



Intro: This morning we are kicking off a new sermon series entitled Generational Generosity. Over the next few weeks we are going to explore the heartbeat of God and see that at his very core God is a Generous God. God's generosity is not rooted in the law nor is it rooted in grace. His generosity is not Old Testament vs New Testament. God's generosity doesn't sway or diminish. It isn't based upon circumstance or convenience. God's Generosity springs forth from his nature, his character and his character is love.

Generosity is a characteristic of God that we see all the way back from the beginning. Even after Adam sinned, God provided a covering.

Genesis 3:21 "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin and clothed them."

In the midst of their fallen state God finds them, makes atonement for them by shedding the blood of an animal, and provides coverings for them. In spite of their sin, in spite of their unfaithfulness, God remained faithful. He never stopped loving them. He never stops loving us! In this example of his character we discover a powerful truth...

You give to what you love!

God is love and He gave to what He loves.

John 3:16 "For God so loved that **he gave** His only begotten Son, that who so ever would believe on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

In God's example we learn that...

Giving/Generosity is not an issue of Old Testament vs. New Testament.

It's not an issue of Law vs. grace.

Giving/Generosity is an issue of love. God so loved that he gave.

It started with tunics of skin and culminated with the gift of His Son!

God is love, love gives.

Our giving is a reflection of our revelation of His character.

We're gonna spend the next few weeks looking at God's Generational Generosity and our call to reflect that image and follow His example.

We're gonna look Scripturally at Generational Generosity from Left to Right and see WHY the tithe and offerings are so important to God's plans and purpose that he called us to be a part of.

Proverbs 3:9-10 "**Honor** the Lord with your possessions, And with **the firstfruits** of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine."

Honor - Hebrew: "Kabad" = To give glory in an abundant, heavy, rich manner

Firstfruits - Hebrew: "Resit ray-sheeth" The first, best, chief, choicest part of your increase."

The 1st First Fruit

Genesis 4:3-7 "And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. **4** Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, **5** but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. **6** So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? **7** If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it."

Cain and Able follow God's example of generosity and bring offerings to Him
Vs. 3 Cain brought an offering

Vs. 4 Able brought the first born, the first fruits of his increase.

God was pleased with Able's offering. Why?

- It was the first fruit! Able gave God the first, his best HE didn't give him the leftovers.
- He didn't wait to see if he had enough and then give.
- He gave the first, before anything else came in!

Proverbs 11:24 "There is *one* who scatters, yet increases more; And there is *one* who withholds more than is right, But it *leads* to poverty."

**In the midst of an economic recession with inflation on the rise the temptation is to withhold. Scripture teaches that this is not wisdom, it's actually foolishness!
God's thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are not this world's ways. (Isa. 55:8-9)**

When we give the firstfruit, the tithe we in LOVE, HONOR & FAITH bring to God our FIRST & BEST!

We don't tithe out of law. (Notice we haven't even gotten to the law yet!)

We tithe out of LOVE. You give your best to what you love.

When we tithe we HONOR the Lord by declaring & demonstrating that He is worthy of it.

We tithe in FAITH, knowing the ONE we are giving to and that his Character is true!

Conclusion:

Do you love God? Has he blessed your life through Rochester Assembly? If so...Tithe.

The tithe funds all of our ministry operations. You are here and receiving this morning because of the generosity of SOMEONE! Someone loved and gave.

God is the supply, but we are the conduit through which His supply flows!