

Finding Your Place: Generosity

Romans 12:5-6,8 (NIV) so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (6) We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift ... is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously.

1. Generosity is not mandatory

Genesis 14:17-20 (NIV) After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). (18) Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, (19) and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. (20) And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Genesis 28:20-22 (NIV) Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear (21) so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God (22) and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23 (NIV) Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. (23) Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always.

Romans 6:14 (NIV) ...you are not under law, but under grace.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 (NIV) Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. (7) Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (8) And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2. Generosity is simply acknowledging I am a steward of God's blessings

Matthew 10:8 (NIV) ...Freely you have received, freely give.

Matthew 6:2-4 (NIV) "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. (3) But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, (4) so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Luke 6:38 (NIV) Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

3. Generosity is a sign of our love for God

1 John 3:16-18 (NIV) Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. (17) If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? (18) Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.