

# Access to God

Beloved, I call your spirit to attention, and I invite the Giver portion to come explore how God has designed you to enrich the world in your unique way.

Imagine being given a duck egg, a chrome plated wrench, a needle with gold thread, 1000 Russian rubles and an exquisite piece of iron wood. Each is a familiar object. Each has value. None are toxic or difficult to use. But if you were asked to make an object of value, using those five items, it might be a challenge.

If you were ordered to make a masterpiece by combining those five, it would be more than a challenge.

This is the marvelous mystery of the Giver. Your tribe is like the bumble bee. The engineers have scientifically “proven” that a bumble bee cannot fly – yet they do with ease. Similarly the Giver’s fascinating combination of resources appears random in the eyes of the uninformed.

In the hands of God, the Giver’s unusual package of resources meets the vicissitudes of the world around them in a transformational way.

One of the biggest gifts from a Giver is access to God.

Matthew illustrated that with his dinner party for fellow tax collectors. The dominant religion of the day had vigorously and unequivocally excommunicated them. And the priests of that religion relentlessly broadcast that they were the keepers of the Ancient Way and therefore, there was no access to God except through them.

Matthew drew from his gifting to live broadly. In a culture that tended toward segmentation and stratification, he calmly interfaced with multiple subcultures – just because that’s what Givers do.



When Jesus invited him to be a part of Christ's community, he did not see that as his new defining orthodox culture. Rather it was just one more community to be added to all the other communities he had entrée to.

Thus since he now had access to God, it was the most natural thing in the world for him to invite a cluster of his friends to meet Jesus. He swiftly filled the room with people like him who had been blocked from God because they were excluded from religion. He gave them access through the treasure of his own relationship with Jesus.

Lyman Stewart used his vast wealth to give people access. The Scotsman learned about oil drilling in Pennsylvania, then came to California to try his hand. He assembled a team of venture capitalists, secured drilling rights in the Mariposa field southwest of Bakersfield, and proceeded to spend all the capital on a dry hole.

The night the board met in Los Angeles to throw in the towel and declare bankruptcy, the drillers in the San Joaquin Valley hit a gusher turning the fortunes of Mr. Stewart. He leveraged that income into great wealth.

As he turned his eyes toward giving back into the community, he defaulted time and again to creating access.

He looked at the poor in Los Angeles and envisioned a way to give them access to God. He found Christian musicians, evangelists and preachers and offered to build them a meeting place if they would minister to the poor. Thus was born the Pacific Gospel Union.

Not content with giving access to those who would come to the mission, he loaded wagons with food, clothing, singers and preachers and sent them out to the highways and byways to bring access to God to those most marginalized in the culture.

As a man with large horizons, he also saw an opportunity to create access for men and women wanting to go into full time ministry. R. A. Torrey was a contemporary firebrand. Lyman invested heavily in building the infrastructure for the Bible Institute of Los Angeles in order to give the future leaders access to the knowledge of God that Torrey had.

The town of Dothan was surrounded by Syrian troops much to the panic of Elisha's servant. Elisha calmly asked God to open the servant's eyes to see the immensity of the presence of the chariots and horsemen of Israel who were also present.



The excommunicated tax collector provided access to God through a dinner invitation.

The wealthy oil baron gave access to God via buildings and spiritual leaders.

The prophet gave access to God through opening the spiritual eyes of a servant. You give a dozen Givers an egg, a wrench, a needle, some rubles and a board and each will build something completely different.

Yet – each will build exactly the same thing: access to God.

Because that's what Givers do!

We welcome you in our midst, Giver. Though each of us has our own, personal legal right to approach God, your practical tools that create on-ramps to heaven are a magnificent gift to the larger community. You are most welcome among us. We bless you in the name of our King, Jesus Christ.

Sherman Library  
Corona del Mar, CA  
December 16, 2008

