

FIVE PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS
EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY
VARIOUS QUOTES FROM WORKBOOK, TEXTBOOK,
M & S MATERIAL - HANDOUT

“Giving reflects the nature of God.” (Page 106/107)

We give because we love God, love the church, desire to grow in love of neighbor. (Page 9, Workbook)

Churches that model Extravagant Generosity give joyously, generously and consistently in ways that enrich the souls of members and strengthen the ministries of the church. (Page 9, Workbook)

“You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity.” (2 Corinthians 9:11) (Page 11, Workbook)

Acquisitiveness does not foster a life rich in God. (Page 12, Workbook - Matt. 25: 14-30)

“Take from among you an offering to the Lord; let whoever is of a generous heart bring the Lord’s offering.” (Exodus 35:5) (Page 12, Workbook)

“Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce.” (Proverbs 3:9)

Paul describes generosity as one of the fruits of the Spirit, alongside love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22)

“They....gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints.” (2 Corinthians 8: 2-4) (Page 17, Workbook)

“And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” (Luke 12: 13-21) (Page 19, Workbook)

Generosity is a fruit of the Spirit, a worthy spiritual aspiration. Generosity is the opposite of selfishness, self-centeredness, and self-absorption. To practice Extravagant Generosity requires self-control, patience, kindness, faith, and love of God and neighbor. These build us up; equip us for life and for ministry; and foster perspectives and attitudes that are sustaining, enriching, and meaningful. Giving changes both the giver and the church. (Page 21, Workbook)

“God has created us so we do small things with great love.” (Mother Teresa)

“O God, I will meet all kinds of people today; help me to help them all.” (William Barclay)

Congregations that cultivate generosity invite young adults into leadership and planning. (Page 28, Workbook)

How does your congregation show generosity to the community? List as many ways as you can that demonstrate this generosity outside the church walls? (Page 23, Workbook)

Extravagant Generosity is what feeds us.

A lens of generosity - a spiritual practice for the life and work of the church -

**Have we.... Seen God’s gifts to us?
Lived from gratitude and generosity?
Worked from an attitude of abundance?
And sensed God’s grace? (M & S)**

EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY

“Generosity enlarges the soul, realigns priorities, connects people to the Body of Christ, and strengthens congregations to fulfil Christ’s ministries.” (Page 106)

“How people use their material resources either honors or dishonors their relationship with God.” (Page 109)

“Giving serves justice and is a fruit of Christ’s transforming grace. (Luke 19: 1-10.)” (Page 110)

“Such churches teach and practice giving that focuses on the abundance of God’s grace and that emphasizes the Christian’s need to give, rather than on the church’s need for money.” (Page 112)

“Pledge campaigns are not about money, dollars, and budgets but about mission, spiritual growth, and relationship to God.” (Page 119)

“Rather than becoming obsessed with income, survival, and maintenance, they continually return their focus to changing lives, reaching out to new people, and offering significant mission.” (Page 121)

“Churches that nurture the practice of Extravagant Generosity take seriously the stewardship of the resources entrusted to them by their members.” (Page 122)

“They looked at their money as if each dollar had a mission.” (Page 105)

“Extravagant generosity means graciously and responsibly placing ourselves and our resources in service to God.” (Page 112)

“People who give generously to the church do so because they genuinely desire to make a positive difference for the purposes of Christ and because they want to align their lives with higher purposes. They give in response to the Spirit’s urging and feel a soul sustaining satisfaction in the sense of meaning and connection that comes with generosity.” (Page 107)

“Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice extravagant generosity....They thrive with the joy of abundance rather than starve with a fear of scarcity.” (Page 108)

“There’s no end to what the church can accomplish for the purposes of Christ, when the sharp awareness of the assets, resources, and talents that God entrusts to us supercedes the fear of scarcity and the obsessive focus on needs, problems, and shortages.” (Page 112)

“The practice of generosity is a means by which God builds people up, strengthens their spirits, and equips them to serve God’s purposes.” (Page 114)

“Extravagantly generous congregations emphasize mission, purpose, and life changing results rather than shortages, budgets, and institutional loyalty.” (Page 119)

“Extravagant Generosity supports the other four practices, helping the church fulfill its ministry to make disciples of Jesus Christ in robust and fruitful ways, opening the message of God’s love in Christ to more people now and for generations to come.” (Page 123)

(Other four practices - Radical Hospitality, Intentional Faith Development, Passionate Worship, Risk-taking Service and Mission)