

Session Three - CROSSROADS: The Way of Generosity 20th March

Reflect back

- Do we have stories to share about random acts of kindness, or hospitality from last week?
- What one thing did God highlight for you from the talk?

Review the teaching

This series is about the cross being an invitation for us to follow the Jesus lifestyle. Cathedrals were built in the shape of a cross. What does a cross shaped church look like today? Today we consider generosity and we first look at Jesus:

Phil 2v6-7 Jesus laid aside his privileges; 2Cor 8v9 Jesus became poor so we could become rich; Matt 8v20 Jesus lived simply, he knew his mission; in 11 of Jesus' 40 parables he talks about money.

As we think about our money - Do we own it or does it own us? The rich young ruler in Matt 19v16-22 was challenged to liquidate his assets. Jesus knew his heart and invited him to radical generosity. What is our treasure? Are we addicted to acquisition?

Emmaus Rd Church is generous: over the 3 congregations nearly £400,000 has been given for social transformation and mission. But the average UK individual only gives away 2% of their income. Imagine what we could do if more was given - spiritual and social transformation; new churches, changed lives.

When Paul was commissioned by the Jerusalem church he was to "not forget the poor" (Gal 2v10). Paul's response:

- Give intentionally - 1 Cor 16v1-2. Failure to plan is planning to fail. Choose to plan how you use your finances
- Give sacrificially. - 2 Cor 8v1-5. The ability to give is a grace given by God.
- Give consistently - 2 Cor 8v10b-12. Start well and keep on giving.
- Give hilariously - 2 Cor 9v7. Don't be a grudging giver.
- Bread or Seed? - 2 Cor 9v10. Bread is for our use, but seed is to be sown so that it can multiply.
- If you sow it, God will grow it - 2 Cor 9v10-15. Sowing seed is good stewardship.

What springs up, what multiplies when we sow intentionally, sacrificially, consistently, hilariously?

- gives you more seed
- harvest of righteousness
- enriched in every way so we can be generous in every situation
- generosity will result in thanksgiving to God
- supplies the need of the Lord's people
- people will see the integrity of your faith - that your obedience accompanies your confession
- Mutuality - Community - common unity - we are in this together - Heart & prayer connection

Matt 6v21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Realise the value

- How can we become more generous? Remember - giving isn't just financial, it might be our time, our skills or use of our homes (room for a refugee?).
- Are there other ways we can show generosity?
- Remember, some in the collective may have debts. How can we help them without them feeling inadequate or a charity cause?
- How can we spur one another on to good works (Heb 10v24)?