

“Jesus, the Generous One”
April 1, 2012

Luke 12:32-34 (“Join Me in My generosity!”)

PROP- Jesus, the Generous One is “inspiring us” (“breathing in us”) to live generously—joining with Him in restoring the world!

- “God so loved...He gave” (not as an afterthought) BEFORE creating the world (1 Peter 1:20)
- **Jesus summarized His ministry:** “To serve and give (*My*) life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45) to “release many hostages!”
- **RE our ministries:** “Keep open house. Be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven...This is what God does. He gives His best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, nice and nasty...In a word, what I’m saying is: *Grow up!* You are Kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you!” (Matthew 5:16,45,48 The Message)
- He is fully invested in us—ever-living to intercede for us (Heb. 7:25). “My life is God’s prayer” (Psalm 42:8 The Message)

JESUS, the extravagantly generous One is calling us to:

1. **GIVE INTENTIONALLY** (*living beyond the moment → momentum*)

SEE Matthew 25:29

[We really don’t “have” anything until we invest it, utilize it, & give it away]

- The “poverty” mindset focuses on what we *don’t have*—generosity focuses on what we do have (i.e., Acts 3:6- “what I have I give you”)
- “Poverty” focuses on “getting by”—generosity on “contributing to” (Proverbs 13:22- “leaves an inheritance for his children’s children”)
- “Poverty” survives the planet—generosity revives it!
- Poverty thinks: “The world is happening to us”—Generosity says: “We are happening to the world!”
- Psalm 126:5- “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Principle: *Present sacrifices reap future benefits.*
- “Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 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 9:10-11)
- STEWARDING is not what you have—it’s what you do w/ what you have

2. GIVE FULLY

- Wherever Jesus was—He was **fully** there!
- He “looked at, listened to, loved” people (NOTE: Lose the cell phone!)
- (Paraphrase John 6:51- “Like giving bread to one who is hungry—I am giving Myself, My very life, for the world to come alive!”)
- He still “so loves” the world that compels Him to “give of Himself”!

3. GIVE SPONTANEOUSLY

- Not “reluctantly or under compulsion” (2 Cor. 9:7)—but “hilariously spontaneous” (“cheerful”)
- “We...opened wide our hearts to you...not **withholding** our affection” (2 Corinthians 6:11-12). NOTE: “*To cramp or compress; a clenched fist*”
- 2 Cor. 8:12- If we give with a “willing heart”, our gift “is accepted according to what one **has**, and not according to what he **does not have.**”
- Genesis 4:3 says that “**in the process of time...Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.**”
 - His gift was an **after-thought**; a leftover; spoke loudly of the lack of importance the Lord had in his life
 - Rather than repent of his lack of honor toward God, Cain became enraged & killed his brother. This same spirit tries to rise up today to quench a **spontaneously generous spirit**

RESPONSE

Following the Generous One will cost us everything!
Jesus said: “Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:33). Costly...but **worth it** (“Worthy!”)

- The One **fully invested in us**—has the right to call for **our full investment!**
- The world will **take the Church seriously**—when we take Jesus **seriously!**
- We will **get our voice back**—as we **respond to His!**

I have “only one life, ’twill soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last. And when I am dying, how happy I’ll be, If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee.”

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