

OVERFLOW:

A LIFE REFRESHED BY GENEROSITY

Sermon Outline 1

 GENEROUSCHURCH™

Title: *“The Source of Whole-Life Generosity: A Life Lived in Relationship with God”*

Goal: inspire people to be generous because it’s a response to God’s generosity and a means of empowering the church to achieve Christ’s mission in the world today.

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Intro Series

1. We love being generous at [Church Name] - Sometimes people think what we do is a little crazy.
2. That’s OK, God’s love can seem a little crazy.

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“If I acted crazy, I did it for God; if I acted overly serious, I did it for you. Christ’s love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do.” (2 Corinthians 5:13–14 The Message) – Apostle Paul

- a. Some of the things we do seem crazy to people because it is driven by the unexpected, over-the-top love of God.
- b. Christ’s love moves us to be generous with our lives in ways that are remarkable.
- c. Christ’s love is all about “others greater than me”.

3. Let me give you just one example of this from the life of Jesus.

Transition: PRAY

2. START WITH JESUS

- A. Love motivated Jesus to be generous in the way He treated people.
 1. One example from a scene in Mark's account of Jesus' life.
 - a. He's been healing people, confronting demonic powers, walking on water –kind of a normal 'Jesus' day.
 - b. He's also teaching scores of people and mentoring a group of trainees to carry on after He leaves.
 - c. On this one day, He shows up in a seaside town and something interesting happens.
 2. A religious leader, Jairus, comes running up through the crowd, falls on his knees and begs Jesus for help – his daughter is dying from an illness.
 - a. Jesus doesn't know Jairus but He understands that this is someone with influence in the community: this is like getting a call from a town selectman or the Lead Pastor.
 - b. It's a truly desperate situation – he's looking for help and is willing to humiliate himself in front of everyone to get it – so what does Jesus do? He helps.
 - c. They head out to Jairus' house - pressing through a crowd of people when something unusual happens. Jesus stops and says, "Someone touched me" – the crowd was huge – but something special had happened.
 1. A woman who has an incurable medical condition touched Him – no one Jesus even knows.

2. She has drained her funds and her hopes looking anywhere for a cure – no help.
 3. She's heard about Jesus and the miracles and she's desperate - thinks to herself – maybe, if I could just touch him – something would happen for me.
 4. And something does happen – she's cured!
- d. Jesus knows this and stops. He wants her to see His face, hear His voice. He takes the time to stop what He is doing and comfort her in tender tones.

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“Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” (Mark 5:34 NIV)

- e. Then He goes on and heals Jairus' daughter – He didn't ignore that need either.
3. Here's Jesus – changing His schedule, putting His agenda aside to respond to need – to take time for someone with influence and someone with no influence.
- a. Jesus didn't have to stop to talk to the woman – she was healed before He said anything but she needed to hear that God cared.
 - b. Jesus didn't have to go to Jairus' home to heal the girl – He healed people from a distance – He wanted Jairus to see God run to his aid, touch his daughter.
- B. Because Jesus loved people, He was generous with His time, His energy, His attention, and with everything.
1. Jesus stopped to pray for children.

2. Jesus took the time to talk to a man who showed up in the middle of the night asking questions about God and faith.
3. Jesus took time at a wedding reception to help someone who ran out of wine.
4. Jesus would wash people's feet when they were dirty.
5. Jesus would pray for people when He needed prayer.
6. Dying on a cross, Jesus expressed forgiveness for the people who put Him there, guaranteed salvation for someone hanging on another cross next to Him.
7. Love drove Jesus to give His life to make it possible for us to know God.

3. WHAT A ROLE MODEL OF GENEROSITY

A. Jesus lived.

1. His whole life in relationship with God.
2. Believing everything He had was a gift from God to be received with gratitude.
3. Releasing everything back to God for the blessing of others.

B. So, Jesus inspires us to do the same.

1. We can live our lives in relationship with God—this is amazing. If you've never committed yourself to fully following God, do that today. You can experience that same extravagant love that Jesus demonstrated.
2. Everything you have is a gift from God. You live in a country where it is safe to worship – if you also have a home, food, access to medical care, an education and a change of clothes – you are among the top 10% of the world's richest people. THANK GOD for that!

3. Here's a question: what can you release back to God for the blessing of others?

Transition: Here's what we're going to do with this series

4. OUR NEW SERIES

A. This series is all about how we can live generous lives motivated by God's love to achieve the vision God has given us.

1. Message

For six weeks, we're going to look at role models from the Bible and from the world today – stories of people who made and are making choices to love God and to love others in remarkable ways. We'll see how God used their generous choices to touch lives, accelerate the work of the church and even change the world through these ordinary people who decided to live out their faith.

2. Group Study

We have a special *Overflow* study that's been designed to compliment what we're talking about in the message. It's different than the messages so you'll be missing out if you don't participate – by using the study, God will stretch your faith and possibly change your life – try it it's only a few weeks – (give directions on where to sign up)

3. Outreach (optional idea)

We have a gift for you that you can make into a gift for others – Generosity Bags. They are empty, so fill them with something that will help someone you know who has a real need and give it to them. It's simple, and we've given you some ideas in the bag.

I met with some leaders recently – staff, church leadership, etc. – gave them the bags and asked them to be generous with them.

Slide - pictures

- a. Example - I took my bag and went to Target – our church is on a railroad track and they get a number of homeless people – so we packed a bag for man/woman with clothes, HBA's and gave it to the church.
- b. Example - Another person made a baby quilt for their new neighbors – explained our church's focus on generous living, the wife was inspired to fill the bag herself and give it to someone else in need – generosity inspires generosity.
- c. Example - Another person filled it with food for someone who lives paycheck to paycheck.
- d. Example - Another family met two men from Nepal who are refugees. They filled it with rice flour and oil because the men wanted to make the bread they ate in their homeland, also added scarves and gloves for the cold.
- e. Example - A couple of families decided to donate goods to the homeless ministry listed on the insert.
- f. I want your stories – generosity inspires generosity: fill out the card and drop it off here or fill out the form we provide you, and give us photos!

Commission/End of Service

Prayer: God, thank You for being our model of whole-life generosity. We know that You are the source and we are not. We thank You for your grace and love to lead us on this journey to become more like Jesus. Help us this week to listen to you in a fresh new way.

Pastor/Church Leader: Additional Overflow resources, including the six-week video study, are available at www.GenerousChurch.com/Overflow