



Gracious Generosity Part 4
The Generosity of God
Psalm 103:1-5
2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:15
Westport Christian Church
January 31, 2010

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 Cor 8:9 NASU)

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (2 Cor 9:15 NASU)

Did you hear about the man who came out of the hills to get a job with a construction company? The first day he sat down to eat lunch with his foreman. The foreman opened up his lunch pail and pulled out a thermos. The new fellow looked at him and said, "what's that?" "Why it's a thermos bottle, one of the greatest things ever invented for lunch on the job." "What do you use it for?" "Well, you use a thermos to keep hot things' hot and cold things cold. Best thing ever invented for lunch."

The next day the construction company hired another fellow for the mountains. At lunch time he sat down with the new comer. The first fellow opened his lunch sack and pulled out a two-foot long thermos.

“What in the world is that thing?” Asked his friend. “Why it’s a thermos bottle and it is the greatest thing ever invented for lunch on the job.”
“What do you do with it?” “You use it to keep hot things’ hot and cold things cold.” “Well, what do you have in there?” “Chili soup and ice tea!”

The greatest things in the world really don’t mean much if we don’t know how to use them, or IF we don’t know their special purpose.

God’s generosity is one of the greatest gifts you and I will ever enjoy! However, for some God’s generosity isn’t real. For others, they believe God really couldn’t care about them or maybe He shouldn’t care about them. Others are so involved in looking at the things God has given other people—that they fail to see how generous God has been in their lives.

Job may have said it best, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."(Job 1:21NASU)

A woman was out shopping one day and decided to stop for a cup of coffee. She bought a bag of cookies, put them in her purse, and then entered a coffee shop. All the tables were filled, except for the one at which a man sat reading a newspaper. Seating herself in the opposite chair, she opened her purse, took out a magazine, and began to read.

After a while, she looked up and reached for a cookie, only to see the man across from her also taking a cookie. She glared at him; he just smiled at her, and she resumed her reading.

Moments later she reached for another cookie, just as the man also took one. Now feeling quite angry, she stared at the one remaining cookie—whereupon the man reached over, broke the cookie in half and offered her a piece. She grabbed it and stuffed it into her mouth, as the man smiled at her again, rose and left.

The woman was really steaming as she angrily opened her purse, her coffee break was ruined, and she put her magazine away. And there she saw her bag of cookies. All along she’d unknowingly been helping herself to the cookies belonging to the gracious man whose table she shared.

"The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD!"

Are we eating cookies from God's bag all the time thinking they are really ours?

There are two facts about the generosity of God that I would like to share with you today.

I. God's Generous—Don't forget it!

Bless the LORD, O my soul, And all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits; Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases; Who redeems your life from the pit, Who crowns you with loving kindness and compassion; Who satisfies your years with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle. (Ps 103:1-5 NASU)

Pick a person from history to tell you just how generous God is. How about King David? He was picked out of the pack of Jesse's boys as the one "after God's own heart." Placed in a position by God, to learn the work of being a King. Made to prosper by God, Himself. Was a wise leader, an excellent shepherd and superior warrior and a skilled musician. We may look and say, he had it all. But, he blew it all one night when he should have been at war.

Who better to tell us just how generous God is, than one who has experienced the "Amazing Grace of God first hand. ! David had blown it big time. The enemies of God had an opportunity to curse the God we love and serve. A man lost his wife, his positions, and his life—a baby died—a nation was caused to stumble. Publicly the King was called on the carpet by a prophet of God. It was time to repent. And do you know what the King did?

Here is what the King says about just how generous our God is. "Bless the LORD, O my souls, And all that is within me, bless. His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget none of. His benefits." What does it mean to, "Praise the Lord?" It means to express: appreciation, gratitude, respect, a joint relationship, our good will to the one who offers us his good will! What is MY "inmost being?" It is ALL that I

am. Heart, mind, soul, strength. ..”

David says—don’t forget God’s benefits! God forgives ALL our sins and David knew that first hand. Now there is a word that has taken a beating the past few decades, sin. By definition it means, a falling away, missing the right path, missing the mark. It used to be we could recognize sin, but that has been changed. We no longer call this an immoral society for we have become an amoral society!

Right and wrong are now categories with no universal meaning. Scripture is coming to life right before our very eyes; In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judg 21:25 NASU)

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. (2 Tim 4:3-4NASU)

No matter how we try to re-label sin—no matter how we try to deny its existence—no matter how smart we think we are—sin will always be SIN! It will always be wrong—it will always need forgiveness. There is none righteous, no not one! “For all have fallen short of the glory of God.”

We try to deny the effects of sin and we can’t. Guilt, sneaking around, nervousness, a refusal to worship, short temper, hardness of heart, loss of respect, embarrassment, constant attempt to rationalize, refusal to be around the righteous, and the list goes on and on.

How generous is God? He forgives our sins! Please don’t forget the forgiveness God gives you! God heals all of our diseases. Forgiveness and healing go hand in hand. We all would be overwhelmed if we knew the number of people who are sick—not because of physical ailments, but because of sin.

Studies have been done that prove the valuable effects of positive prayer on the lives of hospital patient’s. One dear saint put it this way. “God will heal me physically in this life, or He will give me a new body in the next life, either way I win!”

How generous is God? He redeems us from the Pit. The Pit is death,

destruction, separation from God, eternal darkness, Hell. How does He do that? Through Christ! Through His sacrifice, through the atoning death of Christ on the cross, through His victory over death, through our obedience to Him!

How generous is God? He adopts us into His family! We become a child of the King! The Scriptures tell us we are joint heirs with Christ. (Titus 3:7) We are no longer strangers and aliens, but are fellow citizens of the Kingdom. Just look at what we receive. The ability to love like Christ. The ability to care for other like Christ. Until we are a REAL part of the family of God, we are trying to show love and compassion on our own power and it will not work.

How generous is God? He satisfies our desires with good things. The changed life results in blessings. Jesus said, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. (John 15:7NIV)

He also said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (Matt 7:7-8NIV)

"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)

We see how generous God is when Jesus said, "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:11-13NIV)

We serve a generous God—Don't forget that! Even though God is a generous God, there is another part to this and that is . . .

II. My Responsibility—Accepting it!

There are four elements to understanding this. The first is, seek the

Lord. Jesus said, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matt 6:33-34NASU)

I heard about a multimillionaire who gave a testimony in church. He said, "When I was a young man I was poor. I came to church one day and heard a mission appeal for money. All I had to my name was a twenty-dollar bill. The missionary urged us to sacrifice, God touched my heart and I gave away that \$20. To this day I believe that God honored the time that I gave all that I had, and that is why I am rich today." An elderly lady sitting in the back shouted out, "I dare you to do that again!"

Secondly we must trust the Lord. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." (Prov 3:5-6NASU)

Thirdly is wait on the Lord. "Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary." (Isa 40:31NASU)

Do you remember how Mother Teresa started her first orphanage in Calcutta? She began as an ordinary sister in a convent with an extraordinary dream. She shared her heart's ambition with her superior. "Well how much money do you have?" "I have two pennies!" was her positive answer. "Oh, you cannot start an orphanage with just two pennies." "No, but with two pennies and God I can start an orphanage, and she did!

Our last responsibility is to live like the Lord. " Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor 5:17NIV)

Reflecting the family image is important if we are going to receive blessings from our Heavenly Father.

Our God is a generous God waiting for His children to accept His generosity. Mrs. Bertha Adams, 71, years old died alone in West Palm Beach Florida, on Resurrection morning. The coroner's report read": cause of death . . .

malnutrition.” She wasted away to fifty pounds.

When the state authorities made their preliminary investigation of Mrs. Adams home, they found a veritable, “pigpen . . . the biggest mess you could possibly imagine.” One seasoned inspector declared he’d never seen a dwelling in greater disarray. The woman begged food from neighbors’ back doors and had gotten what clothing she had from the salvation army. From all outward signs she was a penniless recluse, a pitiful and forgotten widow. But such was not the case.

Amid the jumble of her unclean, disheveled belongings, the officials found two keys to safe-deposit boxes at two different banks. In the first box were more than 700 AT&T stock certificates, and hundreds of other valuable certificates, bonds, and solid financial securities, not to mention a stack of cash amounting to nearly \$200,000.00. The second box contained \$600,000.00. Adding the net worth of the boxes, they found well more than a million dollars.

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 Cor 8:9 NASU)

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (2 Cor 9:15 NASU)

What I spent, is gone . . . What I kept, I lost. But what I gave away will be mine forever!

Have you given yourself to the One who has given everything for YOU?

Amen