

Generous

Our culture sends us on a never-ending quest for more and better. We are trained to eagerly await the next and newest so we can plan to upgrade our lives. Yet it's likely that the next, new thing won't make us anymore content than the last, old thing.

What if the solution isn't to get more, but to give more? Maybe what our hearts long for is the opportunity to bless others. Our Creator is generous beyond measure. As people created in his image, maybe we should be too, because that's how he designed us to be.

A generous act is like a stone thrown in a pond; it will ripple out and touch everything in its path. When we grow in generosity, we will not only grow in Christlikeness, but we can have a significant impact in the lives of those around us. Spirit-empowered generosity not only transforms individual lives, but affects families, churches, communities and the world.

For the next four weeks we'll be considering what it means to be generous. We'll think about how to share our blessings, who to share them with, and how we can have the faith to be truly generous. But this week we're starting by taking a closer look at our generous God, and counting our blessings.

Generous | Week 1

Gratitude

Lisa Scheffler, author

Think about the shirt you are wearing. How did you get it? Someone took your payment and gave you the shirt. Before that, someone stocked it in a store or sent it to you through an online retailer. Before that, a ship, train or truck (maybe all three) transported it.

Imagine back even further. Someone sewed that shirt from fabric that was created on a loom from thread that had been dyed, probably in a factory where dozens of people were involved. Before that workers on a farm harvested the cotton after the plants grew to maturity.

But how did those plants grow? What gave them life and enabled them to produce something that could be taken and used to keep you warm and covered?

If you're a Christian, then your answer is God. God enabled the entire process that created the shirt on your back. He provided the soil, rain and sun. He gave life to the plants while also

giving knowledge and skills to people so that a ball of cotton fluff could be turned into something that shows his care for you.

As we begin our exploration of what it means to be generous, we're going to start by considering the source of all generosity, God himself. James 1:17 tells us that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." This week we're going to look at a different passage each day as we consider the ways God shows his generosity to us and consider how we can express our gratitude by being generous to others.

Day 1

One of the most well-known verses in the Bible is John 3:16 which tells us, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." There is a deep richness in that one verse, but you can distill it down to one beautiful truth: because God loved, he gave. Throughout Scripture we see the love of God being showered on us through his generous gifts.

Today we're going to look at a couple of passages in Genesis that displays his generosity has always been foundational to our relationship with the Creator.

Read the Word

Genesis 1:26–31

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

*²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.
³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.*

31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Genesis 2:15–18

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

¹⁸ The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

- Look carefully at 1:26. Humanity was created in the image of God so that they could do what? According to 1:29, what did God give humanity?
- What responsibility did God give the first man in 2:15?
- What did he say was *not* good in 2:18?

Reflect

Love is intrinsic to who God is. Because he exists in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – God has always given and received love within the Godhead. He chose to share that love with humanity when he created us in his image. He created a good world, and gave it to us as our home along with everything we needed to thrive. We were given the opportunity to cultivate and care for the creation and rule over the earth, giving us meaning and purpose.

God also gave us each other so that we wouldn't be alone. We were created to have honest, faithful, and nourishing relationships with other people where we would give love and receive it. There should have been no greed or selfish hoarding. Generously sharing in God's good world together, we would have lived in unity as God's people.

But sin has marred humanity so that it no longer reflects God's image in the way it was intended. We are prone to be selfish, stingy, and fearful. From the time we are toddlers we are prone to yell “mine!” rather than peacefully sharing in God's good gifts alongside others.

We are also prone to forget it is God's generous grace that sustains us every moment. Every molecule of air we breathe and every morsel of nourishment we eat were provided by God. The bodies that we take for granted were knitted together by our Creator. It is “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Yet often we fail to walk in grateful acknowledgement that we owe everything to God. We take the glory that we should ascribe to God for ourselves.

It was the idea of being like God that tempted Eve to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,

knowing good and evil,” the Serpent taunted (Genesis 3:5). Ever since, humanity has become a race of cosmic identity-thieves who assume the role of God and take credit for his goodness.

We worship human progress and ingenuity without recognizing the source of it all. According to the Bible, this state of rebellious self-determination and theft will lead to destruction. When we fail to recognize and give praise to God for his generosity, we delude ourselves into thinking that we’re the source of the good things we enjoy; and we will fail to be truly generous to others.

With this series our prayer is that all of us will begin a journey to develop more generous, Christ-honoring lives. That journey starts with appreciating the generosity of the one who created us.

- Our generous God created us to receive his love and reflect it to others with generous hearts. Are you willing to grow in generosity? Are you willing to let the Spirit transform you in this area. Pray over your answer.

Pray

Take a moment and pray, thanking God for all the good gifts he has given you that you may take for granted. Write down some of the things you are grateful for and praise God for them every day this week.

Day 2

In our series, Generous, we are considering how we might become more generous in our own lives. Created in the image of God, we were intended to be people for whom generosity came naturally; but self-centeredness is now the unfortunate norm in a fallen world. This week we are looking to God, the source of all goodness, and considering how generosity begins with him.

The majority of Americans are blessed with plenty. Most of us know little of hunger or famine. Our food comes to us nicely wrapped and packaged from the grocery store. If certain vegetables are out of season or drought, floods, or blight reduces grain production, those items can be shipped in from some other part of the world.

That is not the case in other countries and certainly was not the case in ancient Israel. Famine was a constant threat and could decimate a community, so a bountiful harvest was cause for great celebration. The passage we are looking at today is a song of thanksgiving to the God who provides.

Read the Word

Psalm 65

For the director of music. A psalm of David. A song.

*¹ Praise awaits you, our God, in Zion;
to you our vows will be fulfilled.*

*² You who answer prayer,
to you all people will come.*

*³ When we were overwhelmed by sins,
you forgave our transgressions.*

*⁴ Blessed are those you choose
and bring near to live in your courts!*

*We are filled with the good things of your house,
of your holy temple.*

*⁵ You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds,
God our Savior,
the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas,*

*⁶ who formed the mountains by your power,
having armed yourself with strength,*

*⁷ who stilled the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
and the turmoil of the nations.*

*⁸ The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders;
where morning dawns, where evening fades,
you call forth songs of joy.*

*⁹ You care for the land and water it;
you enrich it abundantly.*

*The streams of God are filled with water
to provide the people with grain,
for so you have ordained it.*

*¹⁰ You drench its furrows and level its ridges;
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.*

*¹¹ You crown the year with your bounty,
and your carts overflow with abundance.*

*¹² The grasslands of the wilderness overflow;
the hills are clothed with gladness.*

*¹³ The meadows are covered with flocks
and the valleys are mantled with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.*

- How does verse 3 celebrate God's mercy?
- How do verses 9–13 celebrate God's generous provision?

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Reflect

This Psalm beautifully depicts the grace of God as it is generously expressed through his provision, both in forgiving our sins and in meeting our physical needs. The opening of the Psalm depicts worshippers in the Temple, or the house of God, who are celebrating his mercy and response to their prayers. God is praised for his faithfulness and forgiveness. The first joy of these worshippers is that “they are now reconciled, and welcome at his house.”¹

The second stanza is focused on the greatness of God who will continue to answer his people’s prayers with awe-inspiring deeds. As magnificent as the creation is and as powerful its forces, they serve to reflect the awesomeness of their Creator. As one commentator puts it, “While mountains are to all appearance massively secure, and seas menacingly wild, the psalmists know better than to think of them apart from their Creator, as objects of either trust or terror in their own right.”²

It is in the final stanza that David comes to the point of his song: a celebration of God’s generous provision through a plentiful harvest. God has ended the year with a rich display of his bountiful goodness by providing abundant rain to an area often plagued by drought. He has so gifted the land that it appears clothed in livestock and crops. David is leading his people in a praise-filled acknowledgement of the generosity of God.

We see from this Psalm that even in our sin, God’s provision for us is so complete that he meets our eternal spiritual needs as well as our temporal earthly ones. Ultimately, forgiveness of sins is even more important than earthly provision because it guarantees our eternal life, not just our temporal one.

Our prayers often have to do with our present, earthly circumstances. We ask God to be generous in giving us – and our loved ones – blessings such as health, financial stability and good relationships. Our Father invites us to ask him for such things and we should be thankful when he gives them.

Yet, we should always remember his spiritual generosity as well, because it is his willingness to save us from our sin that provides for our eternal existence. We will get to experience God’s generosity for all eternity because he has provided a means for us to be forgiven today. Even when our current circumstances seem to be characterized by lack – lack of money, a job, good health, or satisfying relationships – we are never without the presence and power of God’s Holy Spirit in our lives. We are never without the promise of ultimate freedom from sin and death and a glorious inheritance provided by Christ’s death on the cross. Our loving Father holds us in his hand and will see us through the trials of this life into the glory of eternity.

¹ Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1–72: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 15, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 248.

² Kidner, 250.

- How do you experience God as a generous provider of your needs, both spiritually and physically? How can you show your gratitude for all that he gives you?

Pray

Write out a prayer to God that expresses your gratitude to him. Thank him specifically for your spiritual blessings – salvation, redemption, adoption into God’s family, eternal life, the indwelling Spirit, etc..

Day 3

I think we all want to be thought of as generous people. But if we are honest, our generosity often comes with strings attached. We are happy to give to the poor, as long as they are deserving. We are excited about blessing our children, except when they’re acting like brats. We give to churches and charities, as long as they are spending the money the way we think they should. While there is nothing wrong with being wise about how we give our money, we should be careful that what passes for wisdom is not born of pride. If we are giving to get something in return (even if that something is a heartfelt “thank you”) then we are not imitating the generosity of God.

God doesn’t limit his showings of generosity to those who deserve his grace or to those who will be grateful. He gives because of who he is. We are discovering this week that as the source of all goodness, it is because he loves that our Father continually gives. I don’t think any story illustrates this generosity quite like the parable of the Prodigal Sons.

A good god might welcome sinners who had worked hard to make amends and redeem themselves. An inconceivably generous God takes the initiative to bring lost sinners home. That is the message of the whole chapter of Luke 15. The story of the Prodigal Sons is the third of three parables through which Jesus illustrates how he has come to seek and save the lost. First he tells a story of lost sheep (Luke 15:4–7), where the good shepherd leaves the 99 behind to find the one. Then there is the story of the lost coin, where a woman who has 10 coins, searches everywhere to find one that she lost. Each of these recoveries results in a great celebration. Jesus goes on to tell the beloved story of a younger son who goes astray but is welcomed back by his father.

Read the Word

Passage

Luke 15:1–2, 11–32

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus.
² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

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¹¹ Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

¹³ “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹ “My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”

- According to verse 1, who is listening to Jesus tell this story?

Reflect

We don't know what prompted the son of a wealthy man to want to leave home. Perhaps he was feeling burdened by his family responsibilities or dissatisfied with life as the younger brother in the family. Maybe he just had a rebellious heart that insisted the grass was greener elsewhere. We're not sure of his exact motive, but we do know that he goes to his father and asks for his inheritance. Right then.

By law, firstborn sons were granted two-thirds of the inheritance, and the rest was divided among the remaining sons after the death of the Father. The younger son doesn't want to wait. You can almost hear him insisting that he wanted to start living his own life, *now*. It is unlikely that this father had that sum of money lying around, so he probably had to make some arrangements, maybe even sell some property or livestock. Imagine if you had to give a third of what you have right now. It would be a tremendous sacrifice.

Money certainly wasn't the only thing that meeting his son's request cost this father. In fact, it likely wasn't even the most heartbreaking part. Like most parents, this father probably had dreams for his son, and they did not include a life of wild parties and casual sex. He probably imagined his son staying close by, working in the family business and giving him lots of grandkids.

In our culture, we're used to children growing up and leaving home to pursue their individually defined dreams. But this was not how families in the ancient world worked. The community judged you by your children, and to have a son go off and squander the family wealth brought shame to the father. But the father let him go anyway, carrying a bag full of the family's wealth.

A lot of fathers would have dusted off their hands and muttered something about “good riddance” after this disappointment-for-a-son crested the farthest hill and disappeared from view. But not this father. His heart broken in his chest, he kept his eye trained on that distant horizon, hoping his son would someday return.

And he did. In exactly the shape the father probably feared — destitute, broken and ashamed. But this father doesn't care about the money or the shame this young man has brought to his family. He doesn't fixate on all the pain he endured when his son turned his back on him to do “his own thing.” He sees his boy off in the distance and he picks up his robe and races out to meet him.

Instead of guilt, he offers warmth and protection. Instead of handing out blame, he gives his wayward son gifts. Instead of heaping on shame, he throws a party to celebrate. Instead of demanding restitution, he invites his child to come home. That is love. That is generosity.

Of course, not everyone saw things the way the Father did. Most people probably thought: “That boy isn’t worthy of a second chance.” His older brother certainly didn’t understand the father’s actions. What about him? Hadn’t he worked hard for all these years? Didn’t his father owe him something for his loyalty?

The father, perhaps sensing what his older boy’s response would be, walks the path a second time, to meet another son and invite him in for a celebration of love, restoration and family. As the oldest son, he already shared in everything the father had to offer. He’d been experiencing his father’s generosity for his entire life, but fails to recognize it. The father had been sharing his love with his firstborn for so long that this boy should have had some to spare for his younger brother. But sometimes we deny grace when we’re in search of restitution. We don’t trust our father’s wisdom and power to make all things right in the end.

Jesus leaves the story on a cliff-hanger. We don’t hear the oldest son’s response. Will he walk down the path arm-in-arm with his father to welcome his younger brother home? Will his father’s generosity become his own?

Jesus told these stories to the “sinners” and the Pharisees — to the younger brothers who were broken and impoverished because of their choices and to the older brothers who had experienced the gift of God’s law for generations, but instead of loving their Father, felt that he owed them something. As Christians we can be both. We can take our Father’s generosity for granted and squander his good gifts. We can serve him out of obligation, but not love. We can reject our Father’s love while being jealous that he’s sharing it with those we consider “undeserving.”

When the lost are found, it is a cause for celebration. People will drop everything and search for what is beloved and valuable; that is Jesus’ point in the three parables in Luke 15. He left heaven to find us because we are exceedingly valuable to him. Now we have been given the task of helping people find and follow him.

- How does God welcome us in the same way that this father welcomed his son?
- As Christians why should we be excited to share our Father’s generosity with others?

Pray

Thank God for welcoming you home, then pray for those people in your life who haven’t yet experienced the joyful homecoming they could have through Jesus.

Day 4

Generosity is costly. If we're honest, that fact often keeps us from being more generous. We only have so many hours in a day, so many resources at our disposal, so much money in the bank. "If only I had more," we sometimes think, "I'd give away more." But being generous will always mean denying ourselves something else. Even when it's worth it, giving our time, resources or money away freely will always cost us in lost opportunity because we don't have an infinite supply of anything.

What about God? Does being generous cost him anything? He has infinite love and infinite resources. Isn't it easy for God to be generous? Perhaps it would have been, if sin had not entered the picture. The lengths our Father went through to save us from sin cost him immeasurably, in ways we can only begin to understand.

So far this week, we've talked about God's generous care for us. But we haven't really talked about God's most generous act of all, giving himself on the cross.

Read the Word

Ephesians 1:3–10

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

- Look through this passage. Mark verbs that point to God's generosity (blessed, chose, give, etc.) Then record what God has given or blessed us with.?

Reflect

It is in Christ that we have been given all the blessings Paul enumerates in this passage. Because of Jesus we can become adopted children of God, are holy and blameless in his sight and recipients of every spiritual blessing. In him we have redemption and forgiveness of our sins. Since the beginning of time God planned to lavish sinful humans with his love through Christ, not because we deserved it, but because of his grace. He chose us, because humanity lost the ability to choose him. And like the father of the prodigal sons, God welcomed us back into his family and rejoiced when what was once lost was found. His riches became ours in a glorious inheritance that we will enjoy from now into eternity.

How did he make all this possible? By his blood.

All the riches of our gracious God come to us at a price. Unable to free ourselves from the bonds of sin and death, we needed a Savior — a blameless sacrificial lamb upon whom all the sins of the world would be laid. Jesus left all the majesty of heaven and the presence of the Father to become one of us so that he could die in our place. The Son of God sacrificed himself so that we could call God, “Father.” Unlike the older prodigal, Jesus is the older brother who not only joins in the celebration of our homecoming, but also brought it about. He chose to leave his father’s house, sacrificing himself so he could seek us out in our broken depravity and bring us home.³ What could be more generous than that?

Because we didn’t honor God as our Creator and rightful ruler, humanity became enemies of God and deserved judgment. God’s justice demands it. Paul says in Romans, “You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (5:6–8)

Even after all the times we have put our trust in things besides God, given our allegiance to other gods and loved the world more than our Creator, Christ died for us. Even though we’ve been rebellious, ungrateful, and shaken our fist at God while doing precisely what we want, even though it violates his will, Christ died for us. Even though we’ve selfishly hurt his other children in anger, hatred, prejudice, lust and greed, Christ died for us. Then he gave us grace upon grace and sent us his Spirit.

The Spirit of God lives in those who trust in Christ. He is Jesus’ gift to us and enables us to know that we are the children of God (see Acts 2:38 and Romans 8:16). He empowers our spiritual growth, helps us when we are in need and guides us into the abundant life God has for us. Our generous God not only gave himself for us on the cross to rescue us from sin and death, but he gives himself to us every moment through his indwelling Spirit.

Paul assures us in Romans that he is “*convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Romans 8:38–39).

A soul-satisfying, never-give-up, never-ending, everything-you’ve-always-needed love. That’s what our generous God has given you. He will never leave you, never turn his back on you, never decide you’re not worth the trouble. Never.

- What does it mean to you right now, today, that God loves you so much that he sent Jesus to die for your sins? Pray

³ Edmund Clowney, “The Parable of the Prodigal Son” Preaching Christ in a Post Modern World, (Lecture, Reformed Theological Seminary, 2000).

Pray

- How can you express your gratitude to God for what he's given you in Christ?

Day 5

On Day 5 of our guide each week, we will spend some time reflecting on what we've learned, connect it with our lives, spend extended time in prayer and consider our next steps in following Christ.

Reflect on what you've learned

This week we've reflected on the generosity of God as our Creator, Provider, Father and Savior. I pray that you have spent some time praising him with a heart full of adoration and gratitude. For the next three weeks we will consider how God's generosity should fuel our own. So for today begin thinking about the implications of what God has given you in Christ and how it should shape the way you live.

Reflect

Think about what God has generously provided for you in Christ. What are you most grateful for after your study this week?

Make Connections

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" 1 John 3:1

If you have put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you from your sins, and have committed to following him, you are a beloved child of God. Think about what it means for you to be one of God's children. Those of you who are parents, is there anything you wouldn't do for your children to give them a good life? If we who often lack wisdom and can have impure motives still try and do what's best for our children, how much better will God provide for those he has adopted into his family (see Luke 11:13)? We can trust in the Father's generosity, and that should make all the difference in how we live.

If God promises to work things out for our good, then we shouldn't fear. If God says he will take care of us, then we don't have to worry. If God has given us everything we need, then we can be generous to others.

We hold on so tight to stuff in this world because we think it gives us security, will make us feel good about ourselves, or provide comfort and escape. But if we're using them to fill a need only God can meet, material possessions will put chains on our wrists and shackles on our feet. Instead of using the good gifts of God as a means to live for him and others, we can become slaves to a consumer culture that tells us we can never have enough. Jesus wants to set us free.

Our generous Father offers us real rest, security and comfort; and he knows how to meet those soul-deep needs. He knows what is best for us and has revealed it in his Word. We can trust him. He's our Dad.

Over the next three weeks, we will consider what it might mean for us to live a generous life. But we can never forget that our giving is always rooted in his. We can never out-give God who has given us life and breath and everything else. The more we love and trust him, the more we will want to express our gratitude by being generous to others.

What's Your Next Step?

Over the next few weeks we are going to get very practical about sharing our blessings with others. But we will never give our money with the right motivations if our generosity isn't fully grounded in the grace of God. So for today, take some time to pray and reflect on all God has given to you. Then ask him to begin to reveal to you the place money and possessions has in your heart.

Record your prayer to God.

Money-sickness is something nobody thinks they have, but it is something most of us in America are suffering from to some degree. So let's prayerfully prepare to get real with God and with each other about this issue. Let's come together to find and follow Jesus!