

Generosity for Everyone

It has been an exciting summer around my house. I have had the privilege of watching my college daughter volunteer at the local children's hospital as a patient pal. My wife has taken time out of her busy realty business to serve a family that has been through a pretty big crisis. My son, who is about to graduate college, is dreaming of how he can impact the future lives of others and benefit his local church. I've texted our family giving to our local church, helped another family meet a need, and touched a few buttons on an APP donating to a local charity. It is just pretty normal stuff, nothing exceptional, just moments of generosity from everyone.

No matter how old we are or how much we earn, everyone can live generously. Let's look at a few examples in the Bible for inspiration. I am first drawn to the **boy with the fishes and loaves**. While I am not sure how old he is, he appears to be old enough to travel to town and take care of a chore for his family. He probably knows the value of money and certainly of food. Then Jesus and His disciples come along asking if they can use his resources to help others. I don't think the boy was wrestled to the ground and had his groceries taken. I think he gave them willingly, but had no clue what was about to happen. I wonder if it turned out to be the best day of his life. He probably got home late, couldn't wait to tell mom, and bragged to all his friends. I bet it left him pretty eager to go to town again looking forward to his next giving adventure.

Then I want to jump to the other end of the spectrum. It's the **poor widow** who gave all she had. I would imagine in the modern church if a poor widow showed up at her pastor's office wanting to give all she had, her gift may very well be declined. Her pastor wouldn't want to hurt her feelings, but she needs her resources more than the church does. Actually, the church has a Benevolence Fund she could benefit from. I love that neither Jesus nor the poor widow were concerned about what the future holds regarding her financial needs. Jesus was more than willing to accept her gift and she was more than willing to give it.

Of course, there was the **rich young ruler** who had more than enough. Jesus asked him to do as the poor widow did and give everything, but he refused. Pretty interesting that a young boy gives all he had one day and a poor widow gives all she has on another day. Evidently generosity is for everyone and it has nothing to do with the amount of resources you possess or how old you are.

Now I am thinking of **Zaccheus** and **Barnabas**, two very successful men in the prime of their earning careers. While I am not sure how long Barnabas has been a believer, I do know that he is way ahead of Zaccheus. Zaccheus isn't even a believer when his story begins, but by the end of it he is living extravagant generosity. Barnabas actually surrenders an entire piece of property he owns, and gives it to the church to distribute the resources no strings attached.

Here are some things we can learn from a few ordinary people from the Bible who on random days decided to be giving:

1. Giving is for everyone regardless of your age.

2. Giving is for everyone regardless of your net worth.
3. Giving is for everyone regardless of how strong your faith is.
4. Giving is for everyone regardless of what has been previously planned in your life.
5. Giving is indeed for everyone.

Now, I do know giving can be hard at times. It is not always top of mind. I think everyone would agree that giving is good both personally and for the world at large. Just imagine what life would be like if everyone lived just a little bit more generously everyday?

The Bible also contains real stories of our struggles with being a giving person. You actually do not have to travel very far in the Bible to be captured by the story of **Cain and Abel**. Both gave. One got it right and the other had some learning to do. We have already mentioned the **rich young ruler** who just couldn't do it. Then when I shared about Barnabas, you may have been inclined to think of **Ananias and Sapphira**. So while giving is for everyone we all struggle with how to be both willing and joyful givers at times. So maybe we should add a few more principles.

6. Giving is for everyone even though we all fail at it at times.
7. Everyone can learn to be better at living generously.
8. The more generous we all are the better our world is.

As you may have already guessed, **I am pretty passionate about generosity**. If you are interested in learning more, then you may want to check out our latest resource. I had the privilege of partnering with the highly-skilled curriculum team at LifeWay and we put together [Generous Life](#) resources. We took 10 Bible heroes and unpacked five different types of givers helping all ages develop their own growth plan. It contains five sermon outlines, with accompanying small group leader guides for all ages. Yes, all ages are included. There is even a weekly family devotion to do in the home.

The [Generous Life](#) is not the stuff of super heroes or mega saints. It is a great way to live for normal people. Generosity is indeed for everyone, so let's all join the journey of getting a little better at it each day.

> [Read more from Todd](#)

Want to learn more about generosity for everyone; [connect with an Auxano Navigator and start a conversation with our team](#).