



I AM GENEROUS

Introduction: Generosity is one of the marks of a believer. We should be known by being cheerful givers, not only to the church but to all those in need.

This Week's Primary Text: Proverbs 11:24

Sermon Points:

1. It is wise to give freely because we reflect the character and nature of God

- Additional Texts: John 3:16-17

The Bible tells us that wise living is about submission to God. One of the ways in which we submit to God is in giving of our wealth, both to him and to others. We do not give so that we can get something back, we give because it honours God. God has already given to us the costliest gift: his grace. God gave his life for us, when we did not deserve it, because he loved us. We contributed absolutely nothing to his sacrifice, all we had to do was receive his gift. This takes a huge weight off our shoulders, knowing that we did not need to earn his love, nor do we have to sustain it.

Grace has been freely given to us in order to freely receive it. It shapes our understanding of what love truly is. If we believed that we had to earn God's love, then we would place the same burden onto people, expecting them to earn our love. But we don't. We are able to love people freely, without expecting them to earn it, because we have been loved so sacrificially and so extravagantly by God.

Our desire to give, reflects how much we understand the magnitude of what we have been given, in Christ. If we give to expect a return, we are merely transacting. This is how the world views giving. But Godly wisdom is counter-cultural and counter-intuitive, because it tells us that to give is better than to receive. The joy comes in the actual giving process, because it is a byproduct of obedience and submission to God.

2. It is wise to give freely because we share, in part, in what God is doing in and for others

- Additional Texts: Mark 6:34-44, Matthew 6:43-44 & 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

It has always been God's expectation that his people give back to him some of the wealth that he has given to them. God uses our resources to do his work on the earth. Jesus used two fish and five loaves from a child to feed over 5000 people. One can only imagine the sense of blessing that child experienced as he watched his act of obedience used so powerfully by Jesus. We all have resources with which to give to God in submission and obedience to him. The question we need to ask ourselves is, are we willing to give obediently and generously, trusting God to do something incredible with our giving? Do we really believe that it is better to give than to receive?





Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between giving out of a sense of duty and giving cheerfully?
2. Do you think one can be a generous giver, and yet not give with a cheerful heart? Explain.
3. Why is cheerful generosity one of the marks of maturity in the gospel?
4. Why is giving to receive (i.e. expecting a return on an investment) not Godly giving, but merely a 'transaction'?
5. Explain why we experience such joy when we give to God obediently and sacrificially?
6. Have you, like the boy with the 2 fish and 5 loaves, ever experienced God do the miraculous with your giving?
7. On a scale from 1 -10 (1 being stingy, 10 been extravagant), how generous are you towards God's purposes (including giving to church and other people's needs)?
8. If this is an area of your life where you struggle to walk in Godly wisdom (i.e. you are not a "giver"), what are some small steps of obedience and trust that you can start to put in place, so that you will stretch and grow? [If anyone in the group has grown in this area recently, ask them to share what steps they took to begin trusting God in their giving.]

