



“The Ground of Generosity”

Acts 20: – ³² “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ Yes, you yourselves know **that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.** ³⁵ I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that **you must support the weak.** And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’** ³⁶ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul’s neck and kissed him, ³⁸ sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.”

Two things I noticed about the passage:

1. **Paul’s hands benefited him and others.**
2. **Paul patterned his life by the example of Jesus.**

Worldly people have a tendency to be generous around Christmas time.

The generous believer lives a lifestyle of generosity.

Many believers live a life looking at how they can receive benefits from others. Selfishness is rampant in our world. What’s in it for me?

A generous heart is not something that happens overnight. It is something that is cultivated over time, through prayer, through the study of God's word, through the practice of giving. It is a heart that is sensitive to the needs of others, a heart that is moved

to action by the love of Christ. Cultivating a generous heart is a journey, a process of transformation that brings us closer to the image of Christ.

Over the years I have been a receiver of the generosity of people.

It's amazing.

I would think that as a believer living in a community of believers the above statement would be true for all of us.

Generosity is not only about money, but certainly includes it.

Generosity dangers:

1. Giving to be noticed by people.
2. Giving with pride.
3. Being angry at people who are not generous- why me?

Living a life of generosity is developed by our understanding of:

➤ **OWNERSHIP**

A lack of generosity refuses to acknowledge that your possessions are not really yours, but God's.

James 1:17- "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."

Does God own 10 percent of our income?

Proverbs 3:9-10- Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

- ✓ The cheerful giver is not a source of blessing but rather a conduit of God's blessing. The most important result of cheerful giving is the resulting praise and glory to God (see Matthew 5:16). This praise comes not only from the direct beneficiaries of the gifts, but from others who see God's love poured out through the generosity of his people.

III.- Chris Edmunds- (Camper) it belongs to God, it's just at a different address.

Car gets rammed into- did you thank God? It's God's car!!!

Deuteronomy 8:17-18- "then you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.' "And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day."

1 Chronicles 29:10-14- **Therefore David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said: "Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory,**

The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours;

Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all. "Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name. But who am I, and who are my people, That we should be able to offer so willingly as this?

For all things come from You,

C.S. Lewis – "I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare."

A.W. Tozer – “Any temporal possession can be turned into everlasting wealth. Whatever is given to Christ is immediately touched with immortality.”

➤ **OPPORTUNITY**

Galatians 6:9-10- “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

2 Corinthians 9:11-12- while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,”

Psalm 112

Excuses for selfishness

- I can't afford it.
- They make more money than I do.
- They spend their money frivolously.
- There are others who are in a better position to help than I am.
- It will take away from what I want.
- They don't deserve it.

Generosity has nothing to do with the receiver, it only has to do with the giver.

➤ **OBEDIENCE**

Amy Carmichael – “You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.”

Malachi 3:10 – “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

Luke 6:30 – “Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.”

Luke 6:38 - “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

God’s mathematics will always run contrary to the world’s view of money.

Ill.- a run in with a life insurance salesman. Twice-

➤ **OBSERVATION**

God made all of His creation to give. He made the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the earth, the plants to give. He also designed His supreme creation, man, to give. But fallen man is the most reluctant giver in all of God's creation.

- John MacArthur

Leviticus 19:9-10 – When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.

Proverbs 11:24-25 – *There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.*

One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.- ESV

Proverbs 19:17 – Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.

Proverbs 22:9 “The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.”

Matthew 10:42 – 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.”

Romans 12:13 – distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

2 Corinthians 8:12-

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 – But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: “He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.” Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men, and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

1 Timothy 6:17-19- As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

Hebrews 13:16 – And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 John 3:17 – If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

Luke 19:1-9 (Story of Zachaeus)

In all of my years of service to my Lord, I have discovered a truth that has never failed and has never been compromised. That truth is that it is beyond the realm of possibilities that one has the ability to out give God. Even if I give the whole of my worth to Him, He will find a way to give back to me much more than I gave.

- Charles Spurgeon

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.

John Wesley

Are you a generous child of God?