

Generosity Family Value

Ephesians 4:25 – 5:2

I. Intro

- A. Since beginning of year, message focusing on families; first importance of the Lord at center of our homes means He must first be in the hearts of everyone in the home – every family member coming to know Christ as Lord and Savior; fidelity and faith – our family fulfilling our promises, being true to our word, keeping our commitment to one another is taught, modeled, and practiced; last week – family members being productive and responsible – not only in the way we approach our jobs but our marriages, family life, friendships, and all areas of our lives
- B. Today speak about what should be valued in every home – generosity
- C. In our homes, as Christian homes, we're certainly to model the behavior of our Lord; start at end of passage today where we read about the ultimate, selfless act of generosity of Christ – **READ Ephesians 5:1 – 2**
- D. Children learning, exhibiting behaviors of parents; as children of God we're to learn, exhibit behavior of our Savior
- E. Song “Reckless Love” - about the “overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God” for us; God loves us with reckless abandonment so demonstrated in sending His one and only Son to die for us, pay the debt for our sin; a love as believers and followers we need to learn and be examples of
- F. Natural outflow of that love is becoming people who's hearts are moved, compelled to give
- G. **READ Ephesians 4:25 – 5:1**
- H. **Question:** What is Paul telling us about practicing generosity and being models of generosity in our families?

II. **1 – Be generous with truth**

- A. **REFER v. 25 – 27**
- B. We live in a time where “fibbing”, which to us is not quite as bad as outright lying, is the norm rather than the exception
- C. Examples that are not uncommon to be said everyday:
 - i. “Your check is in the mail”
 - ii. “I’ll start my diet tomorrow”; “I’ll start exercising tomorrow”
 - iii. “We service what we sell”; “We have the lowest prices anywhere”
 - iv. “Give me your number and the doctor will call you right back”
 - v. “One size fits all”

- vi. “This will just take 5 minutes”; “Would you be willing to answer this ‘short survey’”
- D. integrity (Def.) - *firm adherence to a code of especially moral values*; synonym – *honesty*; Imitators of Christ are to be people of “integrity”
- E. (v. 25): Paul cites an example where speaking the truth may not be easy; when it comes to truth-telling or keeping peace most people will choose to keep peace by suppressing the truth
- F. **IMPORTANT TRUTH**: Suppressing truth in order to preserve harmony undermines the integrity of your relationships; can’t forget, ignore Paul’s words (v. 15) - ... *speaking the truth in love, not in judgment or condemnation, not out of retribution, but in and with the love of Christ*
- G. **Question**: Don’t we all want our children, our grandchildren, to grow into men and women who are models of integrity, honesty, truthfulness for their families/children? Very likely they won’t learn to be generous with truth from schoolmates, their co-workers or even bosses, their community leaders or government leaders
- H. Best place for integrity and honesty to be taught and modeled is in our homes

III. **2** – Be generous with resources

- A. Touched on this last week talked about being productive, responsible people
- B. **REFER v. 28**
- C. Dave Ramsey; 4 things parents should teach their children regarding money
 - i. **1** – Teach them how to work; growing up given allowance, but we had chores to do to earn that allowance – don’t do chores, don’t get allowance; this teaches discipline
 - ii. (**My addition**) Teach them how to tithe; first tenth of what we earn (even allowance) belongs to God
 - iii. **2** – Teach them how to spend; spend on what is necessary and when there is some extra then spend on what is desired; this teaches discernment
 - iv. **3** – Teach them how to save; remember opening my first savings account; Dave Ramsey suggests tithing first tenth, saving for 3 to 6 months of expenses; this teaches patience
 - v. **4** – Teach them how to give, not just share – usually teaching kids to share involves eventually getting back what they’re sharing; this teaches selflessness
- D. **Illustration**: A story out of Miami, Florida about six Royal Palm trees that had been vandalized and cut down along Miami’s Flagler Street. Due to the expense involved in replacing them, Dade County wasn’t sure how

soon, if ever, they would be replaced. Along came a generous donation of six new trees. Not only were the trees paid for but they were even planted by the donor. The former trees had been 15 feet tall and formed a beautiful foreground for a "Fly Delta" billboard. The new trees were 35 feet tall and now hid the billboard completely. The donor of the trees was Eastern Airlines. (Sometimes giving isn't always generous)

E. So far – be generous with truth, be generous with resources

IV. **3 - Be generous with encouragement**

A. **REFER v. 29 - 31**

B. Many ways we “grieve the Holy Spirit”, certainly one way is demeaning or slandering speech to/about another human being; especially in our families, our homes

C. Pastor Alan Redpath’s formula to apply before speaking about/to any other person using THINK as an acrostic

i. T – Truth of what’s about to be said – is it true?

ii. H – Is it helpful - will it help or hurt the person?

iii. I – Is it inspiring – or is it disheartening?

iv. N – Is it even necessary; if it’s not truthful, helpful, and inspiring then it’s certainly not necessary

v. K – Is it kind – or is it meanspirited?

D. Be generous with truth, be generous with resources, be generous with encouragement

V. **4 – Be generous with forgiveness**

A. **REFER v. 32**

B. Too many of God’s people have bad case of “total recall”; just can’t let anything go

C. Can’t get any plainer when God’s Word says, ... *forgive one another as Christ forgave you* and (v. 5:2) – ... *live a life of love, just as Christ loved us*

D. God never meant *forgiving* as letting a person get away with wrongdoing yet we are not to be vengeful either

E. **Question:** What exactly does it mean when the Bible says, *forgive ... as Christ forgave you*? It means we consciously choose to not let the offense remain a barrier in the relationship we have with that person

VI. **Close**

A. In our homes, be generous with truth, be generous with resources, be generous with encouragement, be generous with forgiveness

B. God has generously revealed His truth to us, so that we can know Him personally and intimately; He’s given Himself fully to us through sending

His only Son to generously give His life for us along with all other blessings that comes through a personal relationship with Him

- C. Saying that we has families should exhibit this generosity family value, we're saying that we want to treat others, including our family, the same way God treats us**