

THE BLESSED LIFE—3 THE GENEROUS EYE

We have been talking about generosity and giving.

He who has a generous eye will be blessed... Proverbs 22:9 NKJV

Some of you, you may have an eye for talent, some of you might have an eye for design, some of you might have an eye for food.

Others of you though, you might actually develop an eye for generosity; where you go around and you say,
..... "**God, who can we bless? What do we have that you could use to make a difference?**"

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

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." When you give it will be given back to you. This does not necessarily mean you give money and you will get more money back; it could, but what it does mean is when you are generous, you will be blessed.

Our spiritual enemy, Satan, cannot stop the blessings of God. It's a principle; you sow, you reap, you give, you're blessed.

Satan can't stop the blessings of God. But, here is what he can do; he can try to distort our relationship, with God's blessings

And this is what I believe Satan is very good at doing; at distorting our relationship, or our understanding of the blessings of God.

THREE RESPONSES TO GOD'S BLESSINGS

PRIDE / GUILT / HUMILITY TWO BAD & ONE GOOD

1) PRIDE

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. Revelation 3:17

Which is quite honestly how a lot of people act when they are materially blessed.

The Bible says you are proud of what you have, but you have forgotten the source of everything you have.

And this is the way a lot of people honestly respond to the blessings. They think, "Well, I earned this! I worked for it! I deserve this! Other people are lazy, not me! I've done all of this! I'm entitled to this life!"

2) GUILT

Some are proud of what they have, others are a little more embarrassed, they feel guilty. This is equally as common.

Then Jacob prayed, "... O Lord, who said to me...I will make you prosper,' 10 I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. Genesis 32:9-10

I'm not good enough, I don't deserve this, I'm embarrassed by all of these blessings. Pride and guilt. You've got those who would say, "I earned it, I deserve it." Others would say, "Actually, I am kind of embarrassed, I don't deserve this, I feel guilty."

3) Humility

1 Peter 5:5 "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." NIV

Sometimes I would feel guilty in receiving a blessing from God.....

EX: The Car we received! / EX: Some of the cars we've drove / EX: Our home in Lapeer

When we receive a Blessing we must receive it with HUMILITY! With thankfulness!

I want to challenge you to remember why God blessed you, because you have all said, "You are exceptionally blessed.

He didn't bless you because you deserve it or earned it, he didn't bless you to make you feel bad.

He blessed you for a purpose. Let's look at a couple of portions of Scripture that will help you see that purpose.

REMEMBER WHY GOD BLESSED YOU

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 2 Corinthians 9:11

Notice he didn't just say financially, if that is what you are pursuing is simply material blessings, you are so undercutting the goodness of God, if that is what you think rich is. We are talking about every kind, relational, not just financial or material; but intimacy and trust, long-term relationships and good health.

Not so that you can spend it all on yourself; "But so that you can be generous." He who has a generous eye will be blessed.

2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:2-3

You must remember where the blessings came from, they came from God. You must remember why you are blessed, you are blessed to be a blessing.

BECAUSE GOD HAS BLESSED US WITH MORE, WE WILL INTENTIONALLY GIVE MORE.

That WORD intentional! Most of us are not intentional givers. Most of us are intentional consumers, aren't we?

Let's think about it. You get a raise and for most of us the first thing we think is "What can I buy!" Right?

You get a little more and you think, "How can I blow this on me!" Most of us, we are intentional consumers.

If there is something you want, don't you generally try to figure out a way to get it?

You know you're like, "I will save my money, or I will clip a coupon, or I will wait until it's on sale, or I will put it on my credit card and pay it off at 18% over a long period of time, so it can cost almost double what I paid for it." We'll figure it out, we will intentionally consume.

But, I believe with all my heart that God is saying, "I have blessed you, not so it can be all for you; but instead, you can intentionally be a bigger blessing around the world. That is who we are, that is what we are becoming, we are going to become intentional-strategic givers.

THREE TYPES OF GIVERS

- **THE SPONTANEOUS GIVER**

Many of you are spontaneous givers and that is a good way to give, but if it's the only way you give, you will be very limited in what you can give. There is a great example of a spontaneous giver in Luke 10.

Jesus told a story about a Samaritan who came across an injured guy that had been beaten and left for dead. A couple of religious guys had passed by the guy in need, but the Samaritan said, "I've got a generous eye, I see a need I can meet, I am going to meet it." He stopped by the wounded guy and he bandaged him up and he put some oil on him and he put him on his donkey. He took him to a hotel and watch as he spontaneously gave...

The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Luke 10:35

Another example, we talked about the boy with the 5 loaves and the 2 fishes.

Quite honestly, this is the way that most people give and most people are limited to spontaneous giving.

This is a great way to give. But, if it's the only way that you give, and for many people it is the only way they do; you will be very limited in what you can give. Spontaneous givers.

- **THE STRATEGIC or PERCENTAGE GIVER**

It's a person who says, "You know what, we are going to plan to be generous.

But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity. Isaiah 32:8 NLT

They plan, they are sitting around going, "How can we be more generous? How can we have a generous eye? How can we maximize the blessings that we have to be a blessing to others?"

Last week, we talked about a strategic giver.

I will give God my first and my best, so that He can bless the rest

I have a strategy and I start there. TITHING is for beginning givers.

I would recommend, that you would become... a strategic giver, a percentage giver. What does that mean? You look at what you have and you pick a percentage and you decide ahead of time, this year we are giving whatever the percentage would be.

The first 10% is to God, maybe you say above that 1%, or 2%, or 15%; whatever it would be.

Let's say your combined household income is \$40,000 a year; the first 10% goes to God, and then let's say 1% above that, that is going to be \$400.00, 2% takes you to \$800.00 and you say, "Whatever, we are going to give 2% through out the year." All of a sudden you have an amount and there will be a strategy emerged when you name an amount.

You may say, "Half of that we are going to give spontaneously", and then you are looking, "I've got this much to give, and you give, "Oh, I've only got this much left." And you may take the other half and say, "We are going to plan and prayerfully decide where to give." Because all of a sudden you are prayerful, all of a sudden you have a generous eye. All of a sudden you are saying, "We've got this allocated, where is the best place to plant it so it can make a difference?"

You can see this kind of generosity in Scripture, when Abraham sent a servant to find a wife to Issac, he was strategic. He loaded up his camels with all sorts of gifts. Go and present her with this jewelry and such. He thought ahead of time.

The wise men, when they came to visit Jesus; they didn't come in and go, "Oh, awesome, the Son of God! Got anything on you? You've got a quarter?" No, what did they do ahead of time? They were like, "Let's plan this thing out, let's be strategic, let's bring our best gold and our best incense and our best murr." Why? Because generous people plan to be generous.

As a church, let me tell you, we have decided to be strategically generous.

1. We take 10% and divide into missions, benevolence, evangelism
2. We give & bless our communities.... God has more planned for us in that arena!

There are those of you, you are spontaneous. Good place to start; but, if that's all you do, you are going to be limited in what you give.

There are those who can be strategic and say, "You know what, we are going to think about this, we are going to put something into it." We're going to pray it over and be led by God!

• **THE SACRIFICIAL GIVER**

These are the fanatics. These are the ones that really recognize that what we have in this world is not simply for us, but it's all for God.

You can be wealthy and be sacrificial. Solomon, instead of sacrificing one bull, when he was anointed to be a king, he said, "You know what? I want to give big!" He gave 1,000 bulls.

David, was making a sacrifice, a guy named Araunah said, "Here, take anything you want." He said, "No, you don't understand, I want to pay for it, I will not sacrifice anything to God, that didn't cost me something."

Most people want to give from what's left over. Most people don't want to feel it, but there are some who are crazy enough to say, "It all came from God, if he has need of it, I will give it away."

41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything — all she had to live on." Mark 12:41-44

You see, a lot of times people say, "Well, we don't really have much to give." No, no, no, no! You've always have got something to give. And when you have even less, that is when sometimes you can make the biggest sacrifice.

Dave Ramsey always says, "Live today like no one else, so one day you can live like no one else." What he means is live modestly and don't get into debt, etc. etc., so one day you can live like no one else.

I want to take what Dave Ramsey said 1 step further "We are going to live like no one else, today, so that we can give like no one else."

So, here is how I hope we will give. I hope you will give spontaneously. See a need you can meet and meet it; don't stop there.

I hope you will give strategically, where it's a prayerful part of your planning. Just like you strategize what to get, you are going to strategize what to give.

Then some of you, you are going to become so fanatical that you are going to say, "We are actually willing to feel this, we can give 20%, 30%, 50!"

Because we are going to give like only blessed people can. He who has a generous eye will be blessed. It's more blessed to give than it is to receive. I pray as a church, we are more blessed.