

The Generosity of God

Mark 8:1-10; 14-20 NIV

- I. God provides for those who seek Him.
 - a. The heart of Jesus is moved by those who have sought Him first but have practical needs.
 - i. In being with Him, they have neglected the practical. He wants to take care of them.
 - ii. Matthew 6:31-33 NIV “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” *You are free to focus on God because He will help you with your day to day life.
 - b. He wants us to trust in His generosity.
 - i. The first time the disciples ask, this time Jesus asks to see what their response will be. Mark 6:35-36 NIV “By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. ³⁶Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” *Jesus tells them to give them something to eat, takes the five loaves and the two fish, breaks the bread while giving thanks, and then gives the disciples the bread and fish to distribute – We are not in manufacturing – only Jesus can do miracles – we’re in distribution – the miracles will go through our hands. *Peter – why are you looking at us?
 - ii. In the boat Jesus rebukes them – don’t you understand? Bread will not be a problem when you’re traveling with me. John 6:25-27 NIV “When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” *He wants us to trust Him with the natural so we can focus on eternal things.
 - c. He wants us to prove His provision by giving without fear.
 - i. This time they are giving their seven loaves – the first time it was a little boys.
 - ii. Malachi 3:10 NIV “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.” *We don’t pay our tithes as they did under the law, we give ours as they did before the law, but my point is God wants them to know they can be unafraid because He has resources beyond those on earth – it’s not a fixed by because of our relationship with the Creator of heaven and earth. Phil. 4:19 NIV “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.” *One of the first verses I memorized (men struggle which is why God says test me!)

- d. We made a mistake – Jesus is disappointed because we forgot the bread; no He’s disappointed because you have forgotten who He is and what He’s done. *An overdraft charge from the bank. 2Chron. 25:9 NIV “Amaziah asked the man of God, “But what about the hundred talents I paid for these Israelite troops?” The man of God replied, “The LORD can give you much more than that.” *Just do the next right thing – He owns the cattle on a thousand hills so He doesn’t worry about money, only we do. He uses it to test us. (Luke 16:10-11) We are playing with monopoly money.

II. The importance of remembering His past provision.

- a. How many were left over? You were supposed to learn about God’s generosity. “If you see God as generous, He sees you filled with faith.”
- b. Psalm 106:7, 13 NIV “When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea... But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold.” Rebellion and impatience were the direct result of forgetting past miracles and provision. *The Jewish feasts, communion – do this in remembrance of Me.
- c. My journals.
 - i. November of 2004 – the leaky roof. Some have heard this story before but that doesn’t mean it shouldn’t be retold! It’s part of my personal story. *We couldn’t repair it, it had to be replaced. I didn’t have the money, nor was I willing to borrow. “God, you know where I am. This is Your roof and it will be Your reputation if I can’t pay the bill. We got a quote of \$5,800 – the work would be done within two weeks, and they would expect payment in three weeks. How will \$5,800 come in above our normal expenses in three weeks?
 1. \$3,067 Insurance company gave us because they didn’t want to be liable for more damage that might have been done.
 2. \$1,256 My grandma had passed and this was inheritance money from her estate.

3. \$727 I backed into the shingles and messed up our van. Our car insurance paid us and I guy in our church made it 99% better for free.
 4. \$495 Alice spoke at our women's retreat and they spontaneously decided to take up an offering for her.
 5. \$900 The elders gave me a Christmas bonus.
 6. A total of \$6,515 – after the tithe was given it was \$5,865 - \$65 was the leftovers.
- ii. City Church – the “cash flow problem”. December of 2010 and the meeting with Brian, Chris, and John. Kansas City – the plan came together all at once. Take that money and throw it as a stone toward Goliath; make a new line on the giving envelopes – “Debt Reduction”; change the bylaws. 2011 A financially failing daycare and school – I wrote my own cry from Psalm 107: “A man was under a great load of debt and he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord delivered him...” What has God done?
1. In two years our line of credit was paid off.
 2. Two more years we had built up an in-house line of credit of \$200,000.
 3. In nine years we burnt the mortgage.
 4. We have put in a new parking lot - \$500,000; two new roofs - \$200,000; Family room remodel - \$100,000; Recarpeted and painted the inside of the church and replaced the pews - \$350,000; missions year after year – the year we received \$100,000 the day before I would announce we were \$50,000 short; this year's current number - \$311,965!!!!
 5. Not just what God has done – what you have done – what a pleasure and delight to pastor at such a generous church!
- d. Psalm 107:21-22 NIV “Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love, and his wonderful deeds for mankind. Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.” Let's stand and sing – “I've Witnessed it”