

Series: Divine Joy

C.R. 6-3-18

“The Joy of Generosity”

Text: Philippians 4: 14-20

Intro: Believe it or not this is our last message from this great little letter. We started this series on Divine Joy on November 12 and I certainly pray that as we have worked our way through we have seen what it takes to have the joy of the Lord. Paul has challenged us to stay unified, to rejoice in the Lord, to be humble, to not live in the flesh and for the flesh, to be anxious for nothing but pray about everything, to learn to be content with little or much, and the list goes on. All these things create an attitude of joy in the believer. Today as Paul closes this letter he is going to teach us about generosity in the believer. Let's learn from this letter one more time.

1) The Basis of Generosity (v. 14-16)

- a. The Message (v.14) “It was a beautiful thing that you came alongside me in my troubles”.
- b. We talked about this several weeks ago, but this church and Paul were in a partnership together.
- c. I wished we could grasp this more. We are supposed to be in partnership, not competition.
- d. In verse 15 Paul points out just how generous this church has been to him and to the cause.
- e. The church entered into an agreement of giving and receiving. They gave materially to Paul and received spiritually from the Lord.
- f. The Lord is the book keeper and He knows what He is doing.
- g. This church was not with Paul physically, but they were in partnership with Paul in their giving.
- h. *Giving to the Mission and Ministry of others is established as Biblical indicator of spiritual health.
- i. Illustrate with Zacchaeus.
- j. **Luk 19:8** And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.
- k. **Luk 19:9** And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham.
- l. *Giving to missions and ministry is great evidence of participation in the fellowship of the gospel.
- m. It is a way that we can fulfill the great commission.
- n. In fact, if we are not giving to the gospel ministry, we have no part of it.
- o. **(Matthew 6:21)** “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
- p. **Kent Hughes**. “What we do with our resources is a window into our souls. The question is, what does God see when he looks in.
- q. The Scriptures are clear. First we are to be generous people. Also, we are called to give to enable others to take the gospel to the lost.
- r. This Church is an example of this. Paul would write about them again in 2 Corinthians.
- s. **2Co 8:3** For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;
- t. **2Co 8:4** Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.
- u. **2Co 8:5** And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

2) The Blessing of Generosity (v. 17-18)

- a. Paul was making it clear in v.17, that he was not soliciting for more money.
- b. Illustrate with Jesse Duplantis, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland etc.
- c. Paul tells this church and us when we give generously for the work of God, in the will of God, God will bless it. There will be fruit in our account.
- d. I am convinced that the blessing and favor of God that has been on this church is because this church has been generously giving to the work of God.
- e. Paul uses beautiful language here to describe their generosity. The Message “ The gifts that you sent with Epaphroditus were more than enough, like a sweet smelling sacrifice roasting on the altar, filling the air with fragrance, pleasing God no end.
- f. God smiles on and is please with the generous spirit of His people.
- g. (v.18) Acceptable and pleasing are both words emphasizing that the Philippians generosity to Paul was of the highest value to God himself.

3) The Bank of Generosity (v. 19)

- a. Here again is one of the famous verses of scripture that more often than not is taken out of context.
- b. The promise of supply in this verse is for generous people like the Philippians and cannot be claimed but those who live only for themselves.
- c. Note: God did not say the He would meet their greed but their need; not all they thought they needed, but all they truly needed.
- d. When the child of God is in the will of God, serving for the glory of God, then he will have every need met.
- e. **Hudson Taylor:** When God’s work is done in God’s way for God’s glory, it will not lack for God’s supply.
- f. George Muller wanted his orphan homes in Bristol England to be a tangible testimony to an unbelieving world that God was alive and well and still very much in business. To achieve this goal, he refused to make any need known to anyone but God. Muller would not accept a financial gift from a person he knew to be in debt; such a donation was always courteously but firmly refused. Another of his principles was to give a full accounting of what he did with all of the money he received. He developed the habit of circulating an annual statement call the Chronicle of the Lord’s Dealings with George Muller. Because this annual statement which listed every gift, might be misconstrued as a subtle way of hinting for support for the work entrusted to him Muller never released “The Chronicle” to the public until there were more than ample funds in the bank. Never was an issue published when funds were low.
- g. My God shall supply.
- h. Note Paul’s doxology in (v.20).