

This Is The Way Giving Back

Introduction: Calling All Hoarders

Admission: I am a hoarder!

Question: How can I live that way?

God's Call To Give Ourselves Away

If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? (Luke 9:24-25 NLT)

Observation: It's not a zero-sum game

What Giving Away Looks Like

1st Look: *To keep our well-being, we give away our treasures*

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. (Matthew 6:19-21 NLT)

The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. (Proverbs 11:25 NLT)

2nd Look: *To keep our focus, we give away our faith*

Jesus told His disciples about two actions to take...

- "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19).
- "You will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).

So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective. Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ. (Colossians 3:1-4 MSG)

Principle: When we give away our lives, we have a new location.

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. (Philippians 1:27 NLT)

Principle: When we give our lives over to Christ, we receive a new citizenship.

Observation: You naturally evangelize for anything you love.

Consider: Your Spiritual DNA

- God is rich in grace (Ephesians 1:7)
- God is rich in mercy (Ephesians 2:4)
- God is rich in kindness (Romans 2:4)
- God is rich in wisdom and knowledge (Romans 11:33)

3rd Look: *To keep our joy, we give away the outcomes*

Remember: *A stingy planter gets a stingy crop; a lavish planter gets a lavish crop. I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving.*

God can pour on the blessings in astonishing ways so that you're ready for anything and everything, more than just ready to do what needs to be done. As one psalmist puts it, He throws caution to the winds, giving to the needy in reckless abandon. His right-living, right-giving ways never run out, never wear out.

This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God. *2 Corinthians 8:6-11 MSG*

Principle: The motive behind the act is more important than the act itself.

Conclusion: The Bridge To Generosity

A Necessary Question: What would it look like to be generous right now?

A Second Question: What is the treasure I am likely to hold on to...tightly?