

All In – Living the Generous Life

God's Generosity to Us

2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Welcome

What is the greatest act of generosity that you have experienced or come across?

Worship

This is our God - Hillsong

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qT6czqPgJ5s>

Word

Background: In his first letter Paul had given some instructions about a collection for the poverty stricken church in Jerusalem. It seems that this collection was also being taken up by the churches in Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea) and Galatia. It seems that though the church had started this collection other issues then took priority. In chapters 8 and 9 of this letter Paul reminds them of this and suggests how the collection may be completed.

Q1 Grace and generosity are linked four times in this passage (v1-2, v5-6, v7 and v9). Why do you think Paul links them? Why does he emphasise the point?

Q2 In v2 Paul highlights the circumstances experienced by the Macedonian churches but also 'the fruit' that was

exposed as a result. Where did their joy and generosity spring from (cf v9, James 1:2-4)?

Q3. What challenge, if any, does this present to us?

Q4. In v3-5 Paul provides three pieces of evidence to illustrate the generosity the Macedonians. What are they? (giving beyond ability, pleaded to share in giving, gave themselves fully to the Lord and to Paul.). What would this look like for us today and how do we measure up?

Q5. How does the example of Jesus (v9) challenge and inspire your understanding of giving? (consider both halves – rich became poor but also that we might become rich).

Witness

- Remembering Paul's reason for writing: are there areas where you have committed yourself in the past to do/give but have let it slip. Do you need to do something about it?
- In the light of God's generosity how can you be more generous this week – at home, in your workplace, in church?

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Serving Like Jesus

John 13:1-17

Welcome

What is the job that you would least like to do? Why?

Worship

The Servant King – Graham Kendrick

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCAdWs-ZyEk>

Word

Read v1-5

Q1 What did Jesus know?

Q2 How would this knowledge help him to serve his disciples in this passage (and throughout his earthly ministry) and help him as he endured the cross?

Q3 What knowledge and promises of God

- help you on your journey
- help you to serve others in the church
- outside the church

Read v 6-17

Q4 Why did Jesus use the washing of feet as an example?

What would be an equivalent example today?

Q4 What can we learn from the example of Jesus washing the feet of all the disciples (including the one who was to betray him)?

Q5 When and why do we find it difficult to serve others?

Q6 Why did Peter respond to Jesus as he did?

Q7 When and why do we find it difficult to let others serve us?

Witness

In what ways can we better serve those within our home, our work and within the church community? Pray for each other that we might seize the opportunities that present themselves. Are there opportunities for others to serve you this week?

Did you look at the ministries fair on Sunday? Where were the opportunities? Which positions were popular and which ones weren't. Why do you think that was? Is there something we need to do about it?

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The Gift of Presence

Luke 10:25-37

Welcome

Have you experienced an act of random kindness from a stranger? How did you respond?

Worship

You alone can rescue – Matt Redman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UracNSSIfTo&list=RDUracNSSIfTo&start_radio=1

Word

Read v25 – 29

Q1 How would you answer the question posed by the expert in the law in v25?

Q2 How does the way Jesus responds in v26 demonstrate a way that we might respond to the questions asked of us?

Read the rest of the passage

Notes – Priests and Levites would become ceremonially impure if they touched a dead body. Samaritans and Jews were bitter enemies.

Q3 Why do you think Jesus uses the Priest and the Levite as his first two people to encounter the body?

Q4 What dilemma presents itself to these first two people when they encounter the half dead man? Can you think of any of examples of this type today?

Q5 In what ways do we go out of our way to avoid not getting involved? What excuses do we come up with?

Q6 If you had been there who would you have expected Jesus to use as the next person to encounter the body? Why?

Q7 Why would the choice of a Samaritan come as a shock?

Q8 What excuses could the Samaritan have used?

Q9 What care does the Samaritan provide? What was the cost to him?

Q10 Compare the question of the law expert (v29 (who is)) and that of Jesus (v36 (who was)). What is the challenge here?

Witness

Who are you a neighbour of? Are there people who you avoid being a neighbour to? What needs to change?

Pray for situations where people are being unneighbourly be it in our church, in our local community, nationally or the world.

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The Joy of a Generous Life

Matthew 6:19-24

Welcome

Have you ever had a “should have gone to Specsavers” moment? What happened?

Worship

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour - Cathedral Church of St Luke

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcB9MIUMPdY&list=RDFcB9MIUMPdY&start_radio=1

Word

Read v19-21

Q1 What choice is presented here?

Q2 What do you consider a) treasures on earth b) treasures in heaven

Q3 What is the benefit of choosing the latter?

Q4 Is Jesus saying that we should not have possessions, savings, insurance? If not, what is he saying? Do these verses help our understanding Pr 6:6,7 1Tim 6:17-20

Q5 Why does Jesus link our treasure to where our heart is (v22)?

Read v22-24

Q6 What are the two possibilities here? Why does Jesus start talking about vision?

Note that in scripture the eye and the heart are often treated as equivalents (see Ps 119 v10 and v18). Note also that in Hebrew thought an ‘evil or bad eye’ was a miserly spirit whereas a sound eye was a generous spirit.

Q7 How does where our treasure is affect our vision?

Q8 Why can we not serve both God and Money? Is there a compromise to be found?

(you may want to refer back to the previous study (love the Lord.....) or look at Matthew 13:44,45) to show that a compromise isn’t possible.

Q9 Glance through the following passage in Matthew 6. How would the choices we make in v 19-24 affect our ability to live free from worry?

Witness

Where am I storing my treasure and what must I do to make sure that I am investing in heaven? What might practicing generosity look like for me within the life of St. Mary’s?

Pray for your mission partner – how can your group be more generous to them thus enabling them to extend God’s kingdom.

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Giving that Grows God's Kingdom **2Corinthians 9:6-15**

Welcome

Where have been in receipt of someone else's generosity this week?

Worship

How deep the Fathers love for us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzQj7XvKFmA>

Word

This continues on from the first study in the series and considers our attitude to giving and the blessings that result from giving.

Q1 What do sowing and reaping in v6 refer to?

Q2 What is the relationship between the amount we sow and the amount we reap?

Q3 Thinking about this principle – how does it apply to us individually?

Examples could be:

- the more I practice a skill the better I become and the more enjoyment I get
- the more time I spend studying the bible the more I understand and know of it and God

Q4 Does this mean the more I give to God financially the wealthier I will become? What evidence is there to show this is not the case?

Q5 So what are we investing in and reaping when we give our time, talent and money?

Q6 What conditions does Paul lay down about giving? How do we apply these?

Q7 What does a) reluctant giving b) cheerful giving look like?

Q8 How do we become cheerful givers?

Q9 What are the promises of God to those who give (v 8-11)?

Q10 What results from our giving (v12-14)?

Q11 What is the indescribable gift (v15)? How should this motivate us to give cheerfully and generously?

Witness

Reflect back on this series. Here are some questions to help you:

- Am I investing wisely in God's Kingdom or storing up treasures on earth?
- In what ways could I be more generous with my money, time, and talents?
- What hinders me from being more generous and what do I need to change to do that?