

January 26, 2020 – Elmont Baptist Church

Text: 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Message Series: GeneroUS: Growing a Community of Giving

Week 3: Generosity Grows Enjoyment

Introduction:

1. Before last January I stayed away from this subject intentionally over the past 9+ yrs, and while many may think that's commendable, I apologized to you for neglecting to deal with the difficult and important subject.
2. If I am to faithfully preach the whole counsel of God, then we cannot avoid dealing with this subject of money and possessions.
3. Why? Because 1 out of every 10 verses in the Gospels deal with money in some way. That's 288 in all. 16 of Jesus' 38 parables deal with how to handle money and possessions. In the Bible there are 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 on faith, and over 2,000 on money and possessions.
4. According to most scholars 20-25% of everything Jesus taught dealt with money and possessions in some way.
5. Yet the Scriptures never record Jesus taking up an offering or asking from anyone to give Him money.
6. As we walk into this, I am not going to ask you to give more or even mention the church budget. There are times for that, but it's not right now.
7. The goal continues to be just what Jesus emphasized – pressing in on this subject to press in on our hearts.
8. I hope you will be encouraged as we highlight how your generosity helps US together be generous in local ministry and global missions.
9. The key word we want to focus on is Generosity. That definitely includes finances, but it's a heart issue before it's a money issue. Generosity overflows in giving of time, hospitality, gifts, skills, and abilities.

10. It's far more about who we are becoming before it's about what we are doing. It's when we come to understand better and better that our God is a great giver, and we are to become more like Him in this way.
11. So far, we've said that Generosity Imitates Jesus and Generosity Displays Trust.
12. The hope today is that as we unpack the idea that Generosity Grows Enjoyment, we will be encouraged and challenged to understand that our generosity with our resources is the best path to enjoying God and His good gifts.

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

1. Some of us heard the first four words of this passage and thought, "Well I'm off the hook because I'm not rich."
2. While you may not be rich compared to a professional athlete or someone making 7 figures, we would do well to understand that just by you having more than a couple of changes of clothes and a car, you are very wealthy globally speaking.
3. We can still be haughty in many ways and forget that were it not for God's grace in gifting us and providing opportunity for us, we wouldn't have the things we do.
4. So, the instruction to not put our hope in money, but on God instead is no surprise. We expect to hear that.
5. But then Paul says, "God, who richly provides us with EVERYTHING to ENJOY." God expects you to enjoy His gifts from His gracious hand.
6. Here is where we often miss out. We run in one of two extremes. Either we don't intentionally celebrate and enjoy, or we allow our enjoyment to terminate on the gift rather than the Giver.
7. We either look like spiritual fun-suckers or far too shallow in our pursuit of enjoyment.

8. Neither are OK. Generosity from God and generosity through us will grow our enjoyment in life, and the hope is that today we will see that...

Generosity Grows Enjoyment as We...

1. Give Faithfully & Cheerfully – 1 Tm 6:17-19; 2 Cor 9:6-13

a. Graciously

b. Not legalistically

- i. The key to being set free to give faithfully and cheerfully is understanding the heart of our Father, the best Giver, and His intention in giving good gifts to us, His children.
- ii. To get good gifts from the Good Giver and live with the attitude like a cable news channel – that all hope is lost – is sinfully unappreciative.
- iii. And to let your enjoyment of the gifts stop there and not fuel your worship of the Giver is the heart of a sinfully spoiled brat.
- iv. When you see something beautiful – thank your artistic Father who made it.
- v. When you taste something savory – thank your creative God who made it possible.
- vi. When you experience love, celebrate a milestone, are able to hold a baby, or any other little thing or big thing – make much of the Good God who gives good gifts to His children for their enjoyment.
- vii. God doesn't say, "Here is Oklahoma, do the best you can. Here is kale, try to make the best of it. Here's unsweet tea, have a nice life."
- viii. Instead we have a God who gives us Texas and good deep-fried food and sweet drinks and desserts, and babies with that new car smell, friends to laugh and cry with, spouses to enjoy every moment of life with, and on and on.
- ix. And all those things are just shadows of His resources and ability to satisfy us forever and ever.
- x. And then from that enjoyment of His incredible generosity, we are to want to be generous and pass on the blessing of giving to others in need around us.

- xi. Understanding all the while that being generous is helping us, “take hold of that which is truly life” – Seeing and savoring God as our source and chief love.
- xii. By living truly transformed lives that worship our Great Giver and have hearts focused on eternal life, we grow to be more like our generous God and better...

2. See Needs & Bless Others – Acts 2:44-47; Eph 4:28

a. We have to look around

b. And have an open hand

- i. Unlike God, we aren’t all-powerful, all-knowing, or all-present. So, we have to train our eyes to look around and take notice of the needs that exist in our sphere of influence.
- ii. We have to budget our resources to meet our needs and build in margin to share regularly with others in need.
- iii. We have to schedule time for others and not fill our lives with empty things that will only indict us rather than commend us one day.
- iv. The early church got this right away. We see in Acts 2:44-47 this description of generosity that looks strange at best and almost cult-like if we’re honest.
- v. But they saw needs and used what they had been entrusted with to meet them. The needs of others mattered.
- vi. They held every possession and resource with an open hand rather than a closed fist.
- vii. Once again, we want to celebrate the Kingdom-advancing work that we are able to accomplish because of the generosity of each of you. That your open-handed generosity helps grow enjoyment as together we...

3. Enjoy God’s Work Locally & Globally

a. Locally – EK Kids

b. Globally – Aim 4 India

- i. Each week through this series we have highlighted a local ministry of our faith family and global mission partner.
- ii. Ones that goes hand-in-hand with enjoying and celebrating are our EK Kids Children's ministry and Aim 4 India.
- iii. Our incredibly gifted Children's minister, BreAna Whiting, is working hard to teach our children to Know, Grow, and Go, and help equip our parents to invest spiritually in the lives of their children.
- iv. From birth to 5th grade the children that spend time here are being cared for, prayed for, and taught who God is and how He loves them.
- v. We celebrate our children at Elmont, and we help them celebrate the good gifts of God.
- vi. And it shows. Each Sunday morning there are up to 40 birth to three yr olds in our nursery and that many more in KidsChurch.
- vii. We are seeing kids get excited about who Jesus is and what He did for them and how He loves them and wants them to live on mission with Him.
- viii. We also get to partner with Aim 4 India which is a mission organization that has built a Christian school in a rural Hindu-controlled part of India.
- ix. The children there would be sentenced to lives as indentured servants in a caste system they could never escape. But having an education changes everything for them.
- x. These children are unashamedly being taught about Jesus and their lives and families are being impacted by the Gospel.
- xi. We'll never know their names or their stories, but we will get to be a part of many of them hearing and receiving the Gospel and spending eternity together.

- xii. You sharing the time, abilities, and finances that you have been entrusted with personally is making a Kingdom difference locally, right here with this faith family, and globally just as much.

Closing

1. We can be thankful together for the great things that we are able to accomplish together for the Kingdom through the faithful giving of time, talent, and treasure of this faith family.
2. And so, the goal today is two-fold. To encourage you to remember that God's desire and command is that you use what He has given you to help others through the ministry and mission efforts of the faith family that you are connected to.
3. And also, to encourage you to look at how you use your time, talent, and treasure and ask, "Am I growing in loving God through the enjoyment of the gifts He gives, and being generous with all that He has entrusted to me?"