

Day 34 – Bold Generosity

Today, we will focus on Stonegate’s last core value, *Bold Generosity*. What is it about acts of uncommon and bold generosity that move and surprise us? Bold generosity changes environments, circumstances, and legacies. In a culture of accomplishment and excess, it is easy to hold onto and protect our resources. But for the people of God, our willingness to be open-handed can separate us from our culture. We want to be courageous stewards of God’s resources and our time, making significant investments to see transformation in our community and the world.

Are there circumstances that keep you from being generous with your time, talent, and finances? What are they and why?

Our focus scripture for today is 2 Corinthians 8:1–5

¹ “Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in His kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. ² They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. ³ For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴ They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. ⁵ They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.”

Most of us find any and all reasons why we can’t give, but not the church in Macedonia. They surprised even Paul with their *rich*, or you could say *bold generosity*. They were not forced to give but begged to give, not out of their excess but out of their poverty and during a difficult situation. To be clear, at Stonegate, we never want to manipulate anyone into giving. Many of us give from what is left over or what we can afford. But again, not the church in Macedonia. They challenge us by their bold example giving more than they could afford. But how? Paul said it overflowed from first giving themselves to God and the joy they had in Jesus. And from that place of joy-filled trust, they were boldly generous.

Pause to consider what it would look like and take for you to be boldly generous with your finances in this season of your life.

As an invitation to a spiritual practice—a way to say “yes, Lord,” be generous with your finances today. The spiritual practice is simple but costly. Seek the Lord in prayer and be generous as the Lord leads you. You could help a single mom pay rent or groceries, help someone get their vehicle fixed, or buy a family's dinner while out to eat. Or, you could give to a local non-profit doing life-changing work in our city. The options are vast. We can trust that if we seek the Lord, willing to give, He will show us a need we can meet.

Prepare to walk with God into the day before us, the Lord who loves us says in:

1 Timothy 6:17–19 ¹⁷ “Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need

for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. ¹⁹ By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.”

Father, help us discern where you are leading us as a church - making Your invitation clear.

Jesus, help us become worshipers, friends, apprentices, and guides who live as disciple-makers in all areas of our everyday.

Spirit, help us become a disciple-making hub, loving the lost and proclaiming Jesus in all we do and say so our communities will flourish.