



We **GIVE** generously to Serve Jesus



Opening prayer

Generous Father, all that we have comes from you. You have given us our time, our talent, and our treasure because you love us. In return you ask us to love others as we have been loved. May you Holy Spirit fill our hearts with your love so that we may live generously. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

It has been said that being born in the United States is equivalent to winning the lottery. Things that we think are ordinary possessions that nearly every household in America has would be items only the very rich have in much of the world.

List a few items that are in the average American household that would be examples of the statement of the previous paragraph.

Given such a standard of living, does most of the world consider you to be among the poor or among the wealthy in this present world?

READ 1 Timothy 6:17-19

List the things Paul tells Timothy to command “those who are rich in this present world” NOT to do.

- 1.
- 2.

Now list the things Timothy was to command them to do.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

According to verse 17 what does God richly provide us with?

Why are these commands good for us according to verse 19?

When we describe a person who is generous and kind we sometimes say that person would give you the shirt off of his/her back. This saying likely finds its origin in next verses we are going to read.

READ Luke 6:27-38

Jesus is the speaker in these verses. List some things Jesus expects of us that seem to be above and beyond normal human responses.

Verse 31 is the “golden rule.” Given the expectations Jesus has just laid out, what changes might you have to make in your understanding of the “golden rule?”

In verses 32-34 Jesus asks some tough questions. Was Jesus expecting answers? If not, why did He ask those particular questions?

In verse 35 Jesus raises the bar even higher. What does Jesus expect us to do for our enemies?

Is this starting to feel a little overwhelming? God’s standards are high. In fact, God’s standard is always perfection.

Take a little side trip and read **Luke 18:18-30**. Are you starting to wonder with those who were listening to the exchange between Jesus and the rich young man, “Who then can be saved?” How did Jesus address their concern?

In Luke 6:35 Jesus promises great reward and even adoption as God’s children. This isn’t a result of our wonderful works. What reason does Jesus give for the reward we will get?

In verse 36 why are we to be merciful?

Let’s make sure we understand clearly. We are not to be generous to gain a reward or salvation. Our generosity is to be a response to God who has been generous to us. For each verse below describe how God was generous to you.

Romans 5:8 -
John 15:13 -
Matthew 20:25-28 -
Romans 3:28 -
John 14:15-19 -
Psalm 130:3-4 -
John 5:24 -

When we are trying to fill a container as full as possible what do we do with its contents to try to get even more in the container?

How does Jesus use a similar image in Luke 6 verses 37 and 38?

How has God poured into your lap “a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over?”

V. 38 says, “For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” Contrast this statement with the golden rule. Are they saying the same thing? Explain.

READ Acts 2:42-47

"They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need." "...shared everything they had." "...shared their meals with great joy and generosity."

These are challenging standards. How is God calling you to be generous? What concerns cause you to hesitate in answering that call?

Remembering Jesus response in Luke 18:27 “What is impossible with man is possible with God”, take some time right now to pray about God’s call to you to be generous.

Summary

In Luther’s questions, in his Small Catechism, regarding the third article of the Apostle’s Creed (the Holy Spirit), Luther asks, “What is a good work in the sight of God?” Then he answers, “In the sight of God a good work is everything that a child of God does, speaks, or thinks in faith according to the Ten Commandments, for the glory of God, for the benefit of his neighbor.”

How does this question and answer relate to the generosity we have been discussing in this study?

List some ways God has been generous to you.

Give some reasons that you can confidently be generous with the blessings God has given to you.