

REVIVAL

When the Spirit opens our hands

Day 1: BECAUSE God's Spirit is generous

Read : 2 Corinthians 8

In these passages of scripture Paul is writing to the Corinthians encouraging them to give generously, eagerly, enthusiastically, and willingly. Paul is highlighting that true and lasting generosity doesn't come from obligation, reluctance, self-effort, self-righteousness, or even simply from our abundance.

True generosity comes from the Spirit of God, as an outpouring of the Spirit's presence in our lives. This type of generosity is a fruit of the Spirit as it says in Galatians 5:22-23. It is BECAUSE of what Christ did for us, BECAUSE of what God has given us, and BECAUSE of the Spirit's transformational power in our lives. True generosity starts with recognizing that we are recipients BEFORE we are givers. Everything good in our lives comes from Him (James 1:17).

Take a moment to think about the ways that you have experienced God's generosity lately. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Spirit to reveal the areas that you may have overlooked the blessings of God in your life. Think through each of these areas and spend time thanking God for what He has given you.

- God gives us time
- God gives us people
- God gives us gifts and abilities
- God gives us grace when we fail & forgiveness we could never earn
- God gives us provision for our lives through our finances & opportunities

Day 2: BECAUSE God's Spirit opens our hands

Read : Matthew 6: 19-34; 1 Timothy 6:17-21

True generosity requires us to loosen our grip on the blessings that God has given us. The Spirit's transformation teaches us that our resources, gifts, and provision are tools that He's given us to do His good work, not trophies for us to admire and keep for ourselves. This passage in Matthew 6 addresses the fears that we can sometimes have surrounding our feelings of not having enough, or having a scarcity mindset. Fear can push us to hold tightly to what we have been given as an attempt to control it for our own strength. Often, the desire to control something in our lives is simply fear disguised as strength, or fear justified as wise preparation. Generosity is the opposite

“Every good and perfect gift comes from above”

- JAMES 1:17

User Guide:

How to use this study guide:

- **Pray** : Ask God to reveal Himself to you.
- **Read** : Read the daily scripture, take notes, and write down anything the Spirit reveals to you.
- **Study** : Read the daily study section and prayerfully answer the discussion questions.
- **Act** : Use the “Spirit in Action” section each week to look for ways to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in your day-to-day life.
- **Gather & Share** : Gather with your small group and discuss what the Spirit has revealed to you during this weekly study.

• **NOTE**: If you need help finding a group - Please reach out to Melonie at: meloniep@gumchurch.com

of control in the sense that it's a dependence on God instead of ourselves. It is an outward demonstration of the faith & trust that we have in God to provide our needs.

What are you tempted to hold tightly to in your life? Where do you feel that need to control due to fear or anxiety? Spend time giving this over to the Lord today.

- My finances
- My time
- My possessions
- My recognition
- My plans for the future

Day 3: BECAUSE God's Spirit makes generosity a lifestyle

Read : Acts 2

Acts 2 describes the early church as God's Spirit works in and through their lives to transform them into a community that lives generously with each other. This includes, but also goes farther than, the generosity of our finances. This could include your time, your home, your attention, your gifts, your knowledge, your forgiveness, and ALSO your finances. Look over these practical daily examples below. Which of these do you tend to give easily and which do you tend to hold onto or protect? What has God ALREADY given you in these areas, that you could give generously through His strength?

- **Time**
 - Take the time to listen - put your phone away, be fully present, listen without fixing or turning the conversation back to yourself
 - Take the time to help someone in need - watch someone's kids while they escape for an hour, call or text just to check-in, help someone finish something hard
 - Take the time to be invitational - invite or include those that would normally be left out or that might be hard to be around
- **Knowledge**
 - Offer to mentor or teach someone in an area you are gifted in
 - Instead of being competitive, share helpful resources or opportunities
 - Volunteer in an area that God has gifted you in
 - Take the time to teach someone how to do something, rather than doing it for them
- **Grace**
 - Chose to forgive, and to pray for those that hurt you instead of getting even
 - Assume the best, and ask questions to understand
 - Give someone a second chance instead of defining them by their worst moment
 - Give others permission to be human, to not have it all together, to have limited capacity at times, and let "good enough" be "enough" in certain seasons
- **Encouragement**
 - Specifically tell someone what you appreciate about them
 - Write a note to someone that has impacted your life
 - Encourage someone who rarely gets noticed

Day 4: BECAUSE God's Spirit doesn't keep score

Read : Luke 6:20-49

True generosity doesn't require repayment and it doesn't keep a secret "scorecard". Spirit led generosity doesn't say, "if I do this, then they should _____".

Spirit in Action

Join us each week as we look for ways to practice experiencing the gifts of the Spirit in Action.

Love

Read : John 13:35

Ask the Spirit - What would your love look like through me today?

1. SEE

Notice **WHERE** the Spirit is showing you love is needed.

- Notice a need and respond vs. waiting to be asked
- Notice when someone is struggling vs. trying to be difficult
- Notice what needs patience and grace vs. correction
- Notice the tension and consider how to bring peace
- Notice who is right in front of you that you may have overlooked, taken for granted, or even ignored

2. ASK

Ask the Spirit **HOW** to show love in His strength.

- How to encourage
- How to listen well
- How to support
- How to say no, or yes, and be obedient to operating in His strength
- How to see someone the way He sees them
- How to forgive
- How to be fully present

Spirit led generosity says:

- **I can give without controlling the outcome**
- **I can serve without needing recognition**
- **I can bless without demanding reciprocity**
- **I can love without keeping score**

Spirit led generosity ALSO doesn't mean living without healthy boundaries. Jesus himself had boundaries and He didn't make everyone happy. He withdrew, rested, said no when others wanted him to say yes, and He didn't meet every need or demand that was asked of Him. Being generous doesn't mean being unlimited, giving beyond our capacities, or meeting everyone's needs. Only God is unlimited, and we weren't created to sit on His throne. True generosity is expressed through the power of the Holy Spirit in obedience to what God has called you to give and do in your life. Generosity should flow FROM God's abundance, not from our striving & exhaustion.

Spirit led generosity *also* says:

- **I can be generous without giving beyond what I have to give** (in energy, capacity, availability, emotional bandwidth, and time)
- **I can be generous without managing other's emotions or people pleasing**
- **I can be generous without creating dependency on myself**
- **I can be generous by saying "I can't, but God can"**
- Which of these "I can" statements from today do you struggle with the most?
- Take a moment today to allow the Spirit to search your heart and begin to show you the areas where you might be keeping score or pointing to yourself, instead of pointing others to Him.

3. ACT

Ask the Spirit to **HELP** you put His love into motion by practicing His love.

- Make the phone call
- Send the text
- Sit and listen without fixing
- Bring a meal
- Give your time
- Apologize first
- Speak truth in love
- Celebrate their success
- Pray for them
- Saying no when it's best
- Invite them
- Wait for them

Remember that acting in love isn't always doing more, sometimes it's doing what's right - even when it's hard. Listen to the Spirit's voice, trust His wisdom, and be obedient to His leading.

Day 5: BECAUSE God's Spirit moves through us

Read : 2 Corinthians 9

God is generous to us, not only to bless us, but also so that we can pour out that generosity towards others in our lives. His Spirit transforms us so that we can be used by God to do His good work here on earth. He moves in and through us in order to bless others by what He has freely given to us. God wants us to be the conduits of His generosity. Ask yourself this week - **What has God generously placed in your hands that He is asking you to generously pour out to others?**

- Has God blessed you financially? - Ask God if He wants to use you to financially bless your church, local ministries, or your community with that gift.
- Has God blessed you with gifts, talents or abilities? - Ask God where He wants to use your time and abilities to bless, volunteer, or serve others in your life.
- Has God blessed you with community, friends and family? - Ask God how He wants you to open your doors to invite others in, to give others a seat at your table, and to allow them to be blessed by it too.

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion"

- 2 CORINTHIANS 9:11