



## **ENABLER #4: FINANCES**

### **MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL THROUGH PARTNERING WITH GENEROSITY**

#### **The Relationship between Salvation and Generosity**

In the Medieval Ages the church raised money by allowing people to “purchase” their salvation through payments to the church. Even St. Peter’s Basilica was funded in part through these payments. Hundreds of years ago the church rejected this practice, conceding that only God had the power to grant salvation. In modern Christian life, buying salvation is no longer considered a healthy way of relating to God.

But where is generosity’s place in relation to our salvation?

Giving is often treated as a secondary activity, done in addition to our salvation, rather than an integral part of our salvation. It is important to remember that generosity is central to our salvation, rather than peripheral. We are saved by following Jesus, and if we are truly following Jesus we should be becoming like Him. The process of becoming more like Him is evidence of our salvation. Ephesians 4:22-24 says: “...to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

But if we are intended to be like God, we must first understand His character. One thing that is certain is that God is the epitome of generosity. God proves His generosity at the cross: “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace which He lavished on us...” (Ephesians 1:7-9).

Famous Christian financial expert Dave Ramsey contends that God is the ultimate Giver, as He sacrificed His only Son for our sake (John 3:16). \* He also reminds us that we must give to become more like God.

Theologian Tim Keller agrees with this assessment, stating that Christians must model God’s loving sacrifice of Christ, and “...our posture toward God and others in response to His love should be one of cheerful sacrifice and generosity.” \*\*

We can never hope to purchase our salvation as the Medieval Church claimed. Nevertheless, generosity will be a part of the evidence that we are saved, and that God is working in our hearts.

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Lord, I desire to be more like You. Help my generosity to be a reflection of You in me.

Giving and sacrifice are a reflection of God's love for me and my love for God.

\* <http://www.daveramsey.com/blog/give-while-in-debt>

\*\* Matthew 6:19-34. May 2, 1999. Grace and Money. Tim Keller