

SERMON SERIES: *Less Is More*

SERMON TITLE: *What is Generosity?*

SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Matthew 5:14-16, 6:1-4

## **What is Generosity?**

Generosity is willingly and joyfully giving out of your surplus of resources to meet another person's need as an act of devotion to God and his people.

### **#1 Generosity is WILLINGLY giving.**

- Generosity is like love in that it can't be forced or coerced or it ceases to be.

### **#2 Generosity is JOYFULLY giving.**

- It is possible to be willing to give because it is the right thing to do and yet be full of sorrow over what your giving will cause you to miss out on.

### **#3 Generosity is giving out of your SURPLUS OF RESOURCES.**

- The goal is equality in the Body of Christ.
- Generosity includes all of our resources...
  - Money
  - Possessions
  - Skills (woodworking, plumbing, electrical, computer, cooking, counseling, etc.)
  - Emotional/Relational support
  - Time
  - Hospitality
- Our surplus is not what is left over after living luxurious but rather what is left over after our basic needs are met.

### **#4 Generosity meets another person's NEEDS.**

- The truly generous person doesn't assume they know the real needs of the person they want to give to, but rather, takes the time to accurately discern them.

### **#5 Generosity is an act of DEVOTION to God and His people.**

- Matthew 6:1-4

- Jesus recommends the discipline of secrecy if we are giving to be seen...for the problem is not if we are seen giving, but rather, if we are giving to be seen.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think about your various relationships...spouse, children, relatives, neighbors, co-workers. Have you ever found yourself giving in these relationships simply to avoid a negative consequence?
2. In what situations or relationships are you most likely to give but not joyfully? When you give begrudgingly, what are you most sad about missing out on?
3. When someone gives you assistance but does so with a complaining spirit, what does that do to your spirit?
4. The Apostle Paul's goal in the body of Christ was equality...that the ones that had much would give to those who had little. Who in your church body appears to be lacking that you can give to out of your surplus of resources?
5. Which resources are you most generous with? Which ones are you most stingy with?
  - a. Money
  - b. Possessions
  - c. Skills (woodworking, plumbing, electrical, computer, cooking, counseling, etc.)
  - d. Emotional/Relational support
  - e. Time
  - f. Hospitality
6. Does the statistic that Christians give only around 3% of their annual disposable income (income after taxes are paid) to the church surprise you? Why or Why not?
7. What percentage of your disposable income do you give to the church and other nonprofits? How might you increase that percentage this year?
8. Describe the last time you gave to be seen. Describe the last time you gave as an act of devotion to God and his people.