

GENEROSITY #2

Givers and Takers

Open:

There are two kinds of people in this world: those who give and those who take.

- One focuses on God and others, and the other is self-absorbed. (What's best for me, my family.)
- One has learned the secret of living a meaningful life, and the other has allowed materialism to distract them.
- As to whether you are a "giver" or a "taker" you will need to consult your checkbook and your calendar.
 - √ How you spend your money and your time indicates what you value.
 - √ What we value indicates the true condition of our heart.
- Greed/materialism is the blood clot of spiritual growth ... it restricts the flow of God's power and His provisions.
 - √ Generosity opens the floodgates of God's power and provisions so they can flow through us and impact eternity.

* There are 2 forces at work.

(1) Satan is a taker.

- What good has he ever done??? He may offer temporary pleasure but in the end, you come up empty ...
 - √ He leaves you wanting more, never satisfied ... ask the alcoholic, the person on crack ... addicts know the insatiable desires that lead to a broken life.
- Jesus said of him: **John 10:10a NKJV** The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill and to destroy.

- √ Satan takes the innocence of youth, displays the body as a sex toy ... creates curiosity and encourages “lovers” to take what they want without commitment to marriage ... hurt and devastation are the result.
 - √ He deceives the husband/dad who instead of heading home, heads to the bar to drink away his troubles while children go unloved, undisciplined, and a wife looks for companionship elsewhere.
 - √ He encourages financial irresponsibility ... spending more than we make, maxing the credit cards out, hoping to grab the American dream but reality is we have landed in the “quicksand of debt” and we are struggling to keep our heads up, and if we wanted to be generous for God, we can’t.
- No wonder Jesus said of him: **John 8:44b NKJV ... He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources for he is a liar and the father of it.**
- √ Ever since he crawled into the Garden, he has been robbing people of the life God wants for them.

* We need not settle for a life robbed of God’s blessings!

(2) Jesus the giver

John 10:10b NKJV ... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

NLT My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

- √ It doesn’t say His purpose is to make you rich but that you might live a rich (blessed) satisfying life.

* Perhaps we would do well to look at a day in the life of our Lord.

- Having returned from the other side of Galilee, after rebuking the demons who had taken over a man who lived in the cemetery ... we read:

Luke 8:40-48 NLT ⁴⁰ On the other side of the lake the crowds welcomed Jesus, (interestingly: on one side of the Sea of Galilee the folks had asked Jesus to leave ... some welcome Him, some reject Him) because they had been waiting for him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, a leader of the local synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come home with him. ⁴² His only daughter, who was about twelve years old, was dying. (Jesus had once cast a demon out of a man in Jairus' synagogue 4:33-37.)

As Jesus went with him, he was surrounded by the crowds. (crushed/thronged by the crowds) ⁴³ A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding, and she could find no cure. ⁴⁴ Coming up behind Jesus, she touched the fringe of his robe. Immediately, the bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. Everyone denied it, and Peter said, "Master, this whole crowd is pressing up against you."

⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me." ⁴⁷ When the woman realized that she could not stay hidden, she began to tremble and fell to her knees in front of him. The whole crowd heard her explain why she had touched him and that she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸ "Daughter," he said to her, "your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

- A person with a blood disorder would have been considered unclean.
 - ✓ This would have prevented her from entering the Temple or any of the synagogues ... spiritually cut off. (Leviticus 15:25-31).
 - ✓ As well, she would have been shunned by society ... even her own family would keep their distance.
 - ✓ If she was married, she wouldn't know the loving embraces of her husband ... if she had children, she couldn't hold them or even touch them except for maybe gloves.
 - ✓ She had exhausted all possibilities, spent the last 12 years in this condition (interestingly, this was also the age of Jairus' daughter) ... she was powerless to change her condition.

- When she heard Jesus was in town, she got a glimmer of hope ... she knew He was a giver ... that He could heal.

- √ The Jews believed when Messiah came, His garments would bring healing.

Malachi 4:2 NKJV But to you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.

- √ The Hebrew word for wings – Ka-naf = extremity, border, edge of a garment.
- √ It is used in **Numbers 15:38 NKJV** Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners (borders/Ka-naf) of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners (Ka-naf).

** (Picture of the garment with tassels) **

- The purpose of the tassels was to remind them of the need to trust and obey God's commands.

- √ When the woman reached out to touch the border of Christ's garment, she was acting on a promise ... she was exercising faith.
- √ The combination of Jesus' generosity and her faith resulted in her being healed ... God's glory was put on display.

→ Had she not reached out in faith, she would have continued in her unhealthy state.

- √ Jesus commends her for her faith. **Vs. 48** Be of good cheer, your faith has made you whole.
- √ So we see the generosity of the Lord ... the benefit of faith.
 - Her life would have been transformed ... she could now be wife, mother, return to worship her Lord.

* With this in mind, I want to offer you a stewardship principle.

Luke 6:38 NLT Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.

- √ The words: poured into your lap ... NKJV put into your bosom ...
Word picture: a long robe, gathered by the corners was used to carry the overflow of grain.

→ God blesses the faith of generosity ...

- √ You don't wait to start when you have a surplus ...
- √ You give what you have and become a conduit of God's blessings.
- √ You give to get to give ...

→ God blesses generosity while the stingy and greedy will always go lacking.

- √ The American lifestyle says: Keep all you can. The Scriptures teach "give all you can."

**** VIDEO CLIP – GOD'S PIE ****

Close:

- * The names have been changed, but the story is true:
 - Bob and Jack are neighbors; they live on Lake Murray.
 - Bob made his money honestly, hard work and good planning.
 - Jack is shady ... matter of fact, he is in the middle of a lawsuit ... he may land in jail?
 - Bob volunteers his time for his church and other worthwhile ministries ... he has a big heart for missions ...
 - Jack has spent his money on strip clubs, exotic resorts, fine dining and ball games.
 - Both men have handled/managed lots of money ... one's a giver and one's a taker.

- * Which describes you? Takers are greedy; givers are generous.
 - √ It's okay to enjoy some creature comforts, but if you're not giving you're not living the life God wants you to live.

- Will you give some time this week to help another just sit and listen?
 - Could you do a kind act ... use a talent you have?
 - Will you give financially from the resources God has given to you?
- Funny thing about givers and takers ... givers feel blessed; they find a way to help another (money is a tool, not a god). Takers ... they never have enough ... they know little about the joy of generosity.
- √ God's a giver; Satan's a taker.

Next Week: Generosity Changes People

Message Notes
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