

Astonishing Generosity

Acts 4:32-37



Acts 4:32-33

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Economics in God's kingdom looks like
God's stuff being held with an open
hand by God's people to be used for
God's purposes.

It's God's stuff. I'm not an owner; I'm a steward.

☞ *“The earth belongs to the LORD. And so does everything in it. The world belongs to him. And so do all those who live in it.”*
(Psalm 24:1)

It's God's stuff. I'm not an owner; I'm a steward.

☞ *“I do not need the bulls from your barns or the goats from your pens. For all the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills... If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for all the world is mine and everything in it.” (Psalm 50:9-10, 12)*

I hold with an open hand because when I close my hand I forget & grow fearful.

☞ *"Every generous act and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights; with Him there is no variation or shadow cast by turning." (James 1:17)*

I hold with an open hand because when I close my hand I forget & think it's mine.

☞ *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”* (1 Timothy 6:10)

God desires our wise and generous stewardship of his resources so that Jesus' name might be lifted up in our world.

☞ *“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.”*
(Matthew 25:21)

Acts 4:34-35

34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold 35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Acts 4:36–37

36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Astonishing generosity is not simply a call of the gospel, but an outworking of our experience of the gospel.

☞ *“We love because Christ first loved us.”* (1 John 4:19)

Astonishing generosity is not simply a call of the gospel, but an outworking of our experience of the gospel.

→ *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9)*

Astonishing generosity is an outworking of our experience of the gospel.

☞ *“By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:16-18)*

Cultivating a posture of openhandedness takes practice, discipline, & the power of God.

→ *“Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce.”*
(Proverbs 3:9)

Cultivating a posture of openhandedness takes practice, discipline, & the power of God.

→ *“The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.” (Exodus 23:19)*

Firstfruits giving...

→ Invites Jesus into the sphere of our finances and calls on him to be Lord;

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- Invites Jesus into the sphere of our finances and calls on him to be Lord;
- Breaks our sense of entitlement and opens us up to heart transformation;
- Makes us available to experience of God's further blessing and gracious provision in our lives.

“Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce. Then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10)

“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work... He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8, 10-11)