



Generosity Revolution

Week 1:

Sunday 27th May 2018

Aaron Dowds

*“As each has received a gift, **use it** to serve one another, **as good stewards** of God's varied grace...” 1 Peter 4:10*

“Start giving your money and time away: New research shows you’ll be happier for it. Americans who describe themselves as “very happy” volunteer an average of 5.8 hours per month. Those who are “unhappy”? Just 0.6 hours. This is just one of the findings in [The Paradox of](#), a new book by sociologists Christian Smith and Hilary Davidson presenting the findings of the Science of Generosity Initiative at Notre Dame.

<https://newrepublic.com/article/119477/science-generosity-why-giving-makes-you-happy>

Generosity:

- “It has to be a _____, it has to be something that is sustained over time, that people engage with regularly”
- “They think they don’t have the money or the time but they could be more generous. I think people are _____. They don’t realize that it’s good for them, that it would benefit them and not just other people.”
- “But the dynamics of generosity are such that people who are learning to be generous increasingly _____ their circle to people beyond their most comfortable or the most intimate and there is a helping of “the other,” and not just one’s own tribe, so to speak. That’s an important threshold to cross in being a generous person.”

“IF ALL CHRISTIANS ACTED LIKE CHRIST, THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD BE CHRISTIAN.”

MAHATMA GHANDI

“THIS ACHING WORLD IS WAITING FOR THE PEOPLE EXPLICITLY IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST TO BE, THROUGH AND THROUGH, THE PEOPLE HE INTENDS THEM TO BE.”

DALLAS WILLARD WITH DON SIMPSON, REVOLUTION OF CHARACTER 188.

“GIVING HAS NOT KEPT UP WITH INCOME. . . . IN 1933, THE DEPTH OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION, [PER CAPITA GIVING] WAS 3.2 PERCENT. IN 1995 . . . IT WAS STILL 3 PERCENT. BY 2004, WHEN AMERICANS WERE OVER 555 PERCENT RICHER AFTER TAXES AND INFLATION THAN IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION, PROTESTANTS WERE GIVING 2.5 PERCENT OF THEIR INCOME TO CHURCHES.”

THE STATE OF CHURCH GIVING, JOHN AND SYLVIA RONSVALLE

- The Bible is completely radical in its teaching on possessions and generosity. The Bible reminds us again and again that if God is not _____ in the use of our money, He is not _____ in our lives.
- 17 of the 38 parables of Jesus are about possessions. In terms of number of verses on possessions, this topic is mentioned in the Bible more than any other:
- ___ times more than love
- ___ times more than prayer
- ___ times more than belief.

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About 15% of the bible (2172 verses) deals with possessions – treasures hidden in a field, pearls, talents, pounds, stables etc

“GAIN ALL YOU CAN, SAVE ALL YOU CAN, AND GIVE ALL YOU CAN” BECAUSE “ALL THAT WE HAVE IS GIVEN US BY GOD, AND SINCE WE HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THESE POSSESSIONS, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO USE THEM IN WAYS THAT BRING HIM GLORY.”

JOHN WESLEY

“PEOPLE ARE NOT NATURALLY DISPOSED TO GIVING, YET, THE LIFE THAT WE ALL PRIZE, FILLED WITH JOY AND SPIRITUAL DEPTH, IS CLOSELY TIED TO GIVING GENEROUSLY AND WITH THANKFUL HEARTS.”

DONALD W. HINZE. TO GIVE AND GIVE AGAIN: A CHRISTIAN IMPERATIVE FOR GENEROSITY.

- God desires for you is to become more like Jesus from the inside out. His desire for you to is to be changed or _____ into Christ’s image.

*“my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!”
(Gal 4:19)*

“THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT GENEROSITY IS A FRUIT OF GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT (GAL. 5: 22–23). THE WAY TO BECOME GENEROUS PEOPLE, THEN, INVOLVES NOT QUENCHING GOD’S SPIRIT (1 THESS. 5: 19), BUT ALLOWING THE TRANSFORMING WORK OF CHRIST TO HAVE ITS FULL EFFECT IN SHAPING US TO BE THE PEOPLE GOD WANTS US TO BE (ROM. 12: 2; 2 COR. 5: 17; GAL. 2: 20; PHIL. 1: 6).”

MARK ALLAN POWELL, GIVING TO GOD: THE BIBLE’S GOOD NEWS ABOUT LIVING A GENEROUS LIFE, 4.

- George Barna describes transformation as:

“A REVOLUTION OF CHARACTER, WHICH PROCEEDS BY CHANGING PEOPLE FROM THE INSIDE THROUGH ONGOING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND ONE ANOTHER. IT IS A REVOLUTION THAT CHANGES PEOPLE’S IDEAS, BELIEFS, FEELINGS AND HABITS . . . AND GENEROSITY.”

BARNA, REVOLUTION, 29.

*“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace...”
1 Peter 4:10*

- A steward was a _____ of the household in ancient times. The word stewardship comes from the Greek word *oikonomos*, which means somebody who manages a household.
- We are not the owners but have been trusted with resources and the care of everything—Creation, gifts and talents, money, time, the gospel—for the sake of God’s purposes in the world.
- To summarise: A steward is a _____ who has been given the gifts of time, talents and money to invest wisely.

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Act 20:35

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