious. Here's a more difficult question. Which are you – a **giver** or a **getter**? If both you and your spouse are **givers** then you are in all likelihood going to develop a wonderful marriage relationship, and the other principles in this book are going to fit very neatly and easily. The person who is the **giver** is imitating the character of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, we Christians are the ones who can truly understand and appreciate the gifts of God.

Allow me to list some portions of Scripture which reveal that God is a **giver**, and that God's direction for us is to be **givers**.

#### **Proverbs 11:24-25**

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

#### **Proverbs 21:26b**

All day long [the sluggard] craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing.

#### **Proverbs 22:9a**

A generous man will himself be blessed . . .

#### **Matthew 10:8b** (Jesus speaking)

. . . Freely you have received, freely give.

#### **John 3:16** (Jesus speaking)

For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

#### **John 10:28** (Jesus speaking)

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.

#### **John 14:15-17** (Jesus speaking)

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If you love Me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you.

**John 14:27** (Jesus speaking)

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

**John 17:2** (Jesus' prayer to the heavenly Father, speaking of Himself)

For you granted Him authority over all people that He might give eternal life to all those you have given Him.

**Acts 20:35b**

. . . remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

**Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 8:32**

He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all – how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?

**II Corinthians 8:8-9**

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

**II Corinthians 9:14-15**

And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. \* \* \* \* \*

There is not one aspect of the relationship between you and your spouse which is not touched by your continuing **CHOICE** of whether you will be a **giver** or a **getter**. For example, think about how this important choice will play out in the following areas: Fulfilling Scriptural roles in marriage; your thought life; your dreams and goals; your financial planning and spending; the

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use of your time; the selection of activities for recreation; your priorities; your sexual relations; and . . . (you fill in the blank).

Previously I stated that if both the husband and wife are **givers** there is an excellent atmosphere and environment for a happy and excellent marriage. I cannot prove the following two conclusions, but my experience tells me that these are true: (1) if both the husband and the wife are **getters** there is very little chance that there will be a happy and God-honoring marriage; (2) if one spouse is a **getter** and the other spouse is a **giver** the marriage relationship may make it, but it is unlikely that the relationship will be happy, and the degree to which the marriage can be God-honoring will be stunted. I urge you . . . No, I beg you . . . to be a **giver** and to not be a **getter** in your marriage.

In a different context the Bible tells us that “God loves a cheerful **giver**” (II Corinthians 9:7b regarding giving to the Lord). While admittedly taking this passage out of context, let me suggest to you that if you are a **giver** rather than a **getter** in your marriage you will indeed be a cheerful **giver** because the more you give in the relationship with your spouse, the more freedom you will have in your inner spirit and the greater the chance you will reflect that giving spirit. As you bless and benefit your spouse you will indeed receive rich blessings and benefits in the form of a happier and more beautiful relationship and increased day-to-day enjoyment of each other.

I challenge you to apply the distinction between a **giver** and a **getter** to all of the topics and principles presented throughout the rest of this book. You will see that your **CHOICE** to be a **giver** is a choice in each case to enhance your marriage.