

## Generosity Pt 2 *The Most Important Thing About Giving*

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### Message to Conversation Guide

#### 2 Cor. 9:5-8

5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements **for the generous gift you had promised.** Then it will be ready as a **generous gift,** not as **one grudgingly given.**

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver.** 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. NIV

1. What type of attitude was to be behind the financial gift given by the Corinthians?
2. What Kind of Giver does God love? What does that word really mean?
3. Why was Paul receiving this gift from the Corinthians? What was it to be used for? (1 Cor. 16:1-4, 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15, Ro. 15:14-32, Ro. 15:25, 30-31)

#### John 12:1-7

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

3 **Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.**

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, **5 "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."** 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me." NIV

1. Discuss the extravagant nature of Mary's anointing Jesus feet with perfume? What was the value of the perfume?
2. Discuss the principle that love is to be the motivation for giving not duty.

3. Love often causes extravagant giving while duty produces less extravagant giving.
4. How does the Shema in the Old Testament underscore that everything we do for God is to be motivated by love not by duty?

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 **Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.** NIV

### **Luke 19:1-10**

1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. 5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. 7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

**8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”**

9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” NIV

1. What was Zacchaeus occupation? How did he make so much money?
2. When Zacchaeus met Jesus and dined with him how did his new relationship with Jesus impact his attitude toward money?

### **Trivia Facts**

**The three most charitable cities in America are all in Idaho. On average practicing Christians in those Idaho cities give \$17,977.** That beats out the giving from people in New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, which averages \$3,308 per person.

Age also makes a big difference in giving. Eighty four percent of millennials give less than \$50 to charity per year even though charitable giving ranks high on their priorities.

Today, the average church attender gives 2.5% of his or her income annually. During the Great Depression, that number was 3.3%. Thirty seven percent of those who consider themselves evangelical Christians don't give at all to their churches. Only 2.7% of evangelical Christians practice tithing.

