

GENEROSITY

Responding To God's Radical Grace In Community

LESSON 1 – GENEROSITY AND GOD'S GRACE

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' ¹³ 'But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ 'I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'"

Luke 18:9-14 (NIV)

1. According to the Bible **Generosity** is not just about money it's also more.

"But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity."
Isaiah 32:8 (NLT)

The generous make generous plans, and by generous deeds they stand." There's no talk of money there.

- A. Generosity should be something so deep in us that it completely **penetrates** all parts of our lives and money is only part of it.
2. What is **RADICAL** generosity?
 - Radical means the **heart**, the radix (rare- a source or origin of something), the depth.

Three Main Questions

- 1) What is the **source** of radical generosity?
- 2) What is the **sign or mark** of radical generosity? So you will know whether it's true or not.
- 3) What is the **key** to becoming radically generous?

THE SOURCE

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector." Luke 18:10 (NIV)

1. **Pharisees** were members of a party that believed in resurrection and in following legal traditions that were ascribed not to the Bible but to "the traditions of the fathers." And one who gives a tenth of all he gets.
 - A. The Pharisee is generous, but he's not **generous** in his heart. (vs 11-12)

2. The **tax collectors** were Jews who were appointed by the Roman authorities. They collected taxes for Rome and then often charged their own people outrageous fees for themselves. They were hated by the people and regarded as sinners.

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'" Luke 18:13 (NIV)

3. The **source** of radical generosity is not money, it's the **HEART**.

"For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7b

THE SIGN OR MARK

1. The sign or mark of radical generosity can't be measured only in the **CURRENCY** of money. There is more than one currency. Currency is a medium of exchange, it's a way for you to exchange value. You will not only be generous in your currency, but you will also be generous in all the other currencies in your life.

Here are a few currencies.

- A. The currency of **PHYSICAL** space and **EMOTIONAL** space.
Some people will be very happy to give money, but they don't want to get personally involved. They don't want to share their emotional space.
- B. There is also currency in **Time**, **Hospitality** and **Privacy**.
- C. The sign or mark is that you don't look **down** on people.

WHAT IS THE KEY

¹³ *"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"* ¹⁴ *"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."* **Luke 18:13-14 (NIV)**

1. Jesus said that this man was **justified** which means he was approved and accepted by God.
2. This meant that he no longer stood before God as a sinner, but as one who had been **declared** just and good by him.
3. God only accepts those who acknowledge their **complete** dependence on his mercy and not those who are proud and self-sufficient.
4. **Humility** is not thinking less of yourself but knowing that you need God's mercy and grace and boldly asking God for it.