

Pastor David's notes for 2/20-21/2010

The Gift of a Giving Life

Generosity . . . of Hand

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."

1 Timothy 6:17-19

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. -- You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God."

2 Corinthians 9:6-8/11-12

"But just as you excel in everything -- see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

2 Corinthians 8:7a/c

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"Generosity . . . of Hand"

True generosity that is thoughtful and heartfelt, inspired by the example and experience of Jesus, will express itself through our hands in giving unless it is prevented by:

1. false fear

2. false faith

3. false freedom

We become generous givers when we understand generosity to be the only way to really:

1. change things

2. find satisfaction

3. save lives

next weekend: a new series begins with Pastor David



CONNECTION QUESTIONS

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

“Generosity...of Hand” - 1 Timothy 6:6-19; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15
2 Corinthians 8:1-15; Luke 16:9-13

1. The generosity Jesus commands involves not only learning to think and feel generously, it also means trying to get what is in our head and heart to come out through our hands. While there are many things that can come through generous hands, central to building a life of generosity is choosing what we do with our money. Jesus taught you cannot love and serve both God and money (Luke 16:13). We have to decide what we will be “devoted to” and what we will “despise”. Where does the question of God and how you relate to Him enter into your decisions about finances? Do you agree with Jesus that there is a choice to make between God and money?

2. Paul commanded those who are “rich” to be “rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share” (1 Tim 6:17-18). How do you define “rich” these days? What is the dollar amount? Do you qualify for Paul’s command?

3. Most Christians want to be generous with their money but many are prevented by powerful forces in their life. Many of these forces are internal and not circumstantial. Being devoted to God requires faith, being devoted to money usually invokes fear. What are your fears with regard to money? Are there practical answers to some of those fears? How can you move forward in seeking to become a generous person and overcome the paralysis caused by fear?

4. The promise of 2 Corinthians 9:6 is that giving generously leads to receiving generously. The practice of generosity is a lifestyle commitment that requires a desire to “excel in this grace of giving” (2 Cor 8:7). No one becomes generous by accident. How do you learn to excel at something that you are not naturally good at? Why would Paul call giving a “grace”?

5. The end goal of generosity is that we “take hold of the life that is truly life”. God is not trying to rip us off or make us suffer through committed giving. Generosity is a necessary means by which we can take hold of the true and let go of the false. How have you experienced this in your life? Are there ways we end up with the life that is not truly life by denying God’s call to generosity?
