

Generous Four:

What Happens When you Give?

1) Your Generosity Pleases God.

- a) Some people think that God is an uninvolved, cosmic ruler who issues written demands and then leaves people to figure them out.

Some people imagine him as a hard-to-impress deity always finding fault with our behavior.

- b) Let's be clear this morning: God is your Father!

- i) One of the most often used images of God in the scripture is that of a Father.

He says over and over; one way or another it is repeated, "I am your heavenly Father and you are my child".

- ii) For some people the image of Father may not be a good one! Their father may have been absent or he may have hindrance.

- iii) STILL WE KNOW HOW FATHER SHOULD BE: (Father's of the dedicated kids)

- (1) A father loves
- (2) A father is involved
- (3) A father should provide

Set aside your human disappointment and accept God as a perfect and loving Father.

Ps.27:10 KJV When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the Lord will take me up.

1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

- iv) Because He is your Father, your relationship doesn't depend upon what you offer Him. It stands on nothing but God's unfaltering affection for and his devotion to us.

- c) The widow's offering

Luke 21:1-4 Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, 2 and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. 3 And he

said, “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. **4** For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

- i) Her small donation caught the attention of Jesus. (He can sniff our generosity and sacrifice)
- ii) Little in the eyes of the world, but a lot in the father’s eyes
- iii) You might think your donations are minuscule in the grand theme of things. living paycheck to paycheck... your contribution wont amount to much.

God sees it differently - God sees the spirit in which it is given.

- d) When you give with the right Motives God is Pleased!

Like a proud father who delights in the unselfish behavior of his children, God smiles when we share!

When your heart is moved God is Pleased!

2) You realize your Purpose.

Ephesians 2:10 NIV For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- a) I told the ladies yesterday and I will repeat it today, Your life is NOT a mess, it is a redeemed resource for God.
- b) Don’t waste what God has been working on in your by hoarding it for yourself!

I wonder what good works are waiting on my generosity?

1 Peter 4:10,11 NIV “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. **11** If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ...”

3) You tap into God’s Provision.

Proverbs 11:24-26 NIV One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. **25** A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. **26** People curse the one who hoards grain, but they pray God’s blessing on the one who is willing to sell.

2 Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

a) There is a clear connection between our generosity and God's provision.

Someone says is God's Supernatural Math

Don't "withhold unduly" it will lead to poverty.

b) Throughout the Bible we learn that God's ways are different than our ways!
And we learn that God's ways are better!

i) A generous heart with the Favor of God is better than great wealth without His involvement.

ii) Of your income 90% with God's blessing goes further than 100% without God!

c) MANNA - The most dominant story of the Old Testament is the Hebrews being led out of Egyptian captivity into the Promised Land.

i) For 40 years they wandered in the desert learning valuable lessons. They made so many mistakes, but God kept teaching, training and preparing them.

ii) One of their biggest lessons was trusting in God's provision for food! God fed them daily in the wilderness.

(1) Exodus 16:15 Story of Manna

(2) "only take as much as you need for the day... no more, no less. No hoarding. No planning; No stock piling. Only trust that I will do what I said I would do.

iii) This was the lesson of Trust!

(1) You aren't the first person to wonder whether God will provide.

(2) You aren't the first person to put a little aside and see it disappear. (At least all your food doesn't turn maggots overnight.

iv) The Hebrews were to learn this lesson in the beginning. "before you become great, before you have more than you know what to do with, before you risk forgetting who it was that brought you out of Egypt to begin with, remember this. I will provide!"

v) Jesus carried this lesson over into the New Covenant

(1) **Matthew 6:8-11 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread...**

(2) The daily bread is the directly connected to OT lesson of the manna!

4) **You gain Perspective.**

Generosity doesn't just position us to receive God's blessings on earth. It will matter 500 years from now.

a) REGRET - this a word we hate to hear and you hate even more to feel. We have all felt it in some way or another.

i) if you have ever bought anything after watching a late-night info commercial

ii) if you have ever been sucked into a 10 yr. first yr. no interest plan only to find out the second year you are paying 22% interest for the thing.

iii) if you have ever lost sleep over that unworn item or still unpackaged thing in your garage... you have felt regret.

b) Buying something sometimes leads to regret, sacrificing for things with eternal impact rarely does.

i) Planting a church in Pakistan

ii) Sponsoring a child in Kenya

iii) Providing Christmas for a family in need

This kind of generosity is worth the sacrifice.

c) Using our resources for a cause that is greater than us, gives us a perspective few other things will.

d) Jesus said it this way: **Mt 6:21 NIV For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

i) Jesus understood what seems like a paradox to us.

ii) There is treasure to be found when we empty ourselves.

iii) And this treasure last!

iv) Empty yourself to be refreshed and you will be refreshed and refilled.

- e) Shift your perspective from trying to acquire more for yourself to providing more for those in need.