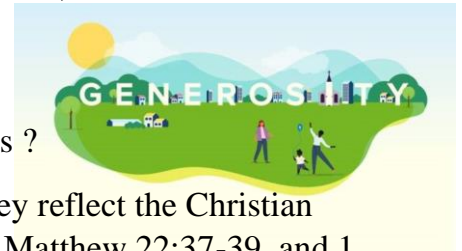


A Community of Generosity and Gratitude

Generosity is a reflection of God's own character and love, expressed through a willingness to give selflessly to others without expecting anything in return. It involves not just material giving but also sharing time, kindness, and spiritual encouragement. Being generous in the Christian sense is rooted in the belief that everything we have is a gift from God, entrusted to us to bless others.

- Do you have areas where you find it easy to be generous ?
- Do you have areas where you find it difficult to be generous ?



Ask people to read the following Bible passages and share how they reflect the Christian understanding of generosity: 2 Corinthians 8:9, 2 Corinthians 9:7, Matthew 22:37-39, and 1 Peter 4:10.

Hopefully, through the conversation, you have covered some of the following ideas:

1. **Sacrificial giving:** Going beyond comfort to meet the needs of others, as Christ sacrificed for humanity (2 Corinthians 8:9).
2. **Cheerfulness:** Giving joyfully rather than grudgingly, as God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).
3. **Love-driven:** Motivated by love for God and others, reflecting the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-39).
4. **Stewardship:** Recognizing that resources, talents, and time are to be used for the glory of God and service to His Kingdom (1 Peter 4:10).

While **generosity** reflects God's character and love, **gratitude** is our heartfelt response to His grace, recognizing His goodness and faithfulness in every aspect of life. Gratitude flows from an awareness of God's blessings—both big and small—acknowledging that everything, including life, salvation, and daily needs, come from Him.

Read: Philippians 4:11-13

Gratitude shows a heart content with what God has provided, whether in abundance or in need. In this passage, Paul explains that contentment must be learned; it doesn't come naturally but is something we grow into.

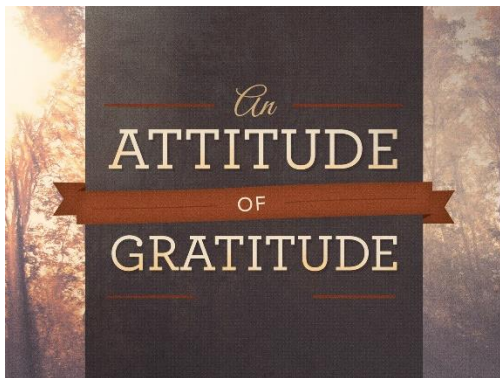
- What areas of your life have you learned to be content in?
- Where might you need to grow in contentment?

A Community of Generosity and Gratitude

The opposite of contentment is envy and this can have a devastating effect on our wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around us.

John Ortberg from his book *Love Beyond Reason* writes

"Envy is wanting what another person has and feeling badly that I don't have it. Envy is disliking God's goodness to someone else while dismissing His goodness to me. It is desire plus resentment—envy is anti-Community."



Contentment breaks the grip of envy, freeing us to focus on God's plan and his actions in our lives. We are called to learn contentment in what we have, who we are, and in what God is doing in our lives at this very moment.

Reflecting on your current life situation, what are the things you can thank God for? Consider both the big and small blessings He has provided. Take a moment to acknowledge and express gratitude for His faithfulness and grace in your life right now.

This reflection can naturally lead into a time of prayer where you express these blessings to God, thanking Him for His provision and care.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,
Thank You for Your countless blessings in our lives. We are grateful for

You could then finish with

Help me to always recognize Your hand in our lives and to share Your blessings with others.
May our heart be filled with gratitude as we seek to live out Your purpose.

Amen.