

Treasures of Heaven Series  
The Joy of Generosity  
November 4 – 5, 2023

Welcome back to our series entitled Treasures in Heaven where we will talk about the fo real kine treasures awaiting for those who choose to embrace ways of God's kingdom. If you missed last week's introduction message by PMark, gotta catch um on our NHCO website as He gives a great roadmap for our series. Tonight/ Today, I get to speak on the Joy of Generosity. The joy that comes when we can be a people generous with all the resources God has entrusted us with.

How so, it's all about choosing to be a conduit, a pipeline, through which God's blessings flow generously to others. It's about not being a cul-de-sac of riches, hoarding wealth, but being a channel through which God's blessings reach those in need. We'll talk about how being generous with your time, talent and treasures isn't just about being a good person, but also about being more like Jesus. Listen up, you'll hear about the joy in generosity and the amazing blessings that come with living in this way. I sure all of us want to live a blessed life, where everything is good inside? How many of you want to do so? Raise your hands. The rest of you, you not sure you like live one blessed life.

The term "blessed", or divine favor where everything is good inside, is the goodness of God flowing **to** you so that it can flow **through** you. You see, we fall into trap of desiring divine favor for ourselves without a thought about how we can pass it on to others.

The moment we become a cul de sac Christian, rather than a Conduit Christian, and the moment you want God to flow **to** you, and care less about how God flows **through** you, we limit what God wants to do **to** you. You so don't want to be a self centered Christian. No, no, no! So I tell you, when you ask God to do something

**for** you, make sure you are interested in seeing how God can work **through** you, to benefit someone else than **only** you. Then, God will be good inside to work **through** you, to be joyfully generous to those he's placed **around** you. And then you'll experience the promise of having the joy He gives **to** you!

Is that good! Can I hear a "Dass it, Pastah!"

I want to highlight that the Bible has much to say about generosity. Let's explore some of the verses that emphasize this virtue: (Show all Scripture **KEYNOTE**)

And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God (Hebrews 13:16 NLT).

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done (Proverbs 19:17 NLT).

The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor (Proverbs 22:9 NLT).

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God (2 Corinthians 9:10 – 11 NIV).

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life (1 Timothy 6:17 – 19 NLT).

And these passages are just some of what God says about generosity.

And this is what Paul says

"I have never coveted anyone's silver or gold or fine clothes. You know that these hands of mine have worked to supply my own needs and even the needs of those who were with me. And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:33 – 35 NLT).

**OG DISCUSSION Q1:** From those scripture passages above, what are some of the promises for those who chooses follow the command to be generous?

In short, we are blessed to be a blessing. Tell the person next to you. You are blessed to be a blessing. Tell the other person, I'm blessed to be a blessing. Paul had an eternal perspective not a worldly one in that he worked hard to help those in need.

The immense joy of being a conduit Christian far surpasses that of being a cul-de-sac Christian. I live at the end of a cul-de-sac, which is ideal for a residence, but not for living in God's world. We want to live with God's power flowing in and through us, making us a people of generosity. That's what we'll be discussing today. How many of you wanna learn the secrets of being blessed to be a blessing?

The secret lies in learning to a person of generosity!

While our NHCO Holy Land tour is postponed until 2025 due to the ongoing conflict in Israel, the tour will take you to experience two bodies of water, the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Though they are technically lakes, they represent a big difference. The Sea of Galilee teems with life because it receives a constant flow of water from the mountains of Lebanon, with an outlet that ensures the water remains fresh. On the other hand, the Dead Sea, with no outlet, becomes toxic due to the accumulation of nutrients and minerals.

Show Pics of those bodies of water (**Keynote**)

And although the nutrients end up there, it's so nutrient filled, it's toxic. No can drink from it. One swish of it and you'll be ill. Right Jalee! Jalee made the



**At 1400' below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on Earth. The Jordan River is the only major water source flowing into the Dead Sea. There are no outlet streams.**



**What a view overlooking the beautiful sea of the bible, the Sea of Galilee**



**Sunrise at the shores of the Dead Sea. Floaters, not swimmers, are already taking in the healing waters of the Dead Sea. The sun is rising over the mountains of Jordan.**

mistake of making tea from water thinking it was tap water. And she spat it out, and later, was so sick.

We surely don't want to be the Dead Sea. So rich, but toxic to those around us.

**OG DISCUSSION Q2:** Reflect upon your life from the perspective of the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Which characterizes more how you live?

Can you believe we're in November now. The last time I checked we were still in summer. Now it's mid fall and soon it will be Christmas.

And one of the best Christmas stories that has been turned into countless movies is the 1843 classic by Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*. This remains one of the longest-running, most-adapted, and most-relevant holiday tales to date. More than 170 years after the infamous miser-turned-do-gooder, Stingy Grouch transformed into a Generous Giver, what's his name, Ebenezer Scrooge. He

entered our culture for the first time, there are still quite a few folks out there who could do with taking in this timeless lesson to heart.

The good news is that Scrooge eventually transforms, and we, too, can transform with the power of the Holy Three Ghosts,

- The Ghost of Christmas Past represents memory. ...
- The Ghost of Christmas Present represents generosity and good will. ...
- The Ghost of Christmas Future represents fear of death.

And it's great Christmas family movie to take in to learn about his transformation.

Everything about Christmas for Ebenezer Scrooge, in his infamous line "Bah Humbug". And there's many today that may not say this, but are so miserly, that they live in misery.

You see the bible is filled with blessing stories from Jesus. But Jesus also taught in warnings as well. And to be balanced in our teachings at NHCO, can't only focus on the blessings, but gotta teach on the warnings too.

Just like getting a dog brings joy but also comes with the warnings of responsibilities. Likewise, generosity has its rewards but also its challenges. As Jesus warns us in Luke 12:15, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

Let me read you a Jesus warning story just like the Christmas Carol that Jesus told about a Rich guy dat not tink so good. And I go read um in Hawaii Pidgin, and you can follow along. **(KEYNOTE)**

Get plenny peopo ova dea, an one guy tell Jesus, "Teacha, tell my braddah he gotta half half da stuff oua faddah wen leave us wen he mahke, an give me my share." Jesus tell, "Eh, who wen give me da right fo judge dat, o fo half half da stuff an give you yoa share an yoa braddah his share?" Jesus tell da peopo, "Watch out! Make shua you no try get eryting fo ony you, cuz if you get plenny stuffs, dat no mean you goin live fo real kine!"

Den Jesus tell one story fo teach um: "One rich guy get one land, an he get plenny wheat. He tink, 'Wat I goin do? I no mo place fo store my wheat an odde stuffs. I know wat I goin do! I goin bus up my store houses an make um mo big, an inside I goin store all my wheat an odde

stuffs. Den I goin tell, “Eh, fo shua I one lucky guy! I get plenny good stuffs store up fo long time. Az why I can take it easy, an eat an drink an party up!” But God tell, ‘Eh brah! Wat you tinkin! Tonite you goin mahke! Den who goin get all da stuffs you wen stack up?’ “Dass wat goin happen to all da peopo dat pile up big stack stuffs ony fo dem, but God see um jalike dey no mo notting.” (Luke 12:13 – 21 DGASB).

Jesus ends his teaching with these words. **(KEYNOTE)**

“Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be (v. 33 – 34 NLT).

Things haven’t changed in our world today, especially in America. We're filling our lives with so much material possessions that the U.S. now has more self-storage facilities than McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger Kings, Starbucks and Walmarts combined. That's around [50,000 storage complexes](#).

People don’t even park their cars in their garages no moa. It becomes a storage of stuff that could be given away. I know, I’m small guilty of this too.

God's economy stands in stark contrast to the world's economy. We often fill our lives with things that don't truly matter, overlooking the essence of life itself.

God’s economy is so different from our economy. I want to introduce many of you with this kingdom value. I want to teach you the first fruit principle of the kingdom of God.

This principle is rooted in scriptures such as Exodus 23:19 and Proverbs 3:9-10, emphasizing the importance of honoring the Lord with our wealth and the firstfruits of our crops. **(KEYNOTE)**

It was Moses who said, “As you harvest your crops, bring the very best of the first harvest to the house of the Lord your God.” (Exodus 23:19 NIV)

King Solomon wrote about it too: “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10 NIV)

The premise is simple: if we honor God with our wealth, dedicating the first and best portion to Him, He promises to overflow our lives with spiritual blessings.

That's God's economy. Not the world's. Can't understand how God works, but he does. There are so many stories of God's people living like this and they a blessing to others. You heard it said, "Can't out give God". Yeah, he's given us so much. And what we have is not even ours anyway!

The first harvest is often the best. I lived in the tea growing prefecture of Japan years ago, where you get matcha. And the first tea of the season, Shincha, is highly valued and cherished as a precious gift you give to special people. Similarly, we are called to give God our first and best, not the leftovers.

**OG DISCUSSION Q3:** How can you adopt the 1<sup>st</sup> Fruits Giving Principle to your life in your time, talent, and especially your treasures? Don't delay as delayed obedience is delayed blessings.

I know many of you practice this principle. You give of your best to God first. Sadly, many give God and others their leftovers.

If we truly understand what we've been given, it would be a disconnect if we aren't generous. We've been given so much. Redeemed relationship with God, Guarantee eternal/after this life, power over my strongholds, freed me from my past, healed me. Can't put a price on this and the joy we have.

It's hard to be generous without knowing how much you really have. Correct? That's why, I'm excited to announce that we'll be offering the Financial Peace University course. This nine-week program will equip you to manage your



finances wisely and be faithful stewards of God's resources. I encourage each one of you to consider participating in this life-changing course.

Watch this promo. **(KEYNOTE)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91q67aPJg-Y>

Jesus shared stories about generous and ungenerous people, emphasizing the importance of where our treasures lie. It's not about the quantity but the quality of our giving. Remember the story of the poor widow in Mark 12:41-44, who gave all she had? Her generosity, though seemingly small, was immeasurable in God's eyes. We are called to that kind of sacrificial giving.

Generosity is not just about giving money, our treasures; it's also about giving from our time and talents to serve God and others. When we learn to be generous stewards, we experience immense joy from being a blessing to others. We don't give to receive accolades from others but to worship God in secret, as Jesus taught in Matthew 6:3-4. **(KEYNOTE)**

Jesus said, "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:3-4 NLT).

Jesus' command to give in such a way that one hand is unaware of what the other hand is doing is obviously not to be taken literally. The context suggests that the command to "not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" refers to [giving alms](#), monies or goods given to those in need. In secret and stands in contrast with drawing attention to our giving. Those who give in order to receive accolades from others have already received their reward. God will reward those who give in secret.

In other words, not to show off that you are such a generous person. That would be such a disconnect? Look at me at how much I give. Already lost your reward!

That's why I got some hesitation from a couple of people who I wanted to feature in sharing about their joy of generosity.

There are so many generous people that give of their time, talents, and treasures in our church ohana. And I pray they experience their rewards from the audience of one, God their Father.

As we conclude this message, I want to invite you to reflect on what the Holy Spirit has spoken to you tonight.

You have a Connection Card on your seat, and I encourage you to respond in one way or another. Whether it's a comment, an application, a question, or signing up for the Financial Peace University Course, let's take this opportunity to respond and commit ourselves to living a life of generosity.

There is a promise for those who choose generosity. **(KEYNOTE)**

The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed (Proverbs 11:25 NLT).

Don't all of us want to prosper and be refreshed? The key is being generous as God has been so generous with us.

**OG DISCUSSION Q4:** What is the Holy Spirit prompting you do to after hearing this message today?

One day, we'll all face God, and we'll have to give an account of how we managed or stewarded what was entrusted to us, your best time (are you gonna spend it on yourself or give your best to what really matters?). How about your talent? (did you use your skills and special abilities to honor me or did you keep them to yourself?). Did you just store up your treasures on earth or did you give them away as blessing to others?

End with God being the most generous. He gives his best in his son and his son models the giving of himself as a servant to his followers. The gift that keeps on giving. That's the heart of our father.