

Title: Open Hands/Open Heaven

Text: “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

Target: The Kingdom advances at the speed of generosity.

1. **The Principle of Tithing:** (Old Testament)

a. **Before the Law:** (Patriarchs)

i. Abraham gives a tenth to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20)

ii. Jacob vowed a tenth to the Lord at Bethel (Genesis 28:20-20)

Key Thought: The goodness of God compels generosity in His people.

b. **Under the Law:** (Israel)

i. First fruit offering: (Leviticus 27:30-34)

ii. Support of the Temple: (Numbers 18:21-24)

iii. Ministry of the Temple: Care for the priests, outcasts, broken, orphans, and widows

(Deuteronomy 14:22-29, 26:12-13)

iv. Prophetic rebuke: (Malachi 3:8-10)

Reflective Question:

When you look at Abraham and Jacob giving a tenth before any law existed (Genesis 14:18–20; Genesis 28:20–22), what does that reveal about their heart posture toward God?

Cross-Reference: Proverbs 3:9–10 — “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce...” How might your giving reflect honor rather than obligation?

Reflective Question:

Malachi 3:8–10 calls out Israel for withholding tithes. What might “robbing God” look like in our hearts today — not just financially, but in time, talents, or trust?

Cross-Reference: Matthew 6:21 — “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What area of your life do you sense God inviting you to loosen your grip on?

Key Thought: Everything belongs to God, and He chooses to meet the needs of His people through the temple.

2. **The Picture of Generosity:** (New Testament)

a. **Through the Eyes of Jesus:**

i. Spoke more about money than heaven and hell combined.

ii. Confronts giving for the wrong motives: (Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42)

iii. Praises the widow's offering: (Mark 12:41-44)

iv. Warns about being enslaved to money. (Matthew 6:19-24)

v. Sincerity in giving: (Matthew 6:1-4)

b. **Testimony of the Early Church:** (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-27)

c. **Radical Generosity:** (1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 8-9)

Reflective Question:

Jesus praised the widow who gave two small coins (Mark 12:41–44). What does it say about how God measures generosity?

Cross-Reference: 2 Corinthians 9:7 — *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion...”*

How might you redefine generosity in your own life beyond just a percentage?

Reflective Question:

Acts 2:44–45 describes a church that shared everything they had. What fears or attachments make that kind of open-handed living difficult today?

Cross-Reference: Luke 12:33–34 — *“Sell your possessions, and give to the needy... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*

What would radical generosity look like for you this season?

Key Thought: The “Tithe” was not abolished; it was transformed.

3. The Pathway of Giving: (Local Church)**a. About the Heart:**

- i. Breaks the grip of greed: (Luke 12:15)
- ii. Declares my trust in God: (Proverbs 3:9-10)
- iii. Reorders my priorities: (Matthew 6:33)
- iv. Makes room for God to work: (Luke 6:38)
- v. Connects me to something eternal: (Matthew 6:19-20)
- vi. Produces joy: (Acts 20:5)

b. About the House:

- i. Win the lost: (Luke 19:10)
- ii. Welcome home prodigals: (Luke 15:20)
- iii. Raise up warriors: (1 Timothy 6:12)
- iv. Care for the broken: (Psalm 34:18)
- v. Take Kingdom ground: (Joshua 1:3)
- vi. Send out missionaries: (Acts 1:8)

Reflective Question:

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21). How does generosity reorder your priorities and shift your sense of security?

Cross-Reference: Luke 6:38 — *“Give, and it will be given to you...”*

How have you seen God multiply what you’ve surrendered?

Reflective Question:

When we give, we participate in God’s mission to win the lost, care for the broken, and send out missionaries. (Luke 19:10; Psalm 34:18; Acts 1:8). How does your giving connect you personally to God’s greater story?

Cross-Reference: Matthew 25:35–40 — “*When you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.*”

How might generosity deepen your sense of belonging in the Kingdom?

Takeaway: Giving doesn't change what's in your wallet; it changes what's in your worship.

Challenge for the Week

This week, practice *open-handed living*.

- Ask God: “What do I need to release so You can increase?”
- Find one tangible way to bless someone — a meal, a gift, an encouragement — not out of abundance, but out of obedience.

Remember: **Generosity is not about amount — it's about alignment.**