

## THE SECRET TO A FULFILLING LIFE

Scripture used: [Acts 20:35 \(NLT\)](#)

### OVERVIEW

As we are in the homestretch of the Be Rich to Others campaign in this special season before Christmas, we are reminded of the importance of service and compassion. Here, the Apostle Paul tells us that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” This opens the door to a lifetime of generosity, and a deeper understanding of God’s heart and character. At NBCC, we aim to create space for people to meet God at their own pace – and find ways to contribute time, talent, and treasure to the work of God. When we walk with God and live life in the way He calls us to, our lives are enriched in quality, meaning, and purpose.

### KEY POINTS

1. Winston Churchill said: “We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.” Generosity brings many concrete benefits. It is advantageous to our physical and mental health, and it creates a sense of connection and purpose, and thus fosters happiness. It is contagious, and inspires others. It is self-fulfilling: it triggers a cascade of laughter and joy. And there is a certain adventure and excitement around radical generosity - it is a stretch goal that challenges us, motivates us, makes us more productive and innovative.
2. Many of the qualities of God that are most central to His character and goodness are directly tied to a sense of unconditional generosity: grace, forgiveness, blessing. For example, the heart of God is revealed in [John 3:16](#) - God’s love for the world caused him to GIVE His Son to us, and Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice is an example of his own love for us (reflecting God’s heart) expressed as generous grace
3. The opposite of generosity is being angry, dour, and cynical - it’s a diminished way to live, both for ourselves and the people around us. Instead, as we live out our identity as children of God and as Jesus followers, we too can sacrifice for others, and focus on others in a spirit of generosity. This generosity can be expressed through service, through giving others the benefit of the doubt in relationships, and through trusting God’s provision enough to be faithful in financial generosity.
4. **Generosity is the secret to a more enriching and impactful life.** For many, many people, our greatest blockage is our attitude towards money, often driven by fear (of not having enough, of running out) or greed. We ought to prioritize, set goals, and decide early in this season of giving - using planning and intention versus relying on impulse and chance. [1 Corinthians 16:2](#) alludes to this sense of priority, percentage, and progressive giving. [Proverbs 11:25](#) tells us we are refreshed through giving. [Luke 6:38 \(NIV\)](#) defines “finding favor”: the measure that we use will be measured back to us. Giving with gratitude is our response to God’s mission in the world.

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Would you describe your family culture growing up as a generous culture? What experiences in your life lead you to lean toward generosity or the lack of generosity?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Acts 20:35](#) and [John 3:16](#). How do these verses reflect a value for generosity found in Scripture that reflects God’s heart? If we are children of God and followers of Jesus, what would it look like to grow in reflecting God’s heart of generosity in our own lives (consider your time, use of your gifts and talents, and your finances)? What are the biggest obstacles you face in taking a step forward in faithful generosity? What is one step that you feel like God is calling you to take in this season of your life?
- 3) **DO** - Find a way to be generous! If you are an active part of the NBCC community and you believe in the vision and values of NBCC, please consider a consistent level of support for our church so that we can be fully resourced to be the church that God is calling us to be. If you are not connected to NBCC or still just getting to know the church, consider finding another way to be generous, whether to a non-profit that you know well, a cause you know well, or some other act of generosity that God puts on your heart. Happy Thanksgiving and see you next Sunday!