



THURSDAY 11.18.10

1 Corinthians 13:3

In 1 Corinthians chapter 13, we have what is often called the “Love Chapter,” a biblical definition of what love really is and its importance. This especially makes sense when we remember John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son!” The love of God was the motivation that led to the cross, the greatest act of love and the greatest act of generosity in history. When we learn to bind generosity and love into one idea, then the entire act of giving changes, and so do we.

- Why do you think that giving in all its aspects — to church, to family, to God — is incomplete if it is separated from loving God and loving neighbor? Why might you think that unreserved love is not only a powerful motivation but the source of really living well?
- Many times acts of generosity or giving can be done for self-benefit, “What can I get out of this?” Why is giving without regard to return the greatest act of love and, yet, still results in the greatest benefits?



FRIDAY 11.19.10

Philippians 4:11-13

The apostle Paul had written a letter of thanks to the church at Philippi for their faithful life together; they had initiated an act of generosity, of giving to Paul and the ministry, that was so integral to the early Church. Here Paul shares in a few words his own philosophy of life and generosity in that same letter, “I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity . . . I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!”

- How might consistent generosity help us learn how to live in prosperity? Why can prosperity be an illusion of security? How easy is it to trust what we have more than we trust God? And, why is it so easy to do this?
- When times are tough and we find ourselves living with “humble means” (Dave Ramsey calls it “beans and rice / rice and beans”), what can we learn? Why might we consider this an opportunity to grow in what is really important? How is generosity reflected during this season?



GROW • PRAY • STUDY

A RESOURCE FOR DISCIPLES SEEKING TO LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS & SERVE THE WORLD . . .

Series: *Thank You*
Message: *Thank You for Your Offering!*
Scripture: **Philippians 4:10-19**

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon:



Introduction

Philippians chapter 4 is rich with promises that God makes to this amazing church in Philippi, a church that Paul writes this “thank you” letter to, a church that was generous, faithful and open to the voice of God. These promises are for us today as well. When we struggle to be faithful and generous, these promises kick in, not because of reward but because of the relationship that develops between the believer, the church and God.

Some of these promises:

- *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13)
- *“And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:19)
- *“I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance . . .”* (Philippians 4:12)

This part of the Bible is all about the relationship, a relationship between people who trust God and a God who honors that trust, people who love God because God first loved them.

HEAVENLY FATHER, THANK YOU FOR YOUR MANY PROMISES. I NEED THEM FOR I AM NOT ENOUGH. STRENGTHEN ME, PROVIDE FOR ME AND TEACH ME TO BE THE PERSON YOU DESIGNED ME TO BE. I TRUST YOU WITH MY LIFE, MY SOUL, MY FUTURE AND MY MONEY.



TUESDAY 11.16.10

1 John 3:16-18

The standard for those who choose to follow Jesus Christ is simply and clearly made here — the case for the generous life. We know what love is because “Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.” (1 John 3:16) These verses remind us that God gives everything to us — our possessions as well as everlasting life — just because He loves us. There are no strings attached. The passage goes on to teach us to share, to give to others who are in need. Why? Because we love God and love our neighbor. It’s life we are talking about.

- Can you name a time when you gave a gift to God just because you loved Him?
- Can you give an example from your life in which you gave to someone or some cause, financially or otherwise, out of a deep compassionate sense of life with no strings attached?
- How might practicing generosity help love grow in our lives?



MONDAY 11.15.10

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Timothy is a young pastor who is receiving instructions as to how to lead a church. The church has affluent people within it, and Paul speaks to them specifically. In our community, most of us probably fall into the affluent category, at least in biblical terms. It seems that there is a temptation for people to put their trust in wealth, in themselves, in what they have instead of in God.

- Why are we tempted to put our trust in what we have or hope to have rather than in God? In verse 17, the word “arrogance” is used — “Do not be arrogant,” it records. Why might God consider it arrogant when we trust money rather than our creator, the giver of Jesus Christ? Who is really in control of our future?
- How does doing good, being rich in good deeds and being generous bring balance to the Christian life and help define what the Christian life is really about?



WEDNESDAY 11.17.10

Matthew 5:23

We might think that when someone brings a gift to the temple, to the church or to anyone, that the recipient would be happy to receive it under any circumstances. After all, good things can be done with the money, and possibly the giver might be elevated somewhat just because of the act of giving. But here we see Jesus putting a condition on gifts — somehow giving must go deep into the heart and life of the giver as well as the receiver.

- Why might acts of generosity go deeper than just the exchange of money or services? These important words connect relationships with God and each other as a core idea in giving. Why do you think that Jesus places relationships above giving in this passage?
- Jesus is teaching us that God wants the whole person in the act of generosity — heart, soul and mind offered in the giving. The gift cannot be separated from the giver. Right attitude is everything.
