

# LIVE GENEROUSLY

PART THREE: THE GENEROSITY OF GOD

You may know the name George Müller. Müller was an evangelist known for his ministry to orphans through the Ashley Down Orphanage he founded in Bristol, England in the 19th century. Over his lifetime, Muller would serve more than 10,000 orphans.

Muller wrote the reasons for establishing the Orphanage: “The three chief reasons for establishing an Orphan-House are: 1. That God may be glorified, should He be pleased to furnish me with the means, in its being seen that it is not a vain thing to trust in Him; and that thus the faith of His children may be strengthened. 2. The spiritual welfare of fatherless and motherless children. 3. Their temporal welfare.”

Müller’s ministry was marked by faith in God and prayer. He never asked for a single donation. He trusted God to provide, and God continued to provide through the generosity of his people. One of these givers was an unknown poor needlewoman who resolved to give to the work of God through Muller. This woman earned three shillings and sixpence per week (about 12 dollars today).

One day this woman brought Müller 100 pounds that she received from her grandmother’s estate to give to him. He was stunned and tried to talk the woman out of it. He asked her reasons for giving and wanted to hear her heart.

The woman replied to Muller: “The Lord Jesus has given His last drop of blood for me, and should I not give Him this hundred pounds!”

She continued to give sacrificially and joyfully—often outgiving her means. She brought clothes, food and gifts. And hardly anyone knew until after she passed. This woman knew the key to true generosity. She had experienced the generosity of God and the grace of Christ. “The Lord Jesus has given His last drop of blood for me...”

## THE GENEROSITY OF GOD

*<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (JOHN 3:16)*

John 3:16 is shorthand for the story of Scripture. We see the whole story wrapped up in this verse. The story of redemption is a story of generosity.

1. In what ways do you see the generosity of God in this passage?
2. How do you see the generosity of God in creation?
3. In what ways do you see the generosity of God in the story of the Bible?

## THE GENEROSITY OF GOD IN THE GOSPEL

*<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (JOHN 3:16)*

*<sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (ROMANS 8:32)*

1. How has God been generous towards you?
2. Why did God give his Son for you? What does this teach you about the heart of God?
3. How does knowing the generosity of God in the gospel move you to a deeper worship of God?

## GENEROSITY AND THE HEART

*<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (MATTHEW 6:19-21)*

*<sup>39</sup>Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. <sup>40</sup>You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? <sup>41</sup>But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. <sup>42</sup>“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. (LUKE 11:39-42)*

1. According to Jesus, what does our treasure tell us about our heart?
2. What does this have to do with generosity?
3. What heart struggles do you have when it comes to generosity?
4. What was wrong with the Pharisee according to Jesus?
5. What does this have to do with generosity?
6. In what ways does this passage enlarge our view of generosity beyond just giving?

## A GENEROUS PEOPLE

*And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. <sup>2</sup>In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup>For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, <sup>4</sup>they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people. <sup>5</sup>And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. <sup>6</sup>So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. <sup>7</sup>But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.*

*<sup>8</sup>I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. <sup>9</sup>For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*

1. What circumstances characterize the people in Macedonia? Why does Paul draw attention to this?
2. What marks the giving of the churches in Macedonia?
3. Where do you see the generosity of God in this passage?
4. Generous living involves our entire lives. Where do you see this in 2 Corinthians? What does this mean for you today?
5. Paul encourages the church in Corinth to excel in the grace of giving. This is part of their discipleship. What areas do you need to grow in the grace of giving?
6. How does the gospel cultivate generosity in us?
7. What did Christ do for you according to verse 9? Spend a few moments reflecting and meditating on this verse.