

# *It's All About the Heart*



**Focus** Giving is all about the heart. Our hearts are changed when we give, and our giving reflects the work of God in our hearts.

**Open** What do you least like to share with other people, *i.e.*, food, TV remote?

**Read** “Give, and it will be given to you ... For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38). This familiar verse is often used out of context to promote giving. However, when we examine the context, we see that Jesus was teaching that *whatever* we give, whether it’s judgment, condemnation or forgiveness (vs. 37), we’ll receive it back and more. Generosity of spirit and giving are issues of the heart!

To become givers with pure hearts, we must deal with our selfish hearts (Deuteronomy 15:7–9). Selfishness causes us to sin when it comes to giving. We need to realize that God doesn’t need anything; He invented giving for our sakes to deal with selfishness and greed in our hearts so we could live a happy life. He wants us to become grateful, generous givers!

Secondly, we must deal with a grieving heart (Deuteronomy 15:10). Selfishness attacks us before we give, then grief attacks us after we give. We grieve after giving because we thought what we gave was ours. God is the owner and we are just the stewards! God is our source.

Next, we must develop a generous heart because God is generous! He sent His Son for us while we were still unthankful, evil sinners (Luke 6:35). God’s heart is generous, even towards the undeserving (all of us). We’re born *selfish*, but God wants us to be born again *generous*—just like Him.

We must develop a grateful heart that remembers where we came from (Deuteronomy 15:15). Gratitude produces generosity. We’ll give generously when we remember that we have nothing—no peace and no joy—without Him.

**Talk**

1. Read Luke 6:30–38. What would you say is Jesus' main point in this passage? What does He most want His followers to know or to do?
2. Whatever we give, we'll receive—whether it's judgment, condemnation, forgiveness, kindness or love. Why is it so important to understand this principle of sowing and reaping?
3. Related to giving, which have you wrestled with more—selfishness (*before* giving) or grief (*after* giving)? Why do you think that is?
4. God invented giving for our sakes to deal with selfishness and greed in our lives. Specifically, how does giving combat selfishness and greed? Is it possible to give and still be selfish and greedy? Why or why not?
5. Who is the most generous person you know? Are they also a grateful person? Why do gratitude and generosity always go together?

**Live**

How often do you “remember” or call to mind, who you were and what your life was like before Jesus saved you? When you take time to remember, how does your heart respond to God? To the needs of others? Why?

**Pray**

Thank God for His mercy and kindness to those who don't deserve it (you!). Ask Him to help you deal with selfishness and grief in your heart, and to develop a heart of generosity and gratitude. Thank Him that He will not allow you to live a selfish, greedy life, and invite Him to change your heart to become like His.