

A Series on the Spirit of Generosity

WEEK 2



Live Generously

TAKE HOLD OF THE LIFE THAT REALLY IS LIFE

1TIMOTHY 6:18-19

Live Generously

THE CIRCLE OF GENEROSITY

Once we have experienced and recognized God's overwhelming love and grace, the only adequate response is profound, total, complete, 'fall-prostrate-on-your-face' gratitude. As people saved by God's generous – abundant and amazing – grace, who have come to a full understanding of the source and cost of this grace, this response leads to a desire to reorient our lives in order to live as instruments of grace, living generously in all aspects of our lives.

Two weeks ago we read that true generosity has to do with the way we use our gifts – skills, talents, time – and how we share, offer, employ, and make use of them to help others. Understood this way, there is more to generosity than money. Everything we have is a gift of a generous God that comes to us as lavish grace: as children of God's grace when we give we do not give simply to the Church – St. Andrew's – we are giving back to God out of gratitude for all that God has done for us in and through St. Andrew's ministries. By giving back to God this way we enable the Church to give forward to others who need God's grace. This is the cycle of generosity: we show our love for a generous God by generously giving back to God so we can live generously toward our neighbours.

We worship a loving, generous, giving, and gracious God. God's greatest gift to us was His Son, Jesus. God gives us the Spirit, who gives gifts for our use to God's glory. When we understand God's giving, gracious nature, our hearts change, our words and deeds imitate God's generosity, living generously, giving back what we have received.

THE RECIPROCITY OF GRACE

Definition: 'rec-i-proc-i-ty' 1. Relationship involving a mutual exchange. 2. Reciprocal relationship or act. What God longs for us to engage in is not one-off acts of kindness but is a life-long grace exchange in which I live generously toward you and you live generously toward Bob and Bob lives generously toward me. To do this we must have the faith and trust that in this circle of care I matter to you matter to me. This reciprocity of grace – this circle of generosity – helps us fulfill our created purpose: our becoming who we were created to be – our becoming more like Christ by being Christ to one another.