

PARTNERING WITH GOD'S GENEROUS HEART

Philippians 4:14-17

2 Corinthians 8:9-12

Malachi 3:10-11

“God is so generous that He gives us grace that we do not deserve, love that we cannot comprehend, and mercy that we cannot resist.” – **Unknown**

“Grace is when you get the good things you don't deserve. Mercy is when you are spared from the bad things you do deserve. God is generous with both.” – **Unknown**

“When it comes to generosity, some people stop at nothing.” – **Anon**

“Nothing is really ours until we share it.” – **C.S. Lewis**

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” – **Winston Churchill**

“When we eat out, most of us expect to tip the waiter or waitress 15%. When we suggest 10% as a minimum church offering, some folks are aghast.” – **Felix A. Lorenz**

For God so greatly loved *and* dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life. **John 3:16 AMPC**

- Our God is a giver and a forgiver, and He has placed His Spirit in us that we may increasingly be like Him.
 - Loving, giving, and forgiving are so essential to our life in the Kingdom of God.
 - God is outrageously generous!
 - God models the significance of giving for our lives.
 - Giving is motivated by love...not greed, guilt, or regret.
 - Giving is manifested by action. God did not just conjecture or propose to give.

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- Giving is measured by value. He gave His son.

- Today we are going to focus on partnering with God's generous heart.
- We will look at the kingdom lifestyle of 'giving living'.
- New Testament giving is based on His desire for us to be blessed. His motive is to bless our faithful obedience.

14Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction. 15You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. 17Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. **Philippians 4:14-17 NASB**

Not that I seek *or* am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek *and* am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account].

Philippians 4:17 AMPC

- We want that harvest of blessing to be real in your life, we want it accumulating to your account.
 - Paul is not after their gift; he wants their fruitfulness. He wants their growth, maturity, and their increase in the Lord.
 - Note in verse 15 he describes the process as 'giving and receiving...' there is reciprocity to giving.
 - His motive in teaching people 'giving living' is clear; he benefited from their giving to support his work and they were blessed by the 'increase' that was placed in their account.

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- Common types and approaches to giving today.
 - The goal of giving...this is usually very sincere and genuine.
 - A goal of giving is set but the follow through is often pretty random.
 - Giving goals are like New Years Resolutions or treadmills in late February...there are lots of them to be found but few being used.
 - Project giving...giving that is tied to a specific need or issue.
 - These are great and we utilize project giving.
 - The difficulty lies when people will only give to a 'felt need project' and not simply to 'the work of the ministry.'
 - The grace of giving or living giving.
 - A grace empowered rhythm of giving in your life.
 - A pattern of giving that is systemic until it becomes automatic.

1Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. 3When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem. **1 Corinthians 16:1-3 NASB**

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **Matthew 6:19-21 NASB**

30But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! 31Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32For the

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Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **Matthew 6:19-21 NASB**

- A living giving rhythm to your life is one way of obeying the 'seek first' commandment and one way He uses to 'add to you'.
 - The grace of generosity takes root in us and grows in our hearts as the flow of blessing moves in us. The flow of grace and giving is a 'lack killer'.
 - The grace of giving lifestyle is for every believer at every stage of life; not having a lot of money does not disqualify you.

¹Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, ²that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. ³For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, ⁴begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, ⁵and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. **2 Corinthians 8:1-5 NASB**

⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. ¹⁰I give *my* opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do *this*, but also to desire *to do it*. ¹¹But now finish doing it also, so that just as *there was* the readiness to desire it, so *there may be* also the completion of it by your ability. ¹²For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what *a person* has, not according to what he does not have. **2 Corinthians 9-12 NASB**

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- What we need is a ready, willing heart and a plan to give based on what we have not on what we don't have.
- Tithing- for many, the rhythm of their giving is based on the time-honored Biblical principle of tithing...giving 1/10 of their income.
- There are Biblical promises associated to giving 1/10 of your income or tithing.

10Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. 11Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast *its grapes*," says the LORD of hosts. **Malachi 3:10-11 NASB**

- Tithing opens the 'overflow' value of heaven for you and brings the Lord's blessing.
- Tithing provides the promise of 'devourer-free living'. The Lord rebukes that which would diminish you and deplete you. What a blessing!
 - Tithing isn't God's way to raise money, it's His way of raising His kids.
- If you have a 'goal' to give, but not a working plan to give, let's make it simple...let's make giving 'convenient' and use the 7-11 concept. 7-11? Yes...start by giving \$11 per week for 7 months.... (7-11) this will put you in a place where the Lord can establish a blessing on your giving in your life. It will also give you a 'platform to grow from and go to any level of generosity He wants to take you to.
 - If you are a regular giver...good for you! It would be great to step into the grace of tithing and experience the Biblical promises that tithing brings to your life.
 - If you are a tither then you know about God's grace to you as a giver. Have you considered 'graduated' tithe? Just take this before the Lord and see where He would lead you in your giving.
- The gift of giving – **Romans 12:8**

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- This is a spiritual gift that empowers and inspires people to have resources that they can give at the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- There are also those who have talent, favor, and capacity to make money and out of a grateful heart give generously to the things of the Kingdom.
- What is your approach to a giving lifestyle?
 - Obviously 'giving' pertains to our heart and affects more than our financial giving, but today our focus is on what the Word says about how we deal with our money.
 - Our approach: we want you blessed! As I stated early...I want the grace of generosity to take root in us and grow in our hearts as the flow of His blessing moves in us.
 - We want to see you blessed!
 - The Lord has made Harmony Vineyard a healing place and we want to be a place where financial healing and blessing abound as well.
 - There are a number of projects and people want to bless as we grow financially, and we will discuss them more in the days ahead.