



Living A Generous Life Luke 9:10-17

Lessons on living a generous life from the feeding of the five thousand. The following story happened in Bethsaida.



Luke 9:10-17

10 And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing.

12 When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."

13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."

14 For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty."

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

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Jesus called His disciples to live a generous life. When they came to him with this need, Jesus said, “You give them something to eat.” (verse 13).

- [The need to live a generous life will increase through discipleship \(verse 10\)](#)

Jesus sent the disciples out to make disciples in the region of Galilee. He divided the 12 into six teams and they traveled throughout Galilee proclaiming the Kingdom of God, healing the sick, and casting out demons. As a result, they were now faced with the task of feeding five thousand men.

The same things happened in the book of Acts. As disciples made disciples, their number in the church at Jerusalem grew from 120 to 3120 and then to 5000. Their overhead went up. There was a need for more leadership. The number of the poor multiplied.

As our church reproduces disciples that make disciples, the need for God’s people to live a generous life will increase through discipleship.

- [The purpose of living a generous life is to grow the Kingdom of God \(verse 11\)](#)

Before Jesus fed the people, He spoke to them about the Kingdom of God. The ministry of Jesus was not a just a social service to meet the material needs of people. The purpose of His ministry was to grow His Kingdom. His social ministry was a way of confirming His Kingdom message. Wherever and whenever Jesus served people, He preached the message of His Kingdom.

The first deacon’s ministry in the church served the more material needs of the people. It relieved the apostles of this responsibility so they could devote themselves to the Word and prayer.

But the deacon’s ministry at Jerusalem was a way to confirm the Kingdom message. The deacons did not leave preaching the message of the kingdom of God to the apostles. Stephen died a martyr because preached about the Kingdom of God. (Acts 7). Philip became a missionary to the Samaritans.(Acts 8).

The purpose of everything we do as a church or a member of the church to live a generous life is to make disciples and grow the Kingdom of God.

- Living a generous life means giving more than what you are expected to give. (verses 12-13)

The disciple's solution to the problem was a reasonable one and what was expected. I doubt if there was anyone in the crowd that expected Jesus and His disciples to feed them.

Living a generous life means giving more than what is expected. Jesus said you feed them.

Jesus said if you are asked by a Roman soldier to go with him one mile, go with him two. (Matthew 5:41)

In the church at Jerusalem, disciples sold their possessions and laid the proceeds at the apostle's feet to meet the needs of the church. This was giving beyond what was expected of them. (Acts 2:44-45)

Paul praised the Macedonian church for being generous because their giving was beyond their ability. They gave out of their poverty. (2 Cor. 8:1-4)

Many people consider themselves to be living a generous life when all they are giving is what they should be expected to give!

There were Jews that thought they were being generous by giving their tithes and offerings that were required in the law of Moses. The prophet Malachi told them that the tithe was what God expected them to give. He told those Jews that were not tithing that they were stealing from God. (Malachi 3:8-12)

There are those in the church that think they are being generous if they care for their widowed mother. Paul said caring for your widowed mother is what is expected. He said even the infidels care for their widowed mother. (1 Timothy 5:8)

When we give more than what we are expected to give as Christians, it gets the attention of the world.

(Example: Hugh Sauer and Sandra's family)

I am sorry to say it is the greatest reason that the church of Jesus Christ is not winning in our society. We are even failing to give what is expected to our own family and church family.

Living a generous life means giving more than what you are expected to give.

- God's call to live a generous life is always greater than our ability (verses 12-13)

The 12 disciples of Jesus did not have the means to feed 5000 men. But Jesus called them to do it.

This story is repeated in scripture. God calls His people to do things that are beyond their ability to perform.

- Abraham and Sarah
- Moses
- Joshua
- Mary

This is why so many believers fail to obey God call to live a generous life. You don't answer God's call to disciple because you don't have the ability. You don't answer God's call to serve because you don't have the ability. You don't answer God's call to give because you don't have the ability.

God's call to live a generous life is always greater than our ability.

- To obey God's call to live a generous life we must live by faith in God's ability (verses 14-15)

The disciples obeyed Jesus. They made the crowd sit down in groups of 50 based on their faith in His ability to deliver what was needed.

The scripture says, "faith without works is dead."

James 2:20-26

20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

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Faith is always an exercise in obedience that involves obeying what God is telling you to do because you believe that God will do what He has promised to do. This believing is even when you do not know how He is going to provide what is needed.

- God's call to live a generous life is a greater blessing to everyone when everyone does their part (verse 16)

Each disciple did His part to organize the crowd in groups of 50 or at least 100 groups. Each disciple did His part by delivering the food to each group. Each disciple did His part by gathering the left overs.

What if half of the twelve disciples would have refused to their part?

It would not have stopped Jesus from blessing the multitudes. It would have put a greater burden on the six that did their part. The six that did not participate would not have received the blessing of doing their part.

- God's call to live a generous life unlocks the abundant life that Jesus promised His disciples (verse 17)

Because the disciples trusted Jesus and did their part, after everyone ate and was filled, they gathered 12 baskets full of bread and fish.

The Greek word used in Luke 9:17 is KOPHINOS.



KOPHINOS, was "a wicker basket," (made of twigs or branches) originally containing a certain measure of capacity. It was designed so that it could be carried on the back to hold provisions, it is believed that they were *Ephah* size, about $\frac{3}{5}$ of a bushel basket.

The disciples of Jesus would have had enough left over to take care of their meals for several days. These were left overs that were a joy to eat.

Jesus promised his disciples an abundant life.

[John 10:10](#)

[10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.](#)

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The way to that abundant life is unlocked as we obey God's call to live a generous life with our money, our time, and our effort, trusting in God's ability.

(The example of Rebekah-Genesis 24-Because she lived a generous life, she experienced an abundant life that was beyond all that she could ask or think.

She became an heir to the wealth of Abraham and heir to God's promise to Abraham)

After I received Jesus, every great opportunity I have ever experienced has come to me as a result of living by faith and being generous in some way.

- I surrendered my life to full time service and as a result, God provided a way for me to go to OBU.
- I was called to serve as the president of the BSU at OBU and because I accepted that call, I met my late wife Debbie in Glorieta NM at a meeting for BSU presidents.
- After I got out of seminary, my mentor Bob Burgess asked me to attend a meeting with him at OCU where he was speaking, and because I went to serve him, I met Mike Barnett, a member of the pulpit committee at Western Hills.
- In 1990, Bob Hoffman asked me to come to speak for a week at his summer basketball camp and as a result, we have seen over 1000 young men make professions of faith.
- I met Tom and Kay Hill because I agreed to serve on a committee for another ministry.
- I met Sandra because I agreed to serve with a counsel of other ministers for RSI.
- Not counting my salary at Western Hills, I have received over \$600000 in gifts since 1984 and everyone of them is somehow connected to living by faith and being generous in some way.

1. The need to live a generous life will increase through discipleship
2. The purpose of living a generous life is to grow the Kingdom of God
3. God's call to live a generous life is always greater than our ability
4. To obey God's call to live a generous life we must live by faith in God's ability
5. God's call to live a generous life is a greater blessing to everyone when everyone does their part
6. God's call to live a generous life unlocks the abundant life that Jesus promised His disciples

The right motivation to live a generous life begins with a spiritual awakening that occurs when you realize that God has been so generous with you. While we were yet sinners and God's enemies, God gave His Son Jesus to die for our sins. Jesus experienced in His death our judgment for sin. When you receive

Jesus, He changes your heart. You want to follow Jesus. You want to live a generous life like He lived it.

To receive God's salvation from sin, you must receive Jesus as your savior and Lord. Will you receive Him?

Church there is a problem! In most local churches, a minority of the members are living a generous life and the majority are not doing their part. The majority are sitting in the stands watching the minority play the game.

- This is true in discipleship.
- This is true in serving.
- This is true in giving.

Would you repent of the sins that are keeping you in the stands and get in the game in 2019?

Unbelief?

Greed?

Pride?

Will you live a generous life?