



40 Day Generosity Journey

Fall 2022

The Apostle Paul included generosity as one of the “fruits of the Spirit”—an outward manifestation of our inner life. The more connected we become with the generous love of Jesus, the more generosity becomes our way of life.

In that way, generosity is not about a dollar amount. We become generous in all aspects of our lives as we reflect the generosity of God's love and grace—generous in giving love and offering forgiveness and extending encouragement and sharing financial gifts.

Here's the good news—we can become more generous. Through thoughtful reflection (the inward journey) and intentional action (the outward journey), we can move from just giving gifts to becoming more generous—more like Jesus!

We hope this 40 Day Generosity Journey moves you a few steps further along that journey. Each day there will be something to reflect on (the inward journey) or something to do (the outward journey). Find a few minutes each day to make this an intentional practice. If you miss a day, no problem, jump back in when you are able. Our journey with Jesus is one of grace and intention. Grace reminds us that every day is a new day. Intention says, “I want to become more generous—like Jesus!” “I'm in!”

Welcome to this Generosity Journey! Process

The process is simple. Follow the daily plan as intentionally as you can. Each week includes thoughtful contemplation on Jesus' words or words from the Apostle Paul, insights from historical figures, and reflections on the messages you received about money growing up. These all shape how we imagine using our gifts, in this case

financial gifts, for the sake of others. There will also be ways to practice generosity in your daily life.

You may choose to take this journey on your own. But, if possible, invite a friend, your spouse, your small group, or an older child to take the journey with you. Sharing stories of generosity is another way to shape a generous spirit in your life.

Week 1

10/3— Read Matthew 6:25-34. All you have is a gift from God. Make a list of the simple gifts of life you have been given (ex. family, friends, work, health, etc.). Then, say a prayer of thanks to God for them.

10/4— “Gain all you can; Save all you can; Give all you can.” What do these words from John Wesley mean to you?

10/5—What were some of the messages your parents gave you around money? Did you talk about money? What did you observe about their use of money?

10/6—Give something to someone unexpectedly. Surprise someone with a small gift.

10/7—Start paying attention to your use of money. What does it say about your priorities?

10/8—What did you learn this week?

10/9—Worship

Notes: _____

Week 2

10/10—Read Matthew 6:21. What do you treasure most in life? What is most important? Where does your heart lean? What is Jesus saying to you about the connection between "your treasure" and "your heart?"

10/11—Martin Luther talks about three conversions: 1) The Mind (how we think about God). 2) The Heart (how we respond to God) 3) The Pocketbook (what we do with our money). When you think about God, what do you think about first? How does your image of God effect your response to God? Have you ever considered the connection between your faith and your finances?

10/12—When did you start earning money? What were you hoping to do with it? What did you do?

10/13—Find a cause at work or church or in your community that you can support financially and send a gift.

10/14—As you have started to pay attention to your ideas about and use of money, what surprises you? What challenges you?

10/15—What did you learn this week?

10/16—Worship

Notes: _____

Week 3

10/17—Read Luke 18: 18-27. For the man in the story, Jesus focused his attention on his use of money because it was holding him back. For you, it may be something else. What is keeping you from taking another step on your journey of faith?

10/18— "For it is in giving that we receive." St. Francis of Assisi. When have you noticed that dynamic?

10/19—What was your first experience of giving? How did that make you feel? Did you continue to give? Why/Why not?

10/20—Think about the causes/ministries that you are most passionate about. Give something to one of them this week.

10/21—As you are examining your habits around money, commit to making one change in how you spend your money.

10/22—What did you learn this week?

10/23—Worship

Notes: _____

Week 4

10/24—Read II Corinthians 9:6-8. What is your attitude toward giving? Is it "I have to!" or "I get to!" Where do you think that attitude comes from for you?

10/25— "Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness." Dalai Lama
How does your attitude toward others affect your willingness to give?

10/26— When is giving a "duty" for you? When does it cause you to experience "delight?" What is different about those two kinds of experiences?

10/27—Give something away this week without the receiver knowing who gave it.

10/28—Keep up the commitment you made to yourself last week.

10/29—What did you learn this week?

10/30—Worship

Notes: _____

Week 5

10/31—Read Galatians 5:22-26. Think about all the gifts of the spirit. What would it feel like to grow in those gifts, especially the fruit of generosity?

11/1—"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver." -Maya Angelou. When has giving felt freeing for you?

11/2— When you were growing up, were you encouraged to be generous with what you were given or to keep what you earned?

11/3—Choose to give something to someone else rather than getting that same thing for yourself.

11/4—Keep up the commitment you made to yourself two weeks ago.

11/5—What did you learn this week?

11/6—Worship

Notes: _____

Week 6

11/7—Read Mark 12: 41-44. What is Jesus telling us about our gifts?

11/8—"Every person, no matter what their wealth, is equally capable of practicing generosity." -Thich Nhat Hanh. Think of a generous person you know. What can you learn from them about a generous life?

11/9—Reach out to someone who taught you about being generous and say 'Thank you!'

11/10—What did you learn this week?

11/11-14—Pray and consider your commitments for 2023 and all the ways you will say, "I'm in!"

Notes: _____

Give: If you are not in the habit of giving, start by giving to something/anything that makes this world better. And then give again.

Give Consistently: Begin to build your giving into a habit. Give seasonally or monthly or weekly.

Give Generously: Once a consistent habit is built start asking if it's time to increase your giving.

Give Until You Notice: This is the point of giving when you start making decisions about your priorities. As you give to what is most important to you, you may have to make decisions about some other things that are of lesser value and not do them so you can be more generous.

Become a Generous Person: Over time you may start noticing that your first response is, "How can I help?" "How can I support?" You are becoming a more generous person!

You are invited to say "I'm In!" by making a financial commitment for 2023.

To make your commitment electronically visit our website:

<https://www.incarnationmn.org/give/im-in/>

Commitment cards are also available at church.