

Selfishness vs. Generosity

NOTES

WARM-UP

- Growing up, recall one specific instance wherein you behaved selfishly. What happened?
- Who is the kindest person you know? What has s/he done for you?
- Growing up, how did your family view money? Why do you think this was the case?

WORD

¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share . . . **1 TIMOTHY 6:17,18**

As believers, we are supposed to put our hope in God, who is our provider. He gives generously of Himself and of everything we need so that we can enjoy His provision, and so we can generously share this with others. The purpose of provision is to be a blessing—not to selfishly keep what we have to ourselves. We can be selfless and generous because we have a selfless and generous God who loves us and saves us, and who wants all men to know Him. In this lesson, we will look at three directives from Paul based on 1 Timothy 6:18, which we can also apply in our lives.

1 Do good.

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. **GALATIANS 6:9**

Though doing good can be tiring and frustrating at times, the Bible challenges us to persevere in this because it pleases God and He will reward us for it. We do good not to earn God's favor. Rather, we do good because we serve a good and gracious God. Following Jesus' example, we can—by God's grace—do what is right and good, whether or not the other person deserves it or responds well, because this is how good God is to us. What will happen if we will not grow weary in doing good?

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2 Be generous.

The wicked borrows but does not pay back, but the righteous is generous and gives . . . **PSALM 37:21**

The righteous, and this includes everyone who has been saved by Christ, is generous and gives freely. This is possible if we are truly content in God and know that He will bless us more as we are a blessing. How have you learned to be generous, now that you're a believer?

3 Be ready to share.

Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. **EPHESIANS 4:28**

A child doesn't have to be taught to be selfish. It comes very naturally because of the sinful nature. As we grow up (spiritually, not just physically), we will choose to share rather than hoard or withhold. God wants us to go from a life of thievery and sin to generosity and a readiness to share. We can be available to others, help in times of need, and give of our time and self. We can be generous with everything we have—not just money. Share how God has changed your life.

APPLICATION

- How has God been good and generous to you? How will you apply what you've learned today?
- In what area do you need to be generous? How can you ask God to make you less selfish and more generous as each day passes?
- Think of one person you can be generous to this week. What will you do?

PRAYER

- Thank God for His generous love to you through Jesus Christ every day. Pray that you would also be generous in your love to God.
- Pray that you will do good and honor God always—no matter what you are facing.
- Ask God to make you generous and ready to share what you have with others. Pray for more opportunities to lead people to God.



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