

Pastor Eric's notes for 2/13-14/2010

The Gift of a Giving Life

# Generosity . . . of Heart

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them."  
Luke 6:32

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:19-21

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."

Luke 6:45

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Colossians 3:23-24

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

Ezekiel 36:26

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"Generosity . . . of Heart"

God's grace in Christ has the powerful ability to soften and grow our hearts to receive and give all that God has for us. We become generous from the heart when we allow God's grace to:

1. widen the arc of our concern

2. assign true value to our treasure

3. set the focus of our attention and affection

We grow in generosity to love and care as we follow Jesus into a place of:

1. compassion

2. contentment

3. courage

next weekend: "Generosity . . . of Hand" - Pastor David



# CONNECTION QUESTIONS

for personal study & individual reflection,  
and small group discussion & comment

“Generosity . . . of Heart” - Luke 6:32; Matthew 6:19-21;  
Ezekiel 36:26; Luke 6:45; Colossians 3:23-24

1. Jesus carries the expectation that you and I will learn to love more than just those who love us (Lk 6:32). Growing this expanded heart of concern involves learning how to love others, even enemies, from a different place than simply what is best for me, or what I can expect to receive in return (Lk 6:45). On what basis other than self-interest does Jesus expect us to be able to love wider and deeper? What gives us the capacity to love and care more generously than “sinners” do?

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2. The prophetic promise of Ezekiel 36:26 is that God is acting redemptively to bring about our transformation and renewal from the inside out. “A new heart”, “a heart of flesh”, is the goal of God’s reach into the center of our life to give us real life, health, and relationship. How has God begun to change who, how and why you care, feel and love? What kinds of things do we experience in life that work to harden our hearts and make them small?

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3. “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mt 6:21). If our hearts are ever going to occupy generous places, we will have to begin to “treasure” generous things. When we value the right things, our hearts grow. What are the treasures of a generous heart? What wrong things can we value that make our hearts small and mean?

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4. In Luke 6:45 Jesus talks about “storing” good in our heart and being generous with it. How do we store good inside ourselves? What are some of the “good things” we have to share? How does the way we speak reflect what we have allowed to fill our hearts?

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5. Throughout the Bible having a “whole” or “undivided” heart is seen as essential quality for the kind of life God wants us to live. Jeremiah 29:13 says, “you will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart”. We find what we are looking for when we don’t hold back, when we put our whole self into it. It is clear that the Lord does not just want a part of us to be generous, He wants us to be generous people from the core outward. What are you doing to cooperate with the grace of God to bring all the pieces of your heart together in one generous place? Is that a goal in your life? What are your main obstacles?

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