

Avoiding the love of money

Read: 1 Timothy 6, 6-10, 17-19

Probably very few of us would say that we love money. Yet the UK is a society that is rich in global terms. It can be easy to spend on impulse, responding to marketing and social media which tell us that having more and better stuff will make us happier.

Today's passage is clear – putting our hope in wealth and the ability to spend our way out of trouble is doomed to failure, compared to putting our hope in a sure, trustworthy God.

So, we are challenged to “do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.” (v18) so that we may live a different kind of life – the life that is truly life.



Reflect: Think about whether are there any ways that you love money or what money can buy. What might you do about this?

Generous stewards

Read: 1 Peter 4:7-11

Living generously is not just about money. It encompasses our whole life; time, skills, hospitality and heart, as well as money.

In this passage, St Peter challenges his readers: “each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” (v10, NIV)

As good stewards, we do not keep to ourselves what God has gifted to us, but seek to use it for the benefit of others. Being a faithful steward is not easy, but the Holy Spirit can equip us to live to the glory of God.... if we ask Him to.

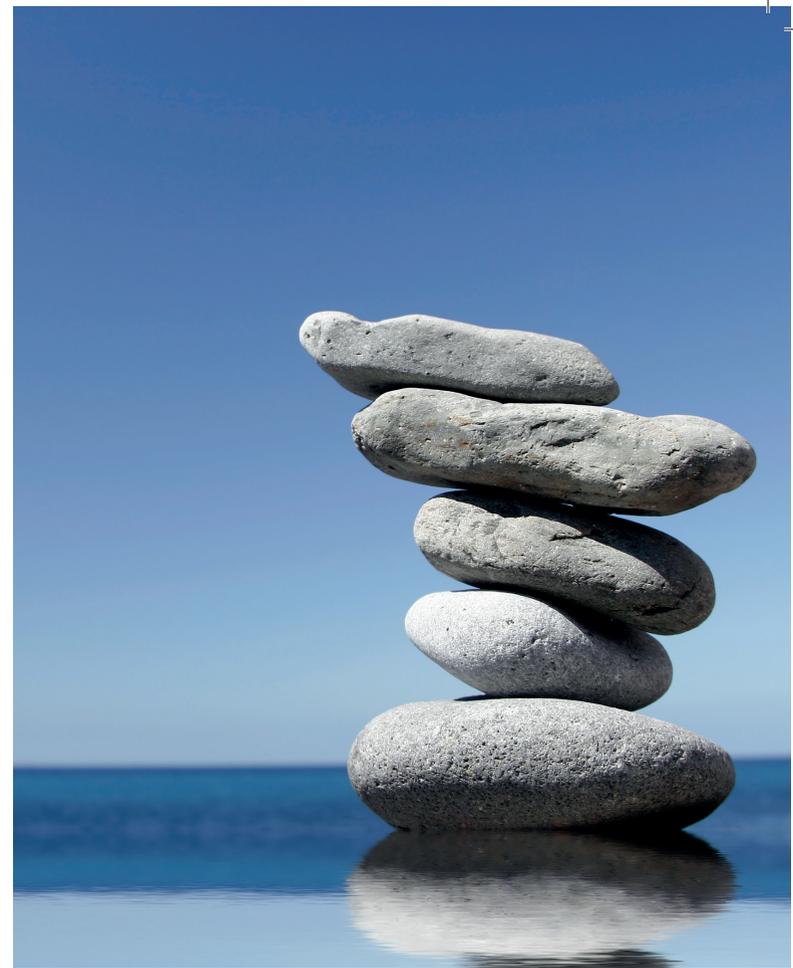


Reflect: In what aspects of your giving do you find it easiest to be generous? Where do you find it harder? Take some time to pray for the help of the Holy Spirit in living generously day by day.



National
Stewardship Team

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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

GIVING
FOR LIFE

FIVE DAILY REFLECTIONS
ON GENEROSITY

God's amazing grace

Read: Romans 8:31-39

God's gift of himself in Jesus is both the ultimate in sacrificial love, and the start of an amazing, unending cascade of grace.

As children of God we are in a family relationship with our loving heavenly father through the gift of Jesus. After such generosity, as Paul says, 'will he not give us everything else?' His love is unending, and he will bless us with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1). Yet none of this is because we are good enough, or have earned it. It's grace - God's abundant, eternal love towards people who have not deserved it.



Reflect: Take some time to reflect on the gift of Jesus, given for you, and the promise that nothing can separate us from his love.

God's abundant provision

Read: John 6:1-13

Using a young boy's gift of a packed lunch, Jesus is able to transform the gift into sufficient food to feed a huge crowd. Henri Nouwen writes 'When the story ends with the glorious statement that the disciples filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over, there is no doubt left that God's house is a house of abundance, not of scarcity.'

Yet human nature tells us that we haven't got enough, and that we need to hold on tightly to what we have.



Reflect: Do you see God as a God of abundance or a God of scarcity? Spend some time thinking of ways that God has blessed you, and give thanks.

Who owns my possessions?

Read: 1 Chronicles 29:1-17

At the end of King David's life he gathered materials for his son Solomon to build the temple. The prayer in verses 10 to 13 is well known, but it's helpful to see it in its original context.

'Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.' (v14) Recognising that God is the ultimate owner of everything is important, for it changes our role from owner to steward or trustee – looking after all that has been entrusted to us, and making wise decisions about how to use it.



Reflect: Pause and consider all that God has entrusted to your care. As with yesterday's reflection, spend some time being thankful, but also ask for wisdom and courage to be a good steward.