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Weekly:

Sunday sermon Bible readings,
Worship song,
Reflection,
Small group questions,
Family time.

Daily:

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THE GIFT OF GIVING

There is good reason to believe that humans are “hardwired” for lives characterised by giving. We live with a strong sense and are even expected to live in the realm of giving. We give ourselves to development and growth. We give ourselves to education and work. We give ourselves to worthy causes. We give ourselves to intimate relationship. We give ourselves to family and friends. This sense and expectation of living “giving lives” is reinforced by society. To live in the realm of giving is society’s explicit message; the marketing and advertising industries willingly tap into this sense and expectation of living “giving lives”. Yet within this embracing of living lives in the realm of giving, economic concepts and

modes of thought begin to creep in and quietly influence and modify the realm of giving. Because of this, we find ourselves talking about giving and receiving; we speak about givers and takers and soon we are not able to think of giving without considering how that giving will benefit us. While this giving for self-gain is widely practiced, it is not openly owned. It is not expressly publicised or explicitly stated. It remains the silent and unspoken agenda behind so much of society’s giving. It begins to poison society. It stands to reason that while society’s unspoken practice is to give to self-benefit, it separates the intimate link between human society and the kingdom of God; between people and God; between the God who gives and the people who are made in the image of God to give. This divorce allows society to define giving in its own way without interference from God and His kingdom. **Over the month of October, we explore giving as God’s gift to humans and to society at large. May we be people who are known for giving the gift of our time, talent and treasure.**

WEEK 1: 2 OCT THE GOD WHO GIVES – Rev Kamogelo

Giving is God’s idea - God the Creator, God the Redeemer and Lord, God the Helper and Counsellor defines giving.

WEEK 2: 9 OCT ADDRESSING MONEY AS A RIVAL GOD – Khanyiso Njwabule

Money makes godly claims but only disappoints is a God rival.

WEEK 3: 16 OCT GIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD (PART 1): SACRIFICIALLY, REGULARLY/FREELY AND GENEROUSLY – Rev Gavin

As God gives, so too do we – sacrificially, freely and generously.

WEEK 4: 23 OCT GIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD (PART 2): GRATEFULLY AND OBEDIENTLY – Tony Matthee

Giving as a response of thanksgiving and obedience.

WEEK 5: 30 OCT A CHURCH KNOWN FOR ITS GIVING – Rev Boitumelo

As God is known as a Great Giver, so too should the church be known as such.

WEEK 5: 30 OCTOBER

A CHURCH KNOWN FOR ITS GIVING

As God is known as a Great Giver, so too should the church be known as such.

BIBLE READINGS

Deuteronomy 28:9-14
Acts 3:1-10
II Corinthians 8:1-15 (especially v2)



WORSHIP SONG:



The Giving Song by Christian Island
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moETCueHCfc>

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION WRITTEN BY:

Rev Boitumelo Makgamathe

Paul holds up to the Corinthian Christians the example of the Macedonian Christians. He boasts to them about this Church that has embraced the spirit and the grace of giving. Paul explains that the church in Macedonia was a church in crisis: they did not have an easy life. Despite that they were giving to the church because they received the call to give, they wanted to share in advancing the kingdom of God. We do not give to God because there is an overflow of abundance in our life. We give because we are called to respond to God in giving.

Paul continues his motivation to the church of Corinth by saying that, the church in Macedonia gave beyond their ability. Not because they were forced or under compulsion, but they found joy in giving, especially if it was going to help others in need. They thought it a privilege to share with others. They did not want to be left out of the blessings of being a blessing. Paul concludes by saying in verse 7: *“But just as you excel in everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”* He uses the Greek word *Charis*, to encourage them to embrace the grace of giving. What Paul is saying is that we have the *Charis* of giving and it is not only a gift to us but also part of our stewardship.

Sacrificial giving or stewardship is a grace. Grace is unmerited, unearned, and undeserved love of God. Just as we confess to be saved by grace alone not by any works, we also need to hold a second confession: that we give because of the grace we have received. Let us remember that the church in Macedonia was facing challenges like we do today!

Even while you are experiencing difficult circumstances, you need to give to God. Severe testing can result in overflowing joy. Facing problems in life sometimes push us to make our way out of our tests. When Abram was childless with his wife Sarah, he received guests in his house and asked for them to make a special meal for them. After eating, they gave him a word from God. The same time next year your wife will give birth to a child. If Abram had withheld the generous gift of laying a feast before the visitors, he would have missed the word they brought to him.

Extreme poverty can bring abundant generosity. There are times (like we are currently going through because of the economic effects of the pandemic) when we live in need and in want. But this time of lacking should be a time



where we exercise giving. We need to be faithful in giving with the little that we have so that God can open big doors for us. True stewards give voluntarily rather than under outside compulsion. When you give it should be out of your own desire not because someone is saying you should. There are people who wait to be told to give rather than to give freely. Let's develop a passion for giving so that even before we are told to, we have already given.

Life Application

Let us practice generous giving in our daily lives to those who are closest to us. Generous giving of yourself to others will translate into a giving habit even when we have little resources. The call to our lives is to seek the grace that enables us to be generous. Ask God to help you determine something you can live without for a period. Take the money you would have spent on that and look for ways for further God's kingdom with it.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. In which ways do you give of yourself to the Lord and others?
2. What are you currently struggling with in your giving patterns? Are you a generous giver or seeking the grace to be able to give generously?
3. What is your concept of generosity?
4. What choices do you need to make in your life to apply this passage?
5. What decisions do you need to make to move from having good intentions to being intentional when it comes to giving?



DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

DAY	VERSE	PRAYER
MONDAY	<i>"The Lord will establish you as his holy people...if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in obedience to him. Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you." (Deuteronomy 28:9-10)</i>	Dear Lord, teach me to submit to you so I can become holy unto you. Teach my heart to understand that to receive your blessings I need to be obedient. In Jesus name. Amen
TUESDAY	<i>"So the man gave Peter And John his attention, expecting to get something from them." (Acts 3:5)</i>	Heavenly father our attention is on you. We anticipate in hope and faith for what we would receive from you. This we pray in Jesus's name. Amen.
WEDNESDAY	<i>"In the midst of a very severe trial, the Macedonian churches' overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity." (II Corinthians 8:2)</i>	Gracious and Loving God, teach us to give to you in Joy and that even amid our trials we may continue to give in Joy. Amen
THURSDAY	<i>"The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none." (Deuteronomy 28:12)</i>	Merciful God, we pray for the blessings that you send to us. We thank you that when we are faithful in our giving, we experience your abundance. This we pray in Jesus's name. Amen
FRIDAY	<i>"Peter said, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you.'" (Acts 3:6)</i>	Heavenly father, thank you for your word of truth that teaches us to live a godly life. Amen
SATURDAY	<i>"I lift you high in praise, my God, O my King! and I'll bless your name into eternity. I'll bless you every day, and keep it up from now to eternity. God is magnificent; he can never be praised enough. There are no boundaries to his greatness." (Psalm 145:1-3)</i>	We pray God that you would be gracious to us and give us victory in this world. We praise your holy name. Amen



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Week 5 - Written by: Magogodi Nkuna, (Children's church Volunteer)

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Sing a song: "Count your blessings, name them one by one" [<https://youtu.be/Hb4JBNDWhOA>]

READ: DEUTERONOMY 28: 9-14

TOPIC: BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

God has blessed us in many different ways. He's blessed us with siblings (*yes, your sister/brother is a blessing*) to share life with. He has blessed us with homes, food to eat and a great church. As children of God, we can also share our blessings with others. This means we must find ways to be a blessing to others.

QUESTIONS

- Can you think of other ways God has blessed you?
- How can you share your blessings with others?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for the many blessings you have given me. Show me ways in which I can be a blessing to others. In Jesus's name Amen.