

New Family Values, p.5: Generosity

September 5, 2026

Family Values, p.5

Generosity

September 6, 2026

Generosity is cheerfully giving more than is required, expecting nothing in return.

*“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.**”*

—Paul, 2 Corinthians 9:7

Generosity applies to more than money.

*“You will be **enriched in every way** so that you can be **generous on every occasion...**”*

—Paul, 2 Corinthians 9:11

*“It is more **blessed** to give than to receive.”*

—Paul, quoting Jesus, Acts 20:35, NIV

makarios = happy, fortunate, well off

*“You’re **far happier** giving than getting.”*

—Paul, quoting Jesus, Acts 20:35, The Message

The Science of Generosity

Arthur Brooks

1. Being generous makes you richer.

“If you have two families that are exactly identical—in other words, same religion, same race, same number of

kids, same town, same level of education, and everything's the same—except that one family gives a hundred dollars more to charity than the second family, then the giving family will earn on average \$375 more in income than the non-giving family—and that's statistically attributable to the gift."

—Arthur Brooks

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap."

—Jesus, Luke 6:38

*"The generous will themselves **be blessed...**"*

—Solomon, Proverbs 22:9

2. Being generous makes you happier.

God wants us to be generous because of what He wants for us, not from us.

*"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this**," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."*

—God, Malachi 3:10

The fear of scarcity is the enemy of generosity.

"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

—Jesus, Matthew 6:31-33

The antidote for scarcity is faith in the abundance of God.

"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... You will be **enriched in every way** so that you can be **generous on every occasion...***

—Paul, 2 Corinthians 9:8,11

**How might I be generous? **

Small Group Questions

ICEBREAKERS

- What's one of the most memorable gifts or acts of generosity someone has ever shown you? What made it so meaningful?
- If someone unexpectedly gave you \$500 with the condition that you had to use it to bless someone else, what would you do with it?

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In this weekend's message, Pastor Mike defined generosity as "cheerfully giving more than is required, expecting nothing in return."
 - How does that definition challenge or expand the way you normally think about generosity?
2. Acts 20:35 says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The sermon showed that blessed (makarios) means happy, fortunate, or flourishing.
 - When have you personally experienced greater joy from giving than receiving?
3. The Message Version of Acts 20:35 reads: "You're far happier giving than getting."

The sermon cited several scientific studies done by Arthur Brooks, a Harvard professor of economics, leadership, and happiness. The data from the studies showed—unquestionably—the link between being generous and happiness. (i.e. The more you give, the happier you are.)

 - What are your thoughts about these studies? Do you believe the data? Or is there something inside you that is skeptical? If skeptical, what do you think the skepticism is rooted in?
4. Read Malachi 3:6-12.

One of the key statements in this weekend's message is: "The fear of scarcity is the enemy of generosity."

- Where does scarcity thinking tend to show up most in your life—money, time, possessions, energy, attention, or something else?

Why?

- Why do you think God says that we can test Him in this area of our lives? (FYI, this is the only time in scripture God makes this offer.

5. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15.

The sermon says, "The antidote for scarcity is faith in the abundance of God."

- What is the difference between trusting God's abundance and simply assuming God will give us everything we want?
- How can Matthew 6:31-33 help us understand that distinction?

6. Generosity can involve our time, resources, encouragement, mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

- Which of those is easiest for you to give generously? Which is hardest? How might God be asking you to grow?
- What is one specific act of generosity you sense God inviting you to practice this week?