

SERMON SERIES: *Less Is More*

SERMON TITLE: *Why Be Generous? Part 2*

SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 9

## 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.

## Why Be Generous?

### #1 Generosity provides **PROOF** that your faith is real.

- 2 Cor. 8:8, 8:24, 9:3, 9:4, 9:12
- Whether or not the Corinthians would be generous was a test that would assess the quality of their love. It would reveal what they really worshipped. It would reveal the condition of their faith.
- Resources and wealth make wonderful servants but terrible masters.

- As our masters...

- They either make us arrogant...giving us a false sense of security and significance, and blind us to our spiritual poverty.

OR...

- They make us feel quite insecure in believing that if we just had a little bit more money, a little bit more resources than we would feel like we were somebody. Then we would feel secure. Then we would be happy.

- James 2:14-17
- It is a joy to have affirmation that your faith is real.

### #2 Generosity enables you to experience God's **GRACE** in increasing measure.

- 2 Cor. 9:6-8
- You can live generously because, as you do, God will cause his grace to abound toward you.

- Matthew 25:29
- 2 Cor. 9:10-11
- Sow bountifully so you reap bountifully so that you can be more and more generous in good works for others.

### **#3 Generosity maximizes your IMPACT on the world for good.**

- Jesus redefines greatness as service. Mark 10:43
- Serving requires generosity.
- God promises to increase the fruit of our generosity. 2 Cor. 9:10

### **#4 Generosity garners the LOVE, RESPECT, and CARE of others.**

- 2 Cor. 9:13-14
- As a result of the Corinthians's generosity, the Jerusalem church loved, respected, and cared for the Corinthians.
- Psalm 112
- 2 Corinthians 8:13-14
- The people you love, respect, and care about the most are those that have been most generous to you.

### **#5 Generosity allows you to experience greater INTIMACY with God.**

- The Generosity Cycle:
  - Go to God
  - Ask him who he wants you to be generous to
  - Do what he tells you
  - Watch as God makes your generosity have impact beyond what you thought it would
  - Receive more resources from God to give away
  - Repeat
- The result? Your love for God grows. Your trust in God grows. Your intimacy with God grows!

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Would you say that you are in danger of giving away too much of your resources that you can't keep the financial, time, and relational commitments that you already have or are you more in danger of not giving away enough?
2. Do you have a desire to grow in the grace of generosity? If so, would you describe that desire as extremely strong or somewhat strong? Why do you describe it this way? If you have little desire to grow in generosity, why do you think this is the case?
3. What do you make of the Apostle Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 9:8?

“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.”

4. We all have a desire for our life to count. We all desire significance. When you were a child what did you want to be when you grew up?
5. How have you seen generosity have a greater impact on a person's life than what was even expected?
6. Describe a time when you were able to impact a person's life through generosity and the joy it brought to you.
7. Which person (besides Jesus and your parents) has made the greatest impact on your life? In what ways were they generous to you?
8. What would it take for you to be constantly engaged in the generosity cycle?