

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

TPMC Values Generosity: The Widow's Little

Mark 12:41-44

Rev Ming Feong Ching

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- To God, true generosity is not about the amount of a gift, but the heart behind the gift. This explains three key things about how God sees giving:
 - (a) Jesus sees what people overlook. While people often measure generosity by the size of a gift, God is not impressed by that. He is moved by how much we trust Him, which is shown by how we give and not how much we give.
 - (b) Generosity is measured by sacrifice, not by surplus. Gifts which cost us nothing (2 Samuel 24:24) and which do not inconvenience us or make us uncomfortable in any way do not demonstrate trust in God or sacrificial love for other people.
 - (c) True generosity reflects faith and trust in God. Being generous to the point of sacrificing one's own security and comfort requires faith that God will take care of our needs: "I believe you will provide, so I release what I have".
- God is our provider, and our life is in His hands - we cannot outgive God. Nonetheless, this does NOT mean that we become transactional with God, expecting Him to bless us MORE as we give. Instead, we are to *give generously* as a way of life, *flowing* from the grace we receive from God, and *reflecting* the heart & love of God when we give. Hence, the motivation to be generous is NOT that we can gain more from God, but rather, our motivation to be generous is to be like our Lord Jesus Christ. We do NOT demand from God His blessings – from an attitude of entitlement, but we humbly receive with gratitude as God blesses us with *whatever form of gifts* He wishes to bless us with & *whenever* He wishes to bless us. We can only experience this truth for ourselves when we practice sacrificial generosity (1 Kings 17:8-16).
- Living out the value of generosity does not just include helping someone materially but also lifting their soul by restoring their dignity. In this way, we are helping another person encounter something of God's love. And whatever we do for another person out of generosity will be recognised by God (Matthew 25:40).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. Describe a person who is generous using the acronym G.E.N.E.R.O.U.S. as a CG. Have fun!

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REFLECT

2. How do (a) loving God and (b) loving other people lead to practicing generosity?

[Verses to help us go deeper: 1 John 4:16, 19; 2 Corinthians 9:8-11; James 2:14-18; Luke 10:25-37]

RESPOND

3. Review your decisions in the Response Questions for *the last TWO* ACTNow write-ups, reflect how you have been doing & share with your CG. Encourage one another for a complete follow-through and pray for one another. Remember that acting on God's Word need not be on a big scale: start with what you have and perhaps try a way of giving (financial help, quality time, a listening ear, or an act of service) you are not used to.

PRAYER POINTERS

- Praise God for being the Provider of everything that we need, both in the past, present and future.
- Thank God for generously giving up His son, Jesus Christ, so that we can have peace with Him.
- Ask God to give us a generous heart, as well as wisdom and motivation to generously help the people we can reach in practical ways.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

"I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." [2 Samuel 24:24b]