

**As we give, so God gives
to us.**

**Read: Matthew 6:19 and 20; also
Philippians 4:14-20**

There is a cycle of generosity. First, God gives to us and, as we saw yesterday, this leads us to give in response. But scripture also shows that God responds to our giving - that we are blessed by it. We need to be careful to avoid the 'prosperity gospel' that suggests that this blessing will be earthly wealth, but equally we should not miss the point altogether. As we give, we receive - in the joy in the act of giving, and in receiving God's blessings thereafter - in heaven (Matthew 6) and in his provision for our earthly needs (Philippians 4). And in this, we see again the overflowing generosity of God.

Reflect:

Spend a moment reflecting on your own giving thinking about where you currently give - money, yes; but also time, or hospitality, or by using the skills and talents God has given to you.

As we give, we grow.

Read: Matthew 25:14-30

The parable of the talents has much to say, but today, let us simply focus on two points. That those who have been entrusted by the Master will one day be held to account, and second, the slightly surprising statement in verse 29, that everyone who has will be given more. The underlying truth is that as we invest time and energy in seeking to follow Christ, so we grow - in faith, in a greater perception of God's blessings to us, and in a greater understanding of what we can do to serve Jesus both in and through the local church.

Reflect:

Calling back to mind the areas of your giving you identified yesterday, consider what the next step in your growth as a disciple of Jesus might be.



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Giving for Life

FOR LIFE
GIVING

**A series of 5 daily reflections
on how we become caught up
in God's generosity**

A God of abundance

Read: John 6:1-14

Using a young boy's gift of a packed lunch, Jesus is able to transform the gift into sufficient food to feed a crowd. This can be seen as a cycle of generosity - that God takes what we offer, and as it is given to meet the needs of others, so its impact is multiplied.

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.'

Reflect:

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

Giving to God enables ministry and mission

Read: Luke 8:1-3

These three verses are sandwiched between two much better known passages, but within them lies an important point. Jesus' ministry was supported by some of the women who travelled with him. Just as Jesus' ministry needed support, so does the ministry of the church today. In assemblies, in moments of quiet with the bereaved, in our youth work and the pastoral encounters of daily life, members of the Church of England, paid or unpaid, are giving of themselves to support communities up and down the country.

Reflect:

Pray for your local clergy and ministers for their work in supporting community. Pause also to reflect on who you have come into contact with today, and pray for them.

Giving to God responds to what we have received

Read: 1 Chronicles 29:1-20

King David is known for many things, but one of his final acts is to give to the building of the Temple. He does so from the wealth of his office, and from his own personal wealth. The prayer in verses 10 to 13 is well known to us, but it is helpful to see it in its original context. One of the world's most powerful and wealthy kings recognises that all of his wealth and power is given to him by God, and that his giving back to God is in response to God's prior generosity. The challenge of this passage is not so much to reflect on what we give, but on our motives for doing so - do we give out of thankfulness?

Reflect:

Pause and reflect on the blessings that you have received. Give thanks to God for his generosity - for the daily blessings of food and shelter, for the blessings of loving human relationships.