

Magnanimous Living Pt3

Prayer Dynamic

February Good News Challenge

28 day challenge to read the four Gospels.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.”

The message we find in the four Gospels tells us about this gospel that Paul is speaking about. This Gospel reveals to us the righteousness of God, teaching us how to live our lives by faith.

Act 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

Examining the scriptures, reading/studying- is the proper way to determine truth.

Too often we emote- decide what is true/false by our emotions/thoughts-uninformed by scripture

We do not take time to examine what we believe against the Word of God.

Mk 12:24 Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?”

A proper understanding of God requires both an understanding of the Scriptures/power of God. To minimize either distorts- message of- Gospel.

Review

Magnanimous- to be very generous/forgiving
One of the most prevalent sins today- ingratitude.
Our indebtedness to God is enormous- but how often do we pause/reflect on all God has done.

As a child of God, thankfulness is not an event, it is an attitude that governs life.

God has prospered us/wants to prosper us in many ways/we need to express thankfulness. We must discover- purpose of God's blessing- so we can bless others/impact history/nations.

Proverbs 25:21–22 (The Message)

21If you see your enemy hungry, go buy him lunch; if he's thirsty, bring him a drink.

22Your generosity will surprise him with goodness, and God will look after you.

Generosity can awaken the conscience of the one you give to- towards the goodness of God.

When we discuss prosperity- be careful of extremes- it is unbiblical to-

>view financial prosperity as a mark of spirituality

>embrace poverty as a way of life for a Christian (not- mark of spiritual maturity)

Prosperity has to do w/issues of- heart- an inner life filled w/overflowing, abundant life of God.

Salvation- forgiveness of our sins- but also- safety, health, preservation, protection.

I have never been poor, but I have been broke- poor is an inner heart issue.

Last week- discussed- concept of the tithe (tenth) and answered the question- NT truth or not?

Looked at Malachi 3 and Genesis 14 ...

The tithe was instituted by Abraham some 400 years before the Mosaic Law.

We also saw- Abraham is the father of our faith ...

Gal 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

If you are born again you are a descendant of Abraham, who tithed to Melchizedek (type).

400 years later Moses affirmed- tithe in- Law ... but Abraham introduced- concept of the tithe.

Malachi 3:8-10 (NASB95)

8“Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

9“You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!

10“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

The tithe- 10%- belongs to God- not mine to keep
The NT equivalent of the storehouse is the church
The tithe goes to the local church and offerings are given above the tithe as our heart leads.

The 90% I have left becomes my new 100%.

Prayerfully decide where to give out of-new 100%

90% with God's blessings goes further than 100% w/o God's blessing.

The tithe is more about faith than finances. P Tony

Magnanimous Living

If you back away from the details of the tithe and look at it from a big picture perspective ...

In Malachi, God is saying that Israel had forgotten the law of sowing and reaping.

Look again at this principle of sowing/reaping ...

2 Cor 9:6-7

⁶Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

⁷Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

The NT always raises the bar- raises the level of behavior/faith- God is looking for in our lives.

We are not to give under compulsion but there still remains the principle of sowing/reaping.

This principle is built into- fabric of God's creation.

Gal 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

If you want- see increase in your capacity-in both- natural/spiritual sense-then increase the seed that you sow (money, time, love).

When we do not practice generosity- we will NOT find increased capacity in our lives (stunt growth)

As we sow it increases our spiritual capacity.

We need to become a people who do not see themselves as entitled but see themselves as entrusted with God's resources to do more. Craig Groeschel

There is also a principle of upward giving- where we sow for a future harvest to ...

- >care for our own future needs and
- >have increased resources to bless others and invest in the KofG.

2 Cor 8:1–5

¹Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, ²that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

³For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord,

⁴begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,

⁵and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

Consider- when was the last time you gave as much as you could and even beyond that?

Begged Paul to give even though they were poor. They gave themselves 1st to- Lord- then- ministry
Generosity is a culture of heaven.

Acts 20:35 ... remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”

We are called to be spiritual contributors and not just spiritual consumers- givers not just takers.

The church does not exist for us- we are the church, and we exist for the world.

Studies have shown- poor, middle class, rich- have a different mindset towards life/money ...

Poor- scarcity mindset- believe- not a enough to go around- you have take what you can get.

Rich- abundance mindset- believe- always more- we serve a powerful God who will provide.

A person can be very rich/give a large sum of money- but for them- not really much money.

As a result they have not really been generous.

Another person can have almost nothing and give very little numerically, but for them it is a lot.

They are more generous than the rich person.

Not equal giving but equal sacrifice. Bill Johnson's father

We may not be able to give numerically as much as someone else-but can make same sacrifice

Do not think about giving in terms of how much you give, but in terms of how much you keep for yourself. Craig Groeschel

As Christians we should be thankful for and generous with what God has given to us.

Isaiah 32:8 (NLT) But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.

Stingy people tend to think of how- can get more- generous people plan how they can give.

Many need a change of mindset from a scarcity mindset to one that believes God provides.

Conclusion

One truth to take away from this series ...

God is calling us to be faithful in the natural so we can impact the eternal.

We can impact- nations by our generosity.

All that we have comes from God and can be used to store-up eternal treasures.

We invest in eternity by using our God given resources for God's purposes.

Move from hoarding kingdom resources to releasing kingdom resources. Rick Warren

Illustration ...

You can cut open an apple and count the number of seeds in the apple- but you can never know how many apples will result from you planting the seeds.

Whatever resources God releases to you- see them as from God- use them with excellence
>to represent God well,
>bless others, and
>invest in the KofG.

Challenge

Let me leave us with this question ...

Is generosity a real value to me? If so, then how does it look in my life? If not, why not?

Read and meditate on- Proverbs 11.24-25.

(Ideas taken from a sermon series by Bill Johnson, Prosperity with a Purpose, and Craig Groeschel, Jesus and We)