

## GENEROSITY #4

### Signs of a Generous Person/Church

**Open:** Drama Sketch ... widow giver

**Mark 12:41-44 NLT** <sup>41</sup> Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. <sup>42</sup> Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.

<sup>43</sup> Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. <sup>44</sup> For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

– Your life group/home group may choose to discuss this passage so I'll be brief.

\* POWERPOINT slide of bronze trumpet-shaped receptacle\*

- √ In the court of the Temple were located 13 bronze trumpet-shaped receptacles ... you could tell the size of the coin by listening to the sound it made as it bounced and fell into the box. (Experiment with a few coins.
- √ On this particular day, Jesus did some "people watching."
- √ Though the widow gave pennies (mite = smallest of Roman coinage) ... what did Jesus say of her?

**Vs. 43 NKJV** She has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury.

→ (banner) Christ measures the gift by the sacrifice ... not the sum.

- √ She gave her grocery money ... she would go without unless God provided more.
- √ It's not equal giving but equal sacrifice ... the more we make, the more we give.

? What are you willing to give up so you can give? A meal, some pleasure, drive your old car a little longer ...

– Life is full of choices ... choose to give.

\* When it comes to generosity/sacrifice ... there is a neat battle story tucked away in the history books of the Old Testament.

– Both 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel tell the story.

**1 Chronicles 11:15-19 NLT** <sup>15</sup> Once when David was at the rock near the cave of Adullam, the Philistine army was camped in the valley of Rephaim. The Three (who were among the Thirty—an elite group Navy SEALs among David’s fighting men) went down to meet him there. <sup>16</sup> David was staying in the stronghold at the time, and a Philistine detachment (Taliban) had occupied the town of Bethlehem.

<sup>17</sup> David remarked longingly to his men, “Oh, how I would love some of that good water from the well by the gate in Bethlehem.” <sup>18</sup> So the Three broke through the Philistine lines, drew some water from the well by the gate in Bethlehem, and brought it back to David. But David refused to drink it. Instead, he poured it out as an offering to the Lord. <sup>19</sup> “God forbid that I should drink this!” he exclaimed. “This water is as precious as the blood of these men who risked their lives to bring it to me.” So David did not drink it. These are examples of the exploits of the Three.

– Cut off from his hometown, David seeks refuge in the mountains.

- √ In what must have been a “nostalgic afternoon” David comments how good a drink of fresh, clean water from the well would be.
- √ His 3 friends got a “crazy idea” ... as a demonstration of love and loyalty and with great courage, they snuck behind enemy lines to fetch a container of water.
- √ Recognizing their generosity and unwilling to show selfishness ... David poured the water out as an offering to the Lord.

– Notice:

√ These three friends were close enough to hear the “wish” of their commander.

→ We, too, must be attentive to the Lord’s words and the opportunities He brings our way.

√ These friends were willing to sacrifice their lives to express their love for their commander.

→ The greater the risk, the greater the expression of love.

√ As David poured out this gift as an offering, so too the Lord poured out His life to offer us forgiveness and grace.

→ God’s gifts to us are not meant to be selfishly consumed but passed on so other lives might be transformed.

**2 Corinthians 8:9 NLT** You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that by His poverty He could make you rich.

\* Church Snapshot:

– Membership end of 2011 was **957**.

– Current membership is **1061**.

√ This indicates a growth of **104** people.

– The average weekly tithe (general budget) for 2011: **\$30,186**.

– The current average weekly tithe is: **\$30,806**.

√ This indicates an increase of **\$620** per week.

Our weekly tithe need is	<b>\$31,500</b>
Our weekly tithe average is	<u><b>30,806</b></u>
Deficit	<b>\$ 694</b>

\$694 x 42 weeks = **\$29,148**

FBLex giving record:

52% have given less than \$100

40% have given up to \$5000

8% have given \$5000 or more

- 58 families make up the 8% and give \$119 per week or more.

\* The answer to our deficit problem: (under budget)

√ In an effort to spend less than we take in, we will cut ministry expenses back to 80%.

√ We cut some ministries ... lay some personnel off.

√ We ask the 50% of families that are giving the 100% of income to give more (20%) of their income so we can continue to grow the ministry, and the 50% of families that give little or nothing can continue to enjoy all that FBLex has to offer.

Or:

√ We ask those who are giving that can and are willing to give more. (The more you make, the more you give.)

→ Proportion giving: **1 Corinthians 16:2 NLT** On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once. (Give proportionally, consistently and willingly)

Idea:

√ Let's ask all our members to give their part. (If those who give none or little would step up to the plate ... we would have a surplus.)

- Don't give your leftovers, give your best.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 NLT** <sup>9</sup> Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. <sup>10</sup> Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

– If you honor God, He will honor you.

√ Another way to reach our financial needs is to reach some new families and teach them God’s stewardship principles.

– More people working potentially means more giving.

→ Our problem isn’t our church budget is unreachable but church members need to obey and trust God. Our church struggles because our members struggle with a lack of faith.

\* Today we celebrate 22 years of ministry ... what do we want next year to look like?

– We will be given an opportunity in 6 weeks to sacrifice and express our love and loyalty to Christ ... Chest of Joash.

➤ Looking back:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
General or tithe:	42,865	48,321	46,834
Chest or Christmas:	<u>141,375</u>	<u>126,156</u>	<u>85,651</u>
Total	184,240	174,477	132,485

\* Sacrificial giving is scary in a sluggish economy.

➤ Looking ahead:

	<u>Praise</u>	<u>Radical</u>
General or tithe	50,000	60,000
Chest or Christmas	<u>150,000</u>	<u>190,000</u>
	200,000	250,000

- \* Praise goal:  $50,000 + 150,000 = 200,000$ 
  - Tithe – allow us to make up lost ground in tithe area.
  - Chest – debt reduction, help for members in crisis, show God’s kindness to those in our community, help our church plants, missions (Guatemala project) and campus improvements.
  
- \* Radical goal:  $60,000 + 190,000 = 250,000$ 
  - A tithe of 60,000 would help us catch up and finish on track.
  - All that was suggested earlier plus a national pastor plan (missions).
  
- \* Recognize money doesn’t grow on trees ... though pecans can be picked up and sold (\$2.00 a lb.). We will have on November 3 a church-wide yard sale, outdoor life group is doing a barbecue plate fund raiser, and any other life groups that would like to participate are welcome.
  - Ask God to bless you with a bonus, commit some money from over-time, begin to pray and plan on giving Christ the best Christmas gift first.

**Close:**

- \* It’s not the sum you give but the sacrifice you demonstrate.
- \* Let’s show our love and loyalty.
  - Time for some to get on board.
  - A generous church will have the resources to fund the vision.
- Without a vision the people perish. Without funding the vision perishes.
- Delivered to you unapologetically for the future dreams of ministry.

Message Notes  
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