

Ungenerous

Starting a new series today called “Generous”

Science is discovering this amazing “new discovery” -

doing all these experiments and studies, realizing the happiest people in the world are the most generous people. Not happy → generous. It's generous → happy! (book on tape listening to right now)

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

Lesson today called “UN-GENEROUS”

Looked it up, it IS a word.

Starting with bad examples - sometimes you can better understand something by examining the opposite - 7-up ad campaign in the 70's “the UNCOLA” (Geoffrey Holder as Caribbean planter) (Motivated to clean house by helping someone else move, or watching “Hoarders”)

Going to look at three stories, and then draw some conclusions for us, then a song that pulls it all together.

The King - Daniel 5

Belshazzar - his father was rebel, married Neb's daughter.
This is 65 years after Dan got there to Babylon

No source ever mentioned Belshazzar - historians all discredited - all histories listed Nebonias last king

Ziggurat of Ur found an inscription explaining - Nebonias got into mysticism, going off worshipping Sin God, Belshazzar ruling for 17 years - that's why he offers 3rd place in the kingdom

(This room has been excavated - plaster wall still there)

vs. 10 - Bel's mom, grew up around Dan

539 BC - 66 years - Daniel doing awesome, never compromised

22 “But you, Belshazzar, his son,[d] have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. 23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven.

We can ALL relate to this. There have been times we have all been proud, set ourselves up against God. **Take what should be dedicated to God and use it for ourselves**, our own pleasure or entertainment

- our time
- our money
- our intellect
- our sexuality
- our families

Contrast the heart of Daniel, vs. 17

Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else."

Can you say this to the world? - "You have nothing to offer me!"

That very night, the city was surrounded

The Successful Farmer - Luke 12

Context - family fighting over money. Seen this often. Especially as parents age/pass away as in this story.

"life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." - How true!

This guy is the picture of the American dream! Plenty stored up! Able to focus on enjoying retirement.

"Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." —take a poll at your office, what percentage would say this is their objective? Most?

My old days at PC mall -all small talk was about the weekend. How many till, how many since.

What was the problem? He was not **rich towards God!**

Some of you say "if God gave me a lot of money I would totally be generous with it."

If you're not generous now, why would God give you more? And would that even be good for you?

He who can be trustworthy with little can be trusted with much

But really we ALL have much!

Our tendency is to think if the rung a step above us

When **Jesus thinks about the rich he's thinking about us**

What is Jesus trying to do with this story? **Free us up from what everyone around us is so worried and anxious about!** What follows is the famous text (read it on your own) about the flowers and the birds and God's creation in balance and at piece, not worrying. Seeking first the Kingdom.

Heard a recent poll found 1/4 Americans lose sleep worrying about finances.

The Rich Man - Luke 16

*13 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and money.**"*

*14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. **What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.**"*

Wow, that is a scary scripture. Be honest. Could it be said of you that you “love money?” It’s going to poison the way you view everything else. It’s the wrong value system when it comes to eternal perspective. Do you value what the world around you values? **What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.**

But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

The *hero* is the poor guy. It’s the value system of the world turned on its head. His name, Lazarus, means “GOD IS MY HELP”. Man, I hear this story and I want to be *that guy!* The rich guy, we don’t even know his name.

Rich man wasn’t thinking at all about anything except the here and now. Just plodding along - totally oblivious. Caught up in the world’s value system. He’s like any one of the countless people around us in the South Bay.

Death is the great equalizer. Death comes to everyone. No matter where you live, no matter how much money you have, no matter how fit you are. Your time will eventually come. We are all humbled on our way out - we’ve **all seen that**. What we haven’t seen is what lies beyond. You’d think if we’re going to listen to someone about the truths of that it would be the son of God! These are metaphors they are illustrations using the things we understand from this world but truly the realities of the next world are even MORE profound, more real.

Common to all

1. They think they have total control

- They are all rich!
- Think they have more time than they do
- Think they can control outcomes

2. They don’t

- Judgment day comes to each
- Regret / fear / trembling - now or later?

Ted talks - story of tests where they divided up people into rich and poor and had them play Monopoly. Rich had unfair advantages but they still took credit. Rich much less likely to give away.

http://www.ted.com/talks/paul_piff_does_money_make_you_mean

This is huge because this is what everyone is looking for!! To be the rich person in the rigged game of Monopoly. To have wealth, comfort, easy results. To feel like we have control.

God is pulling back the curtain on this and exposing it for the fraud that it is!

These scientific studies are saying the more you have, the worse you treat people. So spiritually speaking, the more you have the worse it is for you! That’s exactly what Jesus said in Luke 6!

[Luke 6:20, 24](#)

*20 Looking at his disciples, he said:
"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.*

*24 "But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.*

This is an issue for us Americans - we are the most wealthy people in the world. Occupy Wall Street - people furious with these bankers making so much money. **People can get so caught up in it, so consumed. So driven by trying to keep up. And Jesus comes along and says, "you are SO LUCKY to be poor! (Luke 6)** So counter cultural. But so cool to me that 2000 years later it's being backed up by scientific experiments.

Busy People - James 4

Problem is not in having a business plan. Problem is not having the proper spiritual perspective.

What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

Bel: This very night

Rich fool: This very night

Rich man: death was the equalizer

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

Are you putting God first in your life? Does his Kingdom hold the proper place and priority? If not, TODAY's the DAY! Make piece with God. **Stop chasing everything the world is chasing. Everything you need is right here. It's time to surrender.**

James admonishment to rich in chapter 5 - weep, mourn, and wail - kinda negative? Point is humble yourselves NOW, not when it's too late.

[Part 2 - Can be helped - after short video rich did same as poor.](http://www.ted.com/talks/paul_piff_does_money_make_you_mean)

http://www.ted.com/talks/paul_piff_does_money_make_you_mean

God's kingdom is the answer. God's help, his Holy Spirit. Gaining the right perspective of wealth and humanity.

Series - about being rich towards God. Having a generous heart. Generous heart is a happy heart. Even science, doing all these experiments, realizing the happiest people in the world are the most generous people. Not happy → generous. It's generous → happy!

Generous Heart - Steve

Removing the Idols - Dike

What Matters Most to God - Robert

The Generous Prosper - Mark

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

He Got the Future In His Hands

*He got the future in his hands.
He got the future in his hands.
All He knows, understands,
He got the future in his hands.
It don't matter what you planned,
He got the future in his hands.*

There once was a king who ruled Babylon,
Drank from the goblets he took from God.
He saw a hand that wrote on the wall,
"This very night you gonna lose it all."
"You think you're something," said the prophet Dan,
"But He got the future in his hands."

There was a wealthy farmer - too much to store.
Rich towards himself but not to the Lord.
Said "Bigger barns will store all my hay."
"Then I can take it easy, eat, drink and play."
God said, "You fool, you got your own plan,"
"But I got the future in my hands."

There was a rich man who couldn't care less
About the poor man laying at his steps.
But on the same night both passed away,
One to the saints and one to the flame.
"Please tell my family," said the rich man,
"He got the future in his hands!"

Now listen you who say that today
"Gonna go here and there and this and that-a-way."
"Gonna make some money and live in style."
But you're just a mist that's here for a while.
Why not submit to the master plan?
Cause He got the future in his hands!