



The Science of Generosity

"Those who give, receive back in turn. By spending ourselves for others' well being, we enhance our own standing. In letting go of some of what we own, we better secure our own lives. By giving ourselves away, we ourselves move toward flourishing. This is not only a philosophical or religious teaching; it is a sociological fact. The generosity paradox can also be stated in the negative. By grasping onto what we currently have, we lose out on better goods that we might have gained. In holding onto what we possess, we diminish its long-term value to us. By always protecting ourselves against future uncertainties and misfortunes, we are affected in ways that make us more anxious about uncertainties and vulnerable to future misfortunes. In short, by failing to care for others, we do not properly take care of ourselves. It is no coincidence that the word 'miser' is etymologically related to the word 'miserable.'" *The Paradox of Generosity: Giving We Receive, Grasping We Lose.*

The Divine Design of Generosity

A certain ruler asked Jesus, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"... You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'" "All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. Luke 18:18-23

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house..." Luke 19:1-10

The Divine Model of Generosity

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

He himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. Acts 17:25

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Luke 9:23-25

Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 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. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Question #5: "Where am I serving and giving?"



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