



WEEK FOUR: HOW TO LIVE GENEROUSLY

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If you're surprised that giving is a major theme in developing spiritually, consider this: God equates your ability to give generously—and happily—to your spiritual maturity. *"But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving."* 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV)

Whether generosity is something that comes easily for you, or it is something you struggle to do, you owe it to yourself to search God's Word for His commandments. He has a plan for your life, including how it relates to tithes, offerings, and living a life of generosity above and beyond the baseline.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Would you say you're a hoarder, a sharer, or a truly generous person? Do you get more pleasure *getting* a cool gift or *giving* a cool gift? If you expand generosity to include your time, talents and stuff, is there an area where you excel in sharing whatever you have?

Into the Bible

- 2) Study the scriptures below to discover just a few of the reasons why God wants us to live a life of generosity.

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- a. **Matthew 6:21** _____
- b. **1 Timothy 6:17-18** _____
- c. **Matthew 6:19-20** _____
- d. **Proverbs 3:5, 9** _____
- e. **Luke 6:38** _____
- f. **Philippians 4:18-19** _____
- g. **John 3:16** _____

3) The key to giving and generosity is found in **2 Corinthians 8:5**. What phrase is so important in verse 5? Discuss this with your group.

How Does This Apply?

4) The following points about generosity were the main outline in the weekend message. Consider these points in your own life. Discuss with the group the area(s) where you would like to experience growth in your own journey.

- a. **2 Corinthians 8:2** – Start being generous _____.
- b. **2 Corinthians 8:3a** – Let God _____.
- c. **2 Corinthians 8:7** – Set a goal to _____.

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- d. **2 Corinthians 9:7a** – _____ how God wants you to give and move forward.
- e. **2 Corinthians 9:7b** – Not _____, but give _____.
- f. **2 Corinthians 9:6** – Give with _____.
- 5) Share one area where you know that God is asking you—and already beginning to show you how—to be open-handed, generous and “excel in the grace of giving” so that God may be made famous.

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 6) Mike made a brief reference to the three types of financial generosity mentioned in the Bible: tithes, offerings, and sacrificial giving. Some people want to discount the act of tithing as an Old Testament Law that was done away with by Jesus and the New Covenant. Take a look at the life of Abraham and see where God was glorified by his generosity. Can you see where God still wants us to excel beyond Law, even under the grace taught in the New Testament, as we show our love for God and for our neighbors? **Read Genesis 14:13-20, Matthew 5:17-48 and Romans 4:9-25.**