

Generosity at its core is a lifestyle in which we share all that we have, are, or will ever become as a demonstration of God's love and as a response to God's grace. It flows from an understanding that all we have, are, or ever will become is not ours to possess, but only given to us to bring glory to God, to demonstrate the grace He poured out on us on the cross and continues to shower us with each day.

Defined as being unselfish, kind, and willing to give freely of one's time, money or resources to help others, generosity embraces a biblical understanding of stewardship:

1. God is the owner of everything
2. What has been given to us is *on loan* from God
3. Anything we possess is be invested in God's kingdom

We must confess that Jesus is LORD of:

1. "my" money
2. "my" possessions, treasures
3. "my" positions, authority
4. "my" talents, time

These gifts were generously bestowed on me for a purpose: as an opportunity to witness the reckless nature of God who gives us the free gift of salvation by grace to all who will receive it. Do you realize that when you are generous, God is using your hands, feet, and mouth to work through you to point others to Him? What an amazing privilege to honor Him!

Generosity is the fullest expression of the life of a steward. Jesus is the ultimate example. He left the splendors of heaven to be born a baby, to walk on earth in human form, ultimately suffering death for me! As the hymn aptly states, "Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe." I am a "caretaker," not an owner, and my generosity is a reflection of my faith in a God who can meet all my needs. My generosity, therefore, becomes an act of worship; it is not just a virtue that defines my behavior. I cannot merely commit to "being generous." Generosity is not a random idea or haphazard behavior, but an attitude of submission and faith in God.

Generosity is endangered in today's world, dominated by the "me first" attitude. It is not a trait that defines many people because it takes discipline to live sacrificially. Some give not for the benefit of others, but for their own benefit (recognition and praise), but God, the ultimate giver, gave His only son to die in our place, rise from the dead, and bring us eternal life. (John 3:16).

Prayer: As I travel life's path this week, I invite you God to give me opportunities to be a wise steward of what you have entrusted to me. I humbly submit all of me and all I have to all of You in faith and worship. Use me to accomplish Your good will. Amen.

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