

GENEROSITY

Overwhelmed By God's Generosity

Open:

- * If you were to describe what God is like, what comes to mind? How does the Bible paint God?
 - Merciful, holy, loving, patient, forgiving, perfect ...
 - Could we also say God is generous?
 - What do we mean by generous? Freely giving of ourselves to another without expecting anything in return.
 - √ Included in this: giving of our time, using a talent or gift we have to help another, or to assist someone with some need they have.
 - We are to be generous because our God is generous.
 - √ He showers us with His love, and this should motivate us to love others.
 - God is not stingy but gives to all ... even to those we might classify as undeserving...

Matthew 5:43-46 NLT ⁴³“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much.

 - √ This is radical, supernatural love ... love your neighbor sure, but don't stop there. Love those who don't like you.
- God's generosity is extended to those who curse Him.

- We are most like God when we show generosity to the undeserving.
- This same God looked into the eyes of His executioners and forgave them.

Luke 23:34 NLT Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

- This is mind boggling ... that God would show love to His enemies.

➤ In what ways is God generous?

* I’d like to focus on three areas of generosity.

(1) He desires to develop a friendship with us.

- The infinite God of the universe knows I exist, and He wants to be a part of my life.

Psalms 8:3-4 NLT ³ When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers — the moon and the stars you set in place — ⁴ what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them?

- Big God has time for little me.
- Others may overlook me but God does not.

- He who is eternal has time for me though my days are numbered.

Psalms 144:3-4 NLT ³ O Lord, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them? ⁴ For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow.

- Generosity is taking time to see and meet the needs of those who come across our path.

- It’s not that I deserve His kindness but that I need His kindness.

√ He loved me when I was unlovely.

Romans 5:8 NLT But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

- √ God the Father responded generously by sending us the most precious, valuable gift He could have ... His Son.
- One of the most popular “generous verses” in all the Bible.

John 3:16 NKJV For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- √ He makes possible the gift of salvation.
- √ In what way is He generous? **Isaiah 55:7b NLT** Let them turn to the Lord that He may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for He will forgive generously.
- √ He forgives generously for I have sinned abundantly.
- The price of redemption is His blood ... and Jesus has made it possible for us to be at peace with God.

Ephesians 2:13 NLT But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

? Have you responded to this generous offer?

(2) He sees that our immediate needs are met.

a) Physically:

- He provides the air that we breathe at no cost.
- He gives us the ability to work and earn a living.

Deuteronomy 8:18a NKJV And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth ...

- He provides for our basic needs.

Matthew 6:25-33 NLT ²⁵ “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ “And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹ “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

- √ The apostle Paul said he knew what it was to get along with a little and to enjoy a lot. **Philippians 4:12**
- √ Sometimes we may barely scrape by ... and we learn to depend on God ... other times we enjoy plenty ...
- The Psalmist said: **Psalms 37:25 NLT** Once I was young, and now I am old. Yet I have never seen the godly (righteous) abandoned (forsaken) or their children begging for bread.

→ The Lord is generous and provides for our physical needs.

- √ Usually through the effort of work but sometimes through the kindness of another.
- b) Spiritually
- He gives the Bible for our guide and places His Spirit inside us.
 - √ The Holy Spirit is our helper, encourager, convicter ... God living within.

- He is generous with His grace.

Psalms 8:8-9 NLT The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. The Lord is good to everyone. He showers compassion on all His creation.

- He is patient in His dealings with mankind.

2 Peter 3:9 NLT The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

- Extravagant in His love. His love knows no end.

Lamentations 3:22-23 NLT the faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is thy faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning.

* His generosity is revealed in that He knows I exist and desires to be my friend; He provides for my needs both physically and spiritually.

(3) He has planned a wonderful future for me in eternity.

- Heaven awaits the believer.

Romans 8:15b-17 NLT ¹⁵ ... you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. ¹⁷ And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory ...

→ Our future is bright, we shall live in the presence of God ...

- √ Occupy a world that will not be contaminated by sin.
- √ It's hard to imagine but it is the future promise of the believer.

Close:

- The person that knows not God often has thoughts of a god that is restrictive ... against a lot of things ... but today we see Him as He is.

√ He is generous ... how so?

- (1) He wants to be my friend and invites me to know Him.
- (2) He takes care of me now ... provides for my physical and spiritual needs.
- (3) He is preparing a place for me in eternity that is better than anything I have ever seen.

? Do you know this generous God?

NEXT WEEK: The Secrets of a Generous Life

Message Notes
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