**Booklet  ~Discipleship Explored, Generosity**

**Message Outline**

Deuteronomy 8 (NIV)

*Do Not Forget the Lord*

*Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors.****2****Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.****3****He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.****4****Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years.****5****Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.*

***6****Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him.****7****For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills;****8****a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey;****9****a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.*

***10****When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.****11****Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.****12****Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,****13****and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,****14****then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.****15****He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.****16****He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.****17****You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”****18****But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

***19****If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.****20****Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God.*

It’s easy to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when it’s not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_so who owns \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

In the New Testament, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_are the same word. God doesn’t want your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_he wants your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_is not how \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_you give; it’s how \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is.

The openness of your heart depends on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_you are the more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be. When your heart is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_it can’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The openness of your heart depends on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_means to always keep \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The openness of your heart depends on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_your heart to the one who has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to us.

Ezekiel 36:26 New International Version (NIV)

**26**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Application: Give \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 15:10-11

**10**Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. **11**There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.

Application: Give out of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Soul Food Day 1**

**Scripture**

Deuteronomy 8 (NIV)

*Do Not Forget the Lord*

***8****Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors.****2****Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.****3****He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.****4****Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years.****5****Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.*

***6****Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him.****7****For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills;****8****a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey;****9****a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.*

***10****When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.****11****Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.****12****Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,****13****and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,****14****then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.****15****He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.****16****He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.****17****You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”****18****But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

***19****If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.****20****Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God.*

**The Promised Land**

Fundamental to the Abrahamic covenant is the promise of a good land for the patriarch’s seed ([Gen. 12:1–3](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.%2012.1%E2%80%933); [15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2012.15); [17:1–8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2017.1%E2%80%938)). In context, the promise of land referred first to the land of Canaan (17:8), the territory of which corresponds roughly to the borders of the modern nation-state of Israel. The Old Testament, especially the Pentateuch (Genesis–Deuteronomy), frequently mentions this land, and it is a foretaste of the inheritance promised to God’s church ([Rev. 21:1–4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.%2021.1%E2%80%934)).

Scripture is full of references to Canaan as a “good land,” one “flowing with milk and honey” ([Ex. 3:7–8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ex.%203.7%E2%80%938)). Our passage for today’s study characterizes Canaan in this way, emphasizing the agricultural bounty that the Israelites would find once they took possession of the land ([Deut. 8:7–10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deut.%208.7%E2%80%9310)). In comparison to the wilderness wanderings that Moses recalls earlier in Deuteronomy 8, the land of Canaan was indeed a land of plenty, a land where the grain of the fields and fruit of the trees were more than enough to satisfy the needs of the hungry nation. The wilderness had been a time of scarcity, a period in which the Israelites lived almost entirely on manna (vv. 1–6). Yet as Israel dwelt in Canaan and obeyed Yahweh, the true creator God, the people would enjoy a wide variety of foods and resources.

It is important to note the emphasis on obedience in Deuteronomy 8, especially His call for gratitude in verse 10. The Lord knew that a wealthy and satisfied people might quickly forget that their abundance was a gift of God, and so they were to “bless” the Lord for His gifts — they were to praise Him for His generosity and thank Him for His kindness. Such gratitude would help ensure that they would remember God and keep His covenant (vv. 11–20; [Jer. 18:15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jer.%2018.15)).

As an illustration of how thankfulness promotes a God-honoring lifestyle we may turn to the following quote from the pen of John Milton, the celebrated English poet: “Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world.” If we thank God, we will revere Him, and such reverence will help us look at all of life as that which we are to live *coram Deo* — before the Lord’s face in a way that pleases Him, with no reason to be ashamed. We can then be a blessing to others, to be generous like God was generous to us.

Coram Deo

In [Romans 1:18–32](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Romans%201.18%E2%80%9332), Paul locates humanity’s most basic sin in our refusal as fallen creatures to honor God “or give thanks to him.” Lack of gratitude for all of God’s blessings is the first step toward idolatry, and the more we have the easier it can be to forget that all we have comes from the Lord’s hand. Spend some time today thanking God for His blessings and always endeavor to acknowledge that your success is due ultimately to His kindness.

**Gratitude leads to generosity. In joy, we can be generous because God is generous to us!**

Application

1. What did you hear? What did the Holy Spirit say to you?
2. What do you think and how do you feel about what the Holy Spirit said? How do you feel comforted, convicted and challenged?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want you to do now?

Now talk to Jesus.

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/promised-land/>

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**Soul Food Day 2**

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

*The Fellowship of the Believers*

***42****They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.****43****Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.****44****All the believers were together and had everything in common.****45****They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.****46****Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,****47****praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

**Marks of True Christian Community**

Six verses have shaped my vision for community in the local church more than most. They paint a vivid picture of what marked the very first church — what held those believers together after Jesus left them here on earth, what inspired them to leave everything behind for his sake, and what sustained them in the face of horrible opposition and persecution.

[Acts 2:42–47](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%202.42%E2%80%9347) describes this community of faith for the sake of our Christian communities today. The passage is short enough to memorize, and yet big enough to shape years, even decades, of life in the local church, and captures for us at least four markings of true Christian community. One of markings was generosity.

**Sacrificial Generosity, Not Selfish Ambition**

The Christians in that first church were captured by a vibrant, dynamic, and personal vision of God, but that did not keep them from focusing on one another. They did not have to choose between being a church going hard after the God seated in heaven and a church dedicated to the needs around them here on earth. “All who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need” ([Acts 2:44–45](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%202.44%E2%80%9345)).

Christianity did not isolate believers to focus exclusively on their own relationship with Jesus, but made each believer another vital vein in the body of Christ — each of them carrying what others need *from* God to the one in need.

God promises to meet our every need ([Matthew 6:25–33](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%206.25%E2%80%9333)), and many times (if not most often) he meets our needs through another believer. He gifts each of us, not for self-expression or self-fulfillment, but to fill what is lacking in someone else by meeting genuine needs. God has given each of us grace that was not meant to end with us, but to extend to someone else ([1 Peter 4:10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%204.10)). But without selfless and sacrificial compassion, grace ends up in storage, not in action.

The first Christians felt so secure in God’s promises that they let go of all they had to help one another. To the watching world, it was unexplainably selfless and foolishly generous. As happened later in Macedonia, “in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity” ([2 Corinthians 8:2](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%208.2)). Joy faced with need always looks like compassion and sacrifice. In short, it looks like the cross ([Hebrews 12:2](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb%2012.2); [1 John 4:9–11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%204.9%E2%80%9311)).

Is your community radically selfless and generous toward one another?

**Generosity is a marker of the early church and of our church today.**

Application

1. What did you hear? What did the Holy Spirit say to you?
2. What do you think and how do you feel about what the Holy Spirit said? How do you feel comforted, convicted and challenged?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want you to do now?

Now talk to Jesus.

Adapted from: http://proverbs31.org/devotions/devo/stop-reading-your-bible/#sthash.owHT10Md.dpuf

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**Soul Food Day 3**

**Scripture**

Deuteronomy 8:1-3; 10-18 (NIV)

*Do Not Forget the Lord*

***8****Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors.****2****Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.****3****He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

***10****When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.****11****Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.****12****Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,****13****and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,****14****then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.****15****He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.****16****He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.****17****You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”****18****But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

**The Living Word**

The Bible is a book of knowledge but it is also a living word. This means that the Bible not only enriches our minds, but it also penetrates our hearts (see Hebrews 4:12). Sometimes when we focus so much on what the Bible says we sometimes miss what God is trying to say to us right now. That is why sometimes we just need to carve our space, often in silence, to mediate on scripture. That is what we will do today: mediate and rest in scripture. We will be there to guide you. Read the scripture slowly and then sit in still silence for one-minute resting in God. We will give you questions you can ask to God, however, allow the Holy Spirit to work on your heart what he wants in this time. Let’s pray, *Father God guide as we find you in your word.*

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-3; 10-18

*Was there a word or phrase that stood out?*

Sit and listen in silence for 1 minute

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-3; 10-18

*What is in your heart right now? Give it to God.*

Sit and listen in silence for 1 minute

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17

*Imagine yourself in the wilderness. What can God teach you there?*

Sit and listen in silence for 1 minute

*Pray to God*

Application

1. What did you hear? What did the Holy Spirit say to you?
2. What do you think and how do you feel about what the Holy Spirit said? How do you feel comforted, convicted and challenged?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want you to do now?

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**Soul Food Day 4**

**Scripture**

Deuteronomy 15:1-11 (NIV)

*The Year for Canceling Debts*

***15****At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts.****2****This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel any loan they have made to a fellow Israelite. They shall not require payment from anyone among their own people, because the Lord’s time for canceling debts has been proclaimed.****3****You may require payment from a foreigner, but you must cancel any debt your fellow Israelite owes you.****4****However, there need be no poor people among you, for in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you,****5****if only you fully obey the Lord your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today.****6****For the Lord your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you.*

***7****If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them.****8****Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need.****9****Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: “The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near,” so that you do not show ill will toward the needy among your fellow Israelites and give them nothing. They may then appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be found guilty of sin.****10****Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.****11****There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.*

**Generosity and God’s Blessing**

The topic of generosity arises in [Deuteronomy 15:7-8](https://biblia.com/bible/nrsv/Deut%2015.7-8). “If there is among you anyone in need…do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand.” Generosity and compassion are of the essence of the covenant. “Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work” ([Deut. 15:10](https://biblia.com/bible/nrsv/Deut.%2015.10)). Our work becomes fully blessed only when it blesses others. As Paul put it, “Love is the fulfilling of the law” ([Rom. 13:10](https://biblia.com/bible/nrsv/Rom.%2013.10)).

For most of us, the money earned by work gives us the means to be generous. Do we actually use it generously? Moreover, are there ways we can be generous in our work itself? The passage speaks of generosity specifically as an aspect of work (“all your work”). If a co-worker needs help developing a skill or capability, or an honest word of recommendation from us, or patience dealing with his or her shortcomings, would these be opportunities for generosity? These kinds of generosity may cost us time and money, or they may require us to reconsider our self-image, examine our complicity, and question our motives. If we could become ungrudging in making these sacrifices, would we open a new door for God’s blessing through our work?

According to the McKinsey Quarterly, a group of Harvard psychologists studied performance of 64 units in the U.S. intelligence service after 9/11. They discovered that:

The critical factor wasn’t having stable team membership and the right number of people. It wasn’t having a vision that is clear, challenging, and meaningful. Nor was it well-defined roles and responsibilities; appropriate rewards, recognition, and resources; or strong leadership.

Rather, the single strongest predictor of group effectiveness was the amount of help that analysts gave to each other. In the highest-performing teams, analysts invested extensive time and energy in coaching, teaching, and consulting with their colleagues. These contributions helped analysts question their own assumptions, fill gaps in their knowledge, gain access to novel perspectives, and recognize patterns in seemingly disconnected threads of information. In the lowest-rated units, analysts exchanged little help and struggled to make sense of tangled webs of data. Just knowing the amount of help-giving that occurred allowed the Harvard researchers to predict the effectiveness rank of nearly every unit accurately.

**The strongest factor for organizational performance may be a culture of helping. So too the strength of a church is in its eagerness to give.**

Application

1. What did you hear? What did the Holy Spirit say to you?
2. What do you think and how do you feel about what the Holy Spirit said? How do you feel comforted, convicted and challenged?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want you to do now?

Adapted from: <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/deuteronomy-and-work#generosity-deuteronomy-157-11>

**Soul Food Day 5**

**Scripture**

Deuteronomy 8:10-18 (NIV)

***10****When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.****11****Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.****12****Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,****13****and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,****14****then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.****15****He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.****16****He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.****17****You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”****18****But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

**Drive-Thru Generosity**

Have you ever gone through a drive-thru and arrived at the window to pay for your order, only to find out that the person in front of you had already taken care of it? Wow! Not only are you completely surprised, but you now have a smile on your face and an emotional boost to your day. If you are like me, you want to race through the parking lot, find the person, roll down your window and say, “Thank you so much. You didn’t *have* to do that!”

Of course, they didn’t have to pay for your food. But that wasn’t the point, was it? No doubt, as they drove away, they were imagining the look on your face when the drive-thru attendant gave you the news. They probably also remember the smile on the attendance’s face when they paid your bill. After all, that is precisely why they did it. To cause you to smile for a reason that you didn’t see coming.

That, I think, is the essence of generosity. You and I are generous when **we give some of what we have to someone else** simply because we *want* to, not because we have to.

The person in front of you at the drive-thru didn’t buy your breakfast for the recognition. Instead, they did it so they could look in their rearview mirror and see your look of surprise and the smile on your face. Then they drove away. And they were probably already planning the next time they were going to do the same thing for someone else. Generosity can be addictive.

Generosity, of course, is not limited to our finances. We can be generous with our time, our resources, our expertise and even our relationships. It seems to me that in order for our actions to be generous, though, our gifts must be tangible.

A lifestyle of tangible generosity can be found throughout the pages of the Bible.

In Genesis, we see **Abraham’s** hospitality generously expressed to his three unexpected guests.

**Jesus** tells the story of a father who is remarkably generous with his wayward son who returns.

And, of course, the **widow** at the temple gates is a profound example of sacrificial generosity.

Why, though, would you and I choose to live generous lives? What would motivate us to live that way? A lifestyle of generosity is deeply rooted in Scripture. We can discover a potentially life-changing truth expressed in Deuteronomy 8:17–18:

*“You may say to yourself, My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God…”*

Nothing we have is ours. Everything we have is actually a gift from God, either directly or indirectly.

Wait a minute, you may be thinking to yourself. *I* am the one who goes to work every day. *I* am the one who has invested my time, money and energy to earn what *I* now have. *Me*.

Yes, you and I work hard every day and we produce a lot of…stuff. But who gives us the ability to work, to create, to achieve, to produce? God does.

The context of the verses in Deuteronomy 8 is significant. The Exodus has happened. The Law has been given. A glimpse of a prosperous new future has been shown. In other words, God has been (and will continue to be) generous. And then, a warning:

*“When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.… Do not forget the Lord your God…. Otherwise, when you eat…, build…, settle down, and when your herds…grow…and your silver and gold increase…, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God” (Deuteronomy 8:10–14).*

*“Remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth”*
*(Deuteronomy 8:18).*

“Remembering the Lord” is not the result of our generosity (i.e., God gets the credit), rather, it is our motivation for generosity. When we are generous with others, we are acknowledging the sovereignty of God and are thanking him for his generosity toward us.

In a sense, as followers of God and imitators of Jesus, we are blessed with the amazing experience of spending *someone else’s* money and sharing the gifts that *someone else* has given to us. In a very real way, our generosity actually costs us nothing, but it changes and blesses the world around us. We are simply redistributing what God has given us, whether finances, time or abilities. That is exciting!

Perhaps, then, there are a few questions we need to ask ourselves:

* Since I have been given someone else’s money to spend and gifts to give, what are the most exciting and meaningful ways that I can do it?
* Whose life can I impact or improve without seeking any recognition or credit for myself?
* In which ministries can I invest to multiply my time, expertise and/or money?
* How can I be generous with what I have been given, without having to be asked first?

Big questions, aren’t they?

We are generous, because we know the difference our generosity will make in the lives of others. The more generous we are, the more lives we impact (mission). The more generous we are, the more effective our churches, schools and ministries become at affecting lives (multiplication). And the more generous we are, the more our own lives are changed for the better (transformation).

How would my world be different – how would the world of the people and ministries around me be different – if I were to make a lifestyle of generosity?

I know what I’m going to do the next time I drive up to the window and there is someone placing an order behind me. And as I make a quick getaway, I won’t be the only one with a huge smile on my face!

A drive-thru is just the beginning. Will you join me in a new life of generosity?

**Generosity is our response to God, and it reflects who we think he really is.**

Application

1. What did you hear? What did the Holy Spirit say to you?
2. What do you think and how do you feel about what the Holy Spirit said? How do you feel comforted, convicted and challenged?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want you to do now?

Now talk to Jesus.

Adapted from: <https://mbherald.com/drive-thru-generosity/>

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