

Generosity

Philippians 4:14-20

Generosity is a basic strategy for Christian growth.

This passage offers **four fundamental reasons why God wants His children to be generous givers.**

➤ **GOD USES MY GIVING TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS.**

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Philippians 4:14-16 (New International Version)

- “share” = “koinonia” – the partnership of believers in the common cause of Christ

- Principle of generosity: God owns everything.

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it, . . . Psalm 24:1 (NIV)

You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20a (NIV)

- One important way that God meets the needs of others is through the hands and hearts of His people.
- You can give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving!

➤ **MY GIVING IS AN INVESTMENT IN ETERNITY.**

Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. Philippians 4:17 (NIV)

- Every believer has a spiritual “account” in heaven where we store treasure.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV)

- When we give generously, with an eternal perspective, it is credited to our account.

Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. ¹⁹By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life. 1 Timothy 6:18-19 (New Living Translation, 1996)

➤ **MY GENEROSITY DOMONSTRATES MY FAITH IN GOD.**

I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. Philippians 4:18 (NIV)

- God is pleased with our sacrificial giving because in order to give we must demonstrate faith in God.

- “Generosity” – liberal in giving – from the Latin root: open-handed

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)

- “God judges what we give by what we keep.” – George Mueller

For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings. Hosea 6:6 (NIV)

➤ **MY GENEROSITY ALLOWS GOD TO PROVE HIMSELF AS MY SOURCE.**

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19 (NIV)

- God promises to meet your needs in proportion to your honoring Him.

“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.” Luke 6:38 (NIV)

- You and I cannot “out-give” God. God even tells us to test Him in this.

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.” Malachi 3:10 (NIV)

Slide (not on bulletin) after Philippians 4:17 -

(Insert slide only: Ecclesiastes 5:15 NIV)

Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.

Slide (not on bulletin) at the end -

(Insert slide only: 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 NLT 1996)

Now I want to tell you, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done for the churches in Macedonia. ²Though they have been going through much trouble and hard times, their wonderful joy and deep poverty have overflowed in rich generosity. ³For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴They begged us again and again for the gracious privilege of sharing in the gift for the Christians in Jerusalem. ⁵Best of all, they went beyond our highest hopes, for their first action was to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us for whatever directions God might give them.