WELCOME TO YOUR

Journey *of Generosity*

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GENEROUSGIVING

We share the *joy of giving*, not out of duty or guilt, but out of *gratitude* for salvation in Christ.

OUR VISION IS TO SEE THE GENEROSITY OF GOD DISPLAYED THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Generous Giving was founded in 2000 by the Maclellan Foundation.* We share the message of biblical generosity, creating opportunities for conversations about what it means to be more generous, leading to greater joy, freedom, and intimacy with Christ. We are funded by a small group of foundations and families who are passionate about biblical generosity. Therefore, we don't fundraise at our events, nor do we allow others to do so. We create safe and inspiring environments where generosity can be explored without any concern there will be an appeal for funds.

Learn more about the Maclellan Foundation founder and history on page 36.

Objectives

1 **EXCEL IN THE GRACE OF GIVING.**

But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.
2 Corinthians 8:7

2 **LISTEN TO AND OBEY THE LORD'S PROMPTING FOR OUR LIVES.**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.
Proverbs 3:5-6

3 **DEVELOP A VISION FOR SHARING THE JOY OF LIVING GENEROUSLY.**

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24-25

My hope for this experience:

Guidelines

We want this to be a safe place to learn and share, so here are a few guidelines to make this Journey of Generosity a positive experience for everyone.

- Turn off or silence cell phones until the end.
- Refrain from giving unsolicited advice; it can feel like criticism.
- Use “I” statements rather than “you” statements.
- Commit to confidentiality.
- It’s important to participate—but not dominate. Leave room for everyone to speak.

Tim Keller Teaching

Acts 20:32-37 (NIV) | 32 “Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

33 I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. 34 You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. 35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus Himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

36 When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. 37 They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him.

Reflections

One man gives freely,
yet grows all the richer;
another withholds
what he should give,
and only suffers want.

PROVERBS 11:24

Inductive Study Tips

1. OBSERVATION

What does this passage say?

- ☐ Circle repeated words and phrases.
- ☐ Underline the promises.
- ☐ Draw a box around any commands.
- ☐ Mark every reference to God with a triangle.
- ☐ Mark cause-and-effect words (e.g., "therefore," "because," "so that") by drawing an arrow from the cause to the effect.

2. REFLECTION

What is God telling me?

- ☐ What area in my life needs repentance?
- ☐ What words in this passage encourage and strengthen me?

3. APPLICATION

What is my response?

- ☐ Journal any thoughts you may have and conclude with prayer.

Inductive Bible Study & Reflection

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (NIV) | 6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written:

> "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
> their righteousness endures forever."

10 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. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the Gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Reflections

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

1 TIMOTHY 6:6-7

Reflections

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

Excerpt from *Celebration of Discipline*

We have such a focal point in the words of Jesus: "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (Matt. 6:25-33).

The central point for the Discipline of Simplicity is to seek the Kingdom of God and the righteousness of His Kingdom first and then everything necessary will come in its proper order. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of Jesus's insight at this point. Everything hinges upon maintaining the "first" thing as first. Nothing must come before the Kingdom of God, including the desire for a simple life-style. Simplicity itself becomes idolatry when it takes precedence over seeking the Kingdom. In a particularly penetrating comment on this passage of Scripture, Søren Kierkegaard considers what sort of effort could be made to pursue the Kingdom of God. Should a person get a suitable job in order to exert a virtuous influence? His answer: no, we must first seek God's Kingdom. Then should we give away all our money to feed the poor? Again the answer: no, we must first seek God's Kingdom.

Well, then perhaps we are to go out and preach this truth to the world that people are to seek first God's Kingdom? Once again the answer is a resounding: no, we are first to seek the Kingdom of God. Kierkegaard concludes, "Then in a certain sense it is nothing I shall do. Yes, certainly, in a certain sense it is nothing, become nothing before God, learn to keep silent; in this silence is the beginning, which is, first to seek God's Kingdom."

Focus upon the Kingdom produces the inward reality, and without the inward reality we will degenerate into legalistic trivia. Nothing else can be central. The desire to get out of the rat race cannot be central, the redistribution of the world's wealth cannot be central, the concern for ecology cannot be central. Seeking first God's Kingdom and the righteousness, both personal and social, of that Kingdom is the only thing that can be central in the Spiritual Discipline of simplicity.

The person who does not seek the Kingdom first does not seek it at all. Worthy as all other concerns may be, the moment they become the focus of our efforts they become idolatry. To center on them will inevitably draw us into declaring that our particular activity is Christian simplicity. And, in fact, when the Kingdom of

God is genuinely placed first, ecological concerns, the poor, the equitable distribution of wealth, and many other things will be given their proper attention.

As Jesus made clear in our central passage, freedom from anxiety is one of the inward evidences of seeking first the Kingdom of God. The inward reality of simplicity involves a life of joyful unconcern for possessions. Neither the greedy nor the miserly know this liberty. It has nothing to do with abundance of possessions or their lack. It is an inward spirit of trust. The sheer fact that a person is living without things is no guarantee that he or she is living in simplicity. Paul taught us that the love of money is the root of all evil, and I have discovered that often those who have it the least love it the most. It is possible for a person to be developing an outward life-style of simplicity and to be filled with anxiety. Conversely, wealth does not bring freedom from anxiety. Kierkegaard writes, "...riches and abundance come hypocritically clad in sheep's clothing pretending to be security against anxieties and they become then the object of anxiety... they secure a man against anxieties just about as well as the wolf which is put to tending the sheep secures them... against the wolf."

Freedom from anxiety is characterized by three inner attitudes. If what we have we receive as a gift, and if what we have is to be cared for by God, and if what we have is available to others, then we will possess freedom from anxiety. This is the inward reality of simplicity. However, if what we have we believe we have gotten, and if what we have we believe we must hold onto, and if what we have is not available to others, then we will live in anxiety. Such persons will never know simplicity regardless of the outward contortions they may put themselves through in order to live "the simple life."

To receive what we have as a gift from God is the first inner attitude of simplicity. We work but we know that it is not our work that gives us what we have. We live by grace even when it comes to "daily bread." We are dependent upon God for the simplest elements of life: air, water, sun. What we have is not the result of our labor, but of the gracious care of God. When we are tempted to think that what we own is the result of our personal efforts, it takes only a little drought or a small accident to show us once again how utterly dependent we are for everything.

To know that it is God's business, and not ours, to care for what we have is the second inner attitude of simplicity. God is able to protect what we possess. We can trust Him. Does that mean that we should never take the keys out of the car or lock the door? Of course not. But we know that the lock on the door is not what protects the house. It is only common sense to take normal precautions, but if we believe that precaution itself protects us and our goods, we will be riddled with anxiety. There simply is no such thing as "burglar proof" precaution. Obviously, these matters are not restricted to possessions but include such things as our reputation and our employment. Simplicity means the freedom to trust God for these (and all) things.

To have our goods available to others marks the third inner attitude of simplicity. If our goods are not available to the community when it is clearly right and good, then they are stolen goods. The reason we find such an idea so difficult is our fear of the future. We cling to our possessions rather than sharing them because we are anxious about tomorrow. But if we truly believe that God is who Jesus says He is, then we do not need to be afraid. When we come to see God as the almighty Creator and our loving Father, we can share because

we know that He will care for us. If someone is in need, we are free to help them. Again, ordinary common sense will define the parameters of our sharing and save us from foolishness.

When we are seeking first the Kingdom of God, these three attitudes will characterize our lives. Taken together they define what Jesus means by “do not be anxious.” They comprise the inner reality of Christian simplicity. And we can be certain that when we live this way “all these things” that are necessary to carry on human life adequately will be ours as well.

Foster, Richard J. “The Discipline of Simplicity.” *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, HarperCollins, 1998, pp. 86–89.

Reflections

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son...

JOHN 3:16

30 Questions for *Reflection*

Please take some time before our next session to read through these 30 questions. Come back prepared to share two questions that stood out to you and why. You do not have to answer the questions; just share why they are causing you to wrestle. Though some of these questions might feel like there is only one right answer, they are meant to be provocative, not prescriptive. Please use these questions as conversation starters to explore how God may be working in your heart.

1. Am I viewing myself as a manager or trustee of what God's given me, or seeing myself as owner and controller of my own stuff? Are there things that God would have me manage differently if I acknowledged them as really being His?

2. Am I striving to use my income, influence, and privileges as God directs? Or am I assuming I know what He's asking me for (i.e. tithing 10 percent) and can use the rest as I choose?

3. As I continue to realize that Jesus gave everything by His death on the cross to purchase me, is there a new level of sacrifice I want to give and surrender to Him?

4. At what points in my journey with God have I realized His generous mercy toward my brokenness and sin? Do I hold others to a higher standard than God holds me? Can I give radically to others even though they have brokenness and sin in their lives?

5. Does the thought of sacrificial generosity make me anxious because I feel I don't have enough to make ends meet? Do I live trusting God to provide all that I need in the same way He provided His Son for me to be redeemed? Or have I compartmentalized my trust for my salvation, putting my daily needs in a different category?

6. Is Christ's undying love my true treasure, or do I actually treasure other things more? Is my money an indicator of my true treasure? Is it my reputation, comfort for my family, recognition? Or do I live my life knowing that His love and grace is all I need?

7. Does the thought of sacrificial generosity make me anxious because I might have to carefully look at my spending and give some things up? Are there things I've decided are non-negotiable? The place I live? The car I drive? Do I live believing that my ultimate treasure is in heaven and not in the comforts I desire on earth?

8. How much money do I need? Will my answer always be "more"? Or can I set a finish line for myself, and give away everything beyond that?

9. What does it mean to give responsibly and wisely? How can I honor getting out of debt while giving generously? How can I honor saving for the future or estate planning while giving generously? Since Jesus praised the poor widow for giving away everything, is it possible that He is asking me to worry less about saving for the future and to give more now?

10. Am I trustworthy to make financial decisions entirely on my own, or am I potentially biased by greed, comfort, or culture in such a way that it would benefit me to share my financial and giving goals with some other mature Christians in my community? Who might some of those people be?

11. If the Bible commands us to bear one another's burdens in Christian community, are there opportunities within my community that God might be calling me to bear? Do I assume that this isn't my role because of my culture, or am I looking for such opportunities?

12 Has possessing more money caused me to feel more in control of my life and circumstances, and has that control become an idol for me? Is Christ inviting me into a new level of surrender where I trust Him with control of my life and future instead of trusting my money for that control? How can I step into this practically?

13 If an outsider were to look at how I use my time, my energy, and my resources, what would they learn about my priorities? Would that outsider see my time, energy, and resources being put primarily toward a hope and vision of renewal for our city and world?

14 Do I live as if I'm focusing on heaven, where I plan to live forever, or on earth, where I'll live one-billionth of my existence? In light of eternity, am I happy about where I'm placing my focus?

15 If the nearness of God is what I ultimately seek, what if I dared to pray, "Bring anything into my life; take anything away from my life, as long as I get to be closer to You"? What scares me about that prayer? What excites me about it?

16 Has God entrusted me with these financial assets and opportunities for such a time as this (Esther 4:14)? Has He called me to join a great team of His children in freeing up money and possessions to reach the needy and fulfill the Great Commission?

17 What am I holding onto that's robbing me of present joy and future reward? What am I keeping that's preventing me from having to depend on God? What am I clinging to that makes me feel like I don't have to depend on Him to provide, like I used to before I had so much? What does He want me to release that could restore me to a walk of faith?

18 In light of 2 Corinthians 8:14 and 9:11, does God want me to assume each financial blessing He entrusts to me is not intended to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving?

19 Am I treating God as owner and CEO/CFO of "my" assets, or am I treating Him merely as my financial consultant, whom I pay a fee (10 percent or greater)?

20 Once they have finished college or are working on their own, would inheriting wealth (beyond items of special sentimental and heritage value) help my children's eternal perspective and walk with God? Or would it have a corrupting influence on their character, lifestyle, work ethic, or marriage?

21 Would God ever say to me, when I stand before His judgment seat, "You blew it—you sold those shares and gave them to feed the hungry and evangelize the lost, and then two years later the market peaked"? Or would He say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant"?

22 Is it ever wrong to give to God now rather than wait until later? What's the eternal downside to giving now? What's the eternal downside of delaying giving until later? Am I really in danger of giving too much too soon? Or is the only real danger giving too little too late? You might be thinking: "But if I give away most of my assets now, what will I give from later?" Is the answer "from whatever God chooses to provide"? If Christ commended the poor widow (Mark 12) for giving to God everything she had—considering her faithful, not irresponsible—how much would I have to give away before He would consider me irresponsible?

23 Why do I want to hold on to my wealth? Am I trying to prove something? What, and to whom? Is it pride? Power? Prestige? Selfishness? Insecurity? Fear? Do I need control? Or is it just because it's normal, and I'm going with the flow of my culture? Does God want me to go with that flow? Or to do something different, maybe radically different?

24 Am I living to hear others say of me, "He/she's a great success" or to have God say to me, "Well done, my good and faithful servant"?

25 Instead of asking, “Why should I give this away?” does God want me to ask, “Why shouldn’t I give this away?” Should I put the burden of proof on keeping rather than on giving? When money comes in, should giving rather than keeping be my default—the rule rather than the exception? Unless there’s a compelling reason to keep, should I normally give?

26 Am I hanging onto excess money as a backup plan in case God fails me? Is my fear of health catastrophes and old age creating an inertia in my giving, because I imagine I must provide everything for myself in case something goes wrong? Considering that the vast majority of people in history and most in the world today have nothing stored up for retirement, am I too preoccupied with putting treasures in retirement funds? Is God calling me to work without a net—or with less of a net—trusting He will catch me in case of a fall?

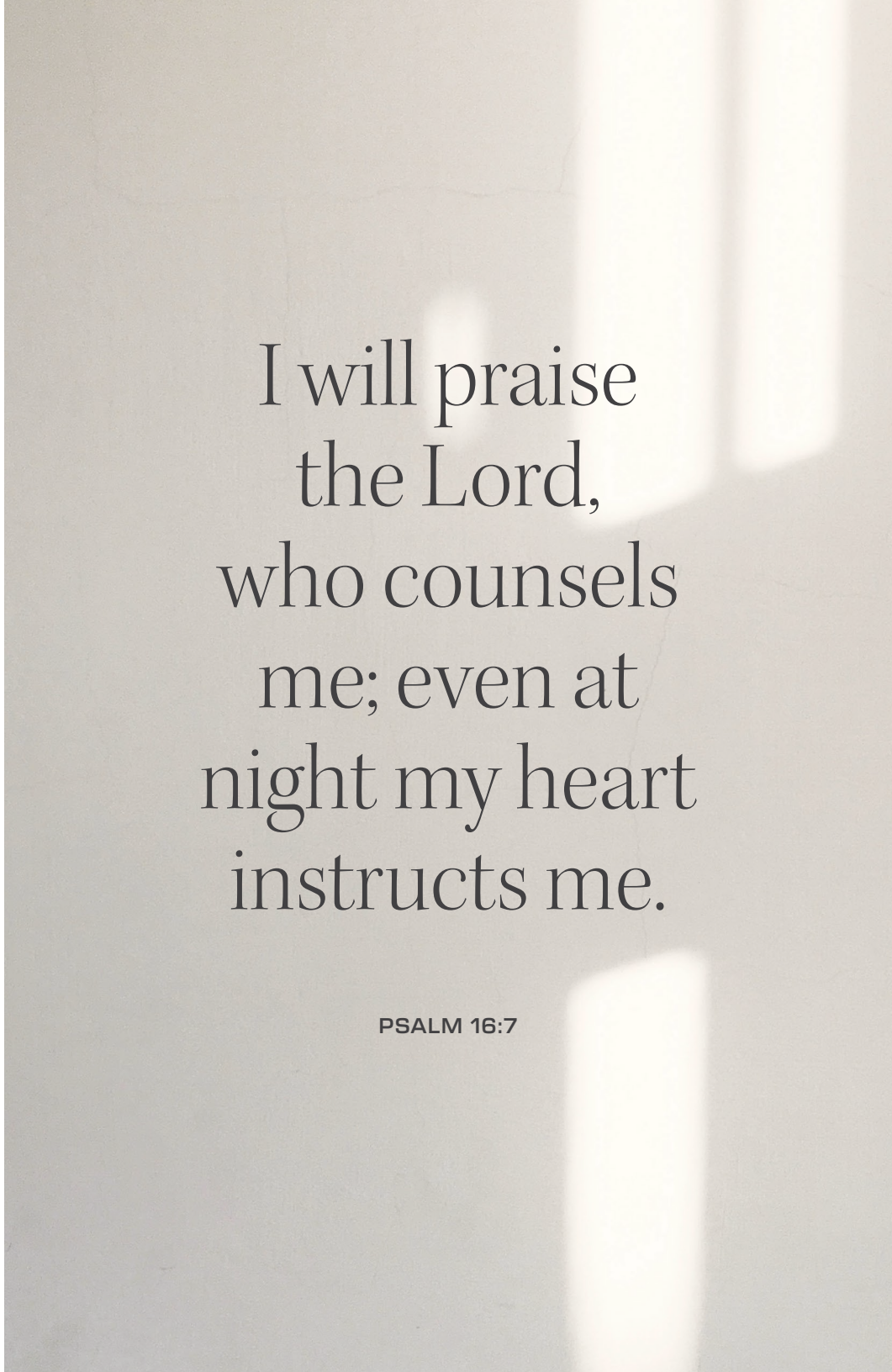
27 How can I better communicate and pray with my spouse so we can walk together down this exhilarating road of giving, leading each other but not leaving each other behind?

28 What am I doing to train my children to be generous givers—and not just donors, but disciples?

29 How is God calling me to steward my influence to share this message with my friends? Who could benefit from experiencing a Journey of Generosity? Could I host a group from my church or a board I serve on?

30 Five minutes after I die, what will I wish I would have given away while I still had the chance? Pray the following: "God, help me spend the rest of my life closing the gap between what I’ll wish I’d given then and what I’m actually giving now. Empower me to help others do the same. Would You, for Your eternal glory?"

These are a combination of questions written by Randy Alcorn (from “The Treasure Principle”) and Tim Keller. All questions are used with permission.



Reflections

But God demonstrates
His own love for us in this:
while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.

ROMANS 5:8

You are my Lord;
apart from You
I have no good thing.

PSALM 16:2

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it...

PSALM 24:1

Final Reflections

Ask

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you as we conclude this experience.

Listen

Spend some time sitting in silence and consider taking notes as you listen.

Come to Me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life.

ISAIAH 55:3

Obey

How do you sense the Holy Spirit leading you to respond?

For more video stories, teachings, and testimonials, visit **generousgiving.org/videos.**

Next steps on your journey

Our hope for every JOG participant is that they continue to seek first the Kingdom through listening and responding to the Holy Spirit's prompting. We also believe transformation is a process. The following steps are helpful for continuing the journey.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

BECOME A JOG HOST

- ☐ Gather your friends.
- ☐ Provide a space.
- ☐ The GG Team will provide a facilitator if you need one.

Learn more: **generousgiving.org/journey-of-generosity**

ATTEND A JOG FACILITATOR TRAINING

- ☐ Be equipped to lead the conversation for your JOG groups.

Learn more: **generousgiving.org/facilitator-training**

GROW DEEPER

- ☐ Explore more ways to continue your journey.

Learn more: **generousgiving.org/next-steps**

OUR VISION

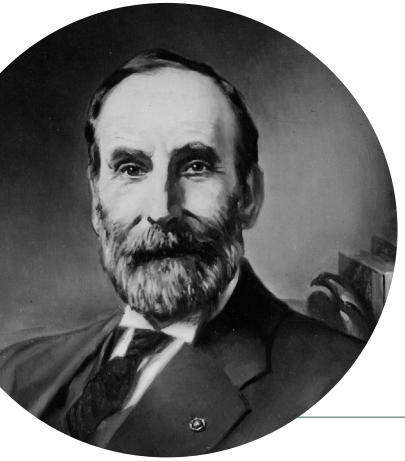
To see the generosity of God displayed through the generosity of God's people.

We envision a movement of Christians who give extravagantly of all that they are in response to God's radical grace. Our primary motivation is to see people liberated to live and give in God's image in order to see God's Kingdom come on earth.

This growing movement will create a dramatic shift in culture:

- Christians will be known for extravagant generosity rather than consumption or accumulation.
- Young people will be organizing their lives around giving before they get caught up in the constant pursuit of more.
- People will be coming to know Jesus because the generosity of Christians is so compelling that they want to know the God who inspires it.

In addition to culture being shaped, individuals will be transformed and find greater joy, freedom, and purpose as they trade away saving and consuming on earth for eternal treasure in heaven. As a result, billions of dollars will be released for God's Kingdom—sharing the Gospel, serving the needy, and healing the world.



Maclellan's Legacy of *Generosity*

"I consecrate all that I am and all that I have, the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time, and my influence over others, all to be used entirely for Thy glory and resolutely employed in obedience to Thy commands as long as Thou continuest me in life."

- THOMAS MACLELLAN, 1857

In 1857, in the small Scottish town of Blairgowrie, Thomas Maclellan wrote out a personal covenant and committed it to the Lord. It was the young Maclellan's 20th birthday, but his youth apparently was no hindrance to his phenomenal spiritual maturity. Having come to terms with his own sinful nature and the grace of God through Christ, he covenanted control of his life and all the proceeds to God Almighty.

Amidst both trials and successes, Maclellan would renew and confirm his covenant twice in the next half-century.

At 56, when his peers were enjoying the fruits of their career, Maclellan was starting over after a bank he ran failed. In a step of faith, Maclellan moved to Tennessee to run a struggling insurance company that insured the uninsurable. At great cost to his own family, Maclellan kept his word and not only paid back investors from the failed bank but also made good on his promise to pay all valid insurance claims within one week to those his company insured.

God blessed Maclellan, and seven generations later the company he built is the largest disability insurer in the world. In 1945, the family started The Maclellan Foundation. For more than 80 years, The Maclellan Foundation has carried the legacy of Thomas, who desired that all he had be used for the glory of God.

In 2000, The Maclellan Foundation founded Generous Giving to continue to foster the generous and faithful spirit that Thomas Maclellan embodied throughout his life. Because of their financial investment, along with that of other foundations and families, Generous Giving has been able to exponentially spread the message of biblical generosity from a safe and neutral platform without soliciting those we serve for financial gifts. More than 150 years after writing his covenant, the life of Thomas Maclellan continues to bring glory to the God he loved and served faithfully.

What We *Believe*

1. GIVING IS A HEART ISSUE

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **MATTHEW 6:21**

Clearly, giving releases resources. And while the resources liberated through acts of generosity are a blessing, they are literally a by-product of the transformational power of generosity within the giver's heart. The true message of giving is the liberation of hearts.

As we move closer to God, it becomes easier to see that the things in which we invest our time, money, and energy are the things that matter to us most. They are often things that ensnare us and stand in the way of liberation from materialism. Remarkably, in much the same way your treasure reveals your heart, the purposeful reallocation of your treasure can be an effective way to guide your heart away from earthly values and toward more meaningful treasure.

As Randy Alcorn explains in *The Treasure Principle*, "My heart always goes where I put God's money." According to Alcorn, giving is not only an indication of where your heart is, but it is also a means of moving your heart toward God's generosity in a never-ending journey, expanding your heart to hold all the blessings of a closer walk with God.

2. GOD GAVE FIRST

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son... **JOHN 3:16**

God is the ultimate model for giving—the most generous of all givers. God's grace has blessed us with goods, skills, and opportunities to generate what we need in our lives, and a rich and wonderful world in which to live out His calling. But at a level of giving beyond anything we can fully comprehend, God gave His Son, whose life bought our salvation.

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Paul presents a model that explains the origin and result of our generosity. "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and ... your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God" (v.11). God's grace and blessing is given so that we can be generous. As we are generous, we both supply the needs of others and show thanks to God (v.12) and others praise God because of our generosity (v.13).

God's giving to us is like the filling of a cup, and our giving to others reveals the cup running over. In the context of our own blessings and gratefulness, we learn to be generous givers. We didn't earn it; we never will. God's gift was the highest demonstration of unconditional generosity:

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

3. GOD OWNS IT ALL

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it... **PSALM 24:1**

Money managers administer assets for the benefit of the owner, but are always aware that the funds they handle are not their own. With all the attention you place on managing your money, how does your perspective change when you come to understand that it is not your money, your wealth, your possessions, or your assets, but instead that it all belongs to God?

We are God's money managers. The wealth of the earth and all its resources are entrusted to us, with the privilege to be stewards of its wise use. Our money is never ours to spend as we choose; our money is God's to spend as He directs.

4. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD

But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **MATTHEW 6:33**

In Matthew 6:24, Jesus reminds us, "You cannot serve both God and money." He adds in verse 25, "Therefore, do not worry about your life..." Jesus is assuring you that you do not have to worry about your earthly life because God has promised always to take care of you. And with earthly matters in God's control, you are free to pursue more spiritual matters, seeking first and above all else God's Kingdom and His righteousness through spiritual intimacy.

Intimacy with Christ offers the highest levels of satisfaction both right now and for eternity, but achieving it confronts us with the challenge to surrender our lives to Christ's Lordship. For many of us, the primary competitor for Lordship in our lives is money. We can even reframe it as security rather than materialism as we hold on to our fears and try to rationalize ways we may have managed money in the past.

But the space that we let money, wealth, materialism, and all its pursuits occupy in our lives is valuable spiritual real estate we could be surrendering to God. How is life different when Jesus is Lord compared to when money is lord?

5. HEAVEN, NOT EARTH, IS MY HOME

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ... **PHILIPPIANS 3:20**

Life is short. Eternity is long. And my home is in heaven, where I will spend eternity. This simple yet radical thinking begs an important question: Why should I invest so much time, energy, and resources in what is short? Why should I focus on my (or even my children's) very temporary life here on earth when heaven is real and coming and calling?

Spending money on earth is not wrong, but it may not be the best option, and it is clearly not the only option. It isn't wrong for us to spend money on things that are temporary. However, if we have an eternal perspective and understand that heaven, not earth, is our real home, then we know that we can store up treasures in heaven where we (and those reached with the Gospel) can experience them for eternity.

A life of generosity—for all who know Christ—means the opportunity to draw closer to God, now and in eternity. It means joy, a fulfilled heart, and the potential to store up treasures in heaven.

6. GIVING BRINGS JOY

"...remembering the words the Lord Jesus Himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" **ACTS 20:35**

"In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." (1 Timothy 6:19)

Your life becomes joyful, fulfilling, and purposeful as you live in God's calling. Joy is experienced in the act of giving, but even more so in the alignment of your heart with God's will.

As generosity comes into your heart, it blesses you in ways you know in the moment, in ways you recognize over a lifetime, and in ways that are revealed to you only in eternity. Generosity enables you to live in the joy of a "life that is truly life."

Seven Topics for *Deeper Reflection*

1. APPROACH

How am I approaching my giving today? Are there things I should consider doing to make it simpler, more organized, and more strategic? Does my giving really reflect my heart and my calling?

2. FAMILY

How much have I engaged my family in our giving? What are some practical ways we could do more as a family in this current season of life?

3. PARADIGM

Have I considered pressing into the question, “How much do I need?” instead of asking, “How much should I give?” Is 10 percent my goal, or am I giving proportionately to what God has entrusted me with?

4. ASSETS

If God owns it all, what does that mean for my assets? Have I considered giving from my portfolio, business, real estate, and other assets, instead of just from income?

5. WISDOM

What does it mean to give wisely? How do I choose charities and balance my giving portfolio? Who can I trust to come alongside and help me determine the wisest way to give?

6. COMMUNITY

Have I been walking the journey of generosity in community in a way that fosters encouragement and accountability? Who could I connect with who would understand the goals I have and the challenges I face?

7. LEGACY

What kind of legacy do I want to leave after I’m gone? What are some different ways I could pass on values, not just valuables? How will my legacy carry on into future generations?

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Survey and Next Steps

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