



Bible Study: Living Generously

2 Corinthians 9:6-12

Icebreaker:

Describe a time when someone was generous with you.

The Study:

Generosity and the Advent/Christmas season go hand in hand. Each one of us would like to be known as a generous person. (Who wants to be thought of as a Mr. Potter, Scrooge, or Grinch?) But how do we become that sort of person? One place to start might be to investigate the reasons the Bible gives for pursuing generosity. Read through 2 Corinthians 9:6-12 then dive into the study.

4 Reasons To Be Generous

I. I am created to be generous.

“For God so loved the world that he gave...” – John 3:16

1. We are created in the image of a God who is abundantly generous. What do the following verses say about God’s generosity?

Psalm 104:10-15

Ephesians 1:3

Philippians 4:19-20

James 1:17

2. We said in the teaching that with God, life is not a “zero-sum game” (where if I give away a dollar, now I’m down a dollar). Why can we say this?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Psalm 50:10-11

Malachi 3:8-10

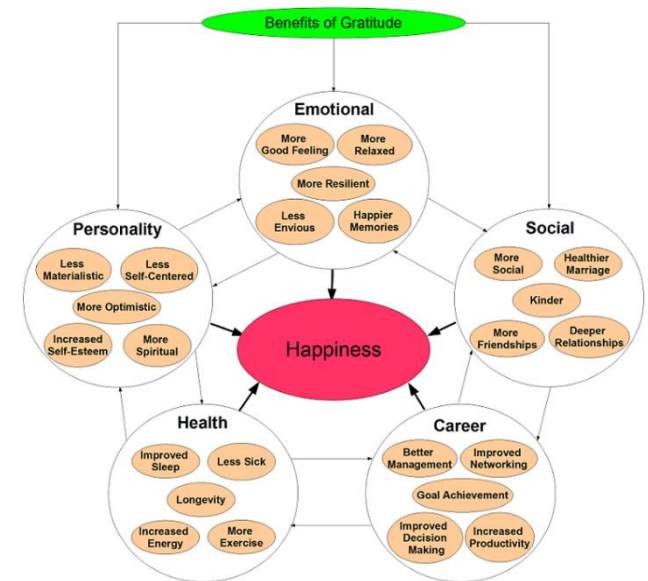
Luke 6:38

2 Corinthians 9:10

II. Life is more fulfilling when I’m generous.

“A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.” – Proverbs 11:25

3. Countless studies in recent years have validated the Bible’s frequent assertion that joy is found in generosity and gratitude. We showed this diagram in the message. Look it over, then write down a few observations about it.



4. Let's 'think theologically'. The "health and wealth" gospel is a heresy taught by not a few "prosperity" preachers who claim that if we walk in faith, God will remove all poverty and sickness from us. They'll use verses such as those in question 2 to tell people to give sacrificially to their ministry, then God will reward them with immediate financial blessings.

What is slippery, even erroneous and heretical about the "health and wealth gospel"?

III. Through generosity, God's love and goodness grows and overflows.

"You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God...they will glorify God because of your submission [generosity]." – 2 Cor.8:11,13

5. We told the story of Raju Gomes, a 25-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant who for nine years running, had hosted a Christmas dinner for the homeless in his community, which grew from 45 to 600 attendees over the years. When asked where he received the inspiration for his generosity, he mentioned how one woman befriended his family when they arrived from Bangladesh, who carried out 'a thousand kindnesses' for Raju and his family.

Put in your own words the power that one person's generosity can unleash on the world.

6. How can generosity draw lost people to Christ? Read Matthew 5:14-16.

7. Jesus said his followers would do "greater works than he did" (John 14:12). How is that even possible?!?

IV. God commands that my plenty be used for another's want.

"Your abundance at the present time should supply their need so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness." – 2 Corinthians 8:14

8. Describe in a sentence or two what you think 2 Corinthians 8:14 is saying?

9. While God can certainly meet our needs directly, his ordinary way is to do so *through other people*. "Everyone to whom much is given, of him much will be required," Jesus said in Luke 12:48. (So don't get on your roof in a flood and turn away the boat!) Why do you think the Lord does it this way?

10. When John the Baptist was asked how to prove our repentance, he replied "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." (Luke 3:11).

Think through and list all the things you own that you have two or more of.

Does this mean God doesn't want us to expand our standard of living? Discuss.

7. Jesus said his followers would do “greater works than he did” (John 14:12). How is that even possible?!?

IV. God commands that my plenty be used for another’s want.

“Your abundance at the present time should supply their need so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.” – 2 Corinthians 8:14

8. Describe in a sentence or two what you think 2 Corinthians 8:14 is saying?

9. While God can certainly meet our needs directly, his ordinary way is to do so *through other people*. “Everyone to whom much is given, of him much will be required,” Jesus said in Luke 12:48. (So don’t get on your roof in a flood and turn away the boat!) Why do you think the Lord does it this way?

10. When John the Baptist was asked how to prove our repentance, he replied “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” (Luke 3:11).

Think through and list all the things you own that you have two or more of.

Does this mean God doesn’t want us to expand our standard of living? Discuss.



Bible Study: Living Generously

2 Corinthians 9:6-12

Icebreaker:

Describe a time when someone was generous with you.

The Study:

Generosity and the Advent/Christmas season go hand in hand. Each one of us would like to be known as a generous person. (Who wants to be thought of as a Mr. Potter, Scrooge, or Grinch?) But how do we become that sort of person? One place to start might be to investigate the reasons the Bible gives for pursuing generosity. Read through 2 Corinthians 9:6-12 then dive into the study.



4 Reasons To Be Generous

I. I am created to be generous.

“For God so loved the world that he gave...” – John 3:16

1. We are created in the image of a God who is abundantly generous. What do the following verses say about God’s generosity?

Psalm 104:10-15

Ephesians 1:3

Philippians 4:19-20

James 1:17

2. We said in the teaching that with God, life is not a “zero-sum game” (where if I give away a dollar, now I’m down a dollar). Why can we say this?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Psalms 50:10-11

Malachi 3:8-10

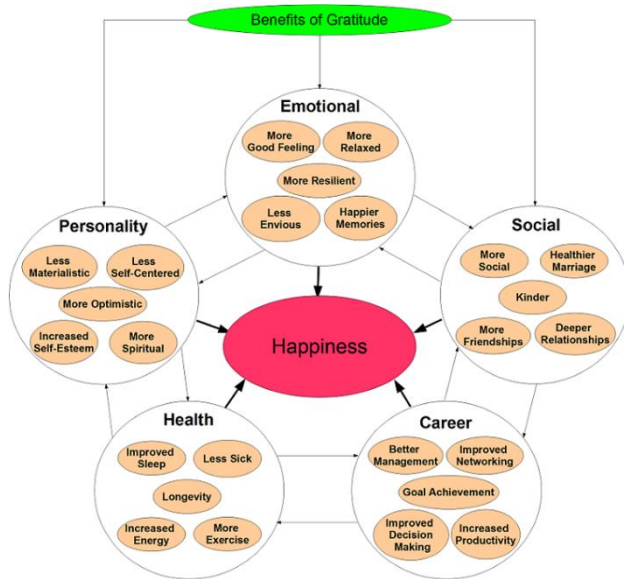
Luke 6:38

2 Corinthians 9:10

II. Life is more fulfilling when I’m generous.

“A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.” – Proverbs 11:25

3. Countless studies in recent years have validated the Bible’s frequent assertion that joy is found in generosity and gratitude. We showed this diagram in the message. Look it over, then write down a few observations about it.



4. Let’s ‘think theologically’. The “health and wealth” gospel is a heresy taught by not a few “prosperity” preachers who claim that if we walk in faith, God will remove all poverty and sickness from us. They’ll use verses such as those in question 2 to tell people to give sacrificially to their ministry, then God will reward them with immediate financial blessings.

What is slippery, even erroneous and heretical about the “health and wealth gospel”?

III. Through generosity, God’s love and goodness grows and overflows.

“You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God...they will glorify God because of your submission [generosity].” – 2 Cor.8:11,13

5. We told the story of Raju Gomes, a 25-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant who for nine years running, had hosted a Christmas dinner for the homeless in his community, which grew from 45 to 600 attendees over the years. When asked where he received the inspiration for his generosity, he mentioned how one woman befriended his family when they arrived from Bangladesh, who carried out ‘a thousand kindnesses’ for Raju and his family.

Put in your own words the power that one person’s generosity can unleash on the world.

6. How can generosity draw lost people to Christ? Read Matthew 5:14-16.