

— SUPERNATURAL GENEROSITY —

Lord of All

Have you had those moments where you rely totally on God to provide? You know the ones, where you have a sudden or urgent need and no way to meet it, and prayer is the only tool in the toolbox?

“I believe, help my unbelief!” - Mark 9:24

God is Generous

God the Father is generous in giving His Son.

Jesus the Son is generous in giving His life.

Holy Spirit is generous in giving us the gift of Himself and all that He brings.

Because He is a generous God, we should be generous people.

This is because we are made in the image of God (see Genesis 2).

Why? Because knowing we are designed to be a reflection of God's generosity, and actually being generous are not the same thing!

The Call to Follow Jesus

In Luke 5, we get a record of Jesus calling some of His disciples

The brothers James and John, and Peter (Simon at that point) were at their daily job of fishing, and Jesus shows up, does a miracle in helping the seasoned fishermen catch fish where there shouldn't have been fish.

Luke 5:10b-11

The call to follow Jesus caused the disciples to leave everything behind and follow Jesus.

A little later in Luke 5, Jesus calls Levi, who came to be known as Matthew.

Luke 5:27-28

If that's not enough, then just a few chapters later, Jesus unpacks the truth of what was really going on behind this supernatural response to His invitation.

Luke 9:18-27

“If anyone would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me...”

Galatians 2:20

Resurrection: It's already happened in your Spirit, it's happening in your mind (Romans says be transformed by the renewing of your mind in an ongoing way) and your body will be resurrected.

Acts 17:28

2 Corinthians 5:17

Modern Day Disciples

When I said yes to Jesus, did I lay it all down? Did I truly die to my old way of living? Or did I just let a bit of it stay on life support?

Or, in the cut and thrust of modern life, did we just pick up a few things without checking back in with the Father?

Or even, maybe, all that was fine for primitive fishermen and tax collectors and the like – but they didn't face the issues I'm facing.

Do we treat the entry requirements to the kingdom like an optional extra, for the really spiritual ones, and if that means too much for me, I'll just take the futures option as insurance?

The challenge that faces each one of us today is a question: If Jesus is really Lord, then it really requires me to lay down everything to follow Him. Take a look at Luke 9:59-60!

What Do We Lay Down?

But if there's anything we need to check with before we say 'Yes' to Jesus, then we have a priority issue (actually, it's idolatry, but that's a strong word...)

If Jesus is really Lord, then He's really Lord of everything in your life.

There's actually nothing that is exempt from His lordship, if He's really Lord.

So what do we lay down? Everything!

“If anyone would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for my sake will save it.” – Luke 9:23-24 (ESV)

The End Is Near!

Straight after Jesus drops this heavy thing in Luke 9, there's a link in the passage in Luke 9:28, where eight days after saying this, Peter, James and John are taken up a mountain and the Transfiguration happens.

When we take up our cross, lay down our life, die to our old self, then we are invited into an encounter with the glory of the risen Lord!

The Freedom of Jesus' Lordship

And the power of dying to self is that we are not anymore trapped.

We're not defined by the toys, the status, the power or the position (or lack thereof). We're defined by Christ!

Galatians 5:1

What Does That Look Like?

Do you know the top five things Jesus taught on in Scripture?

1. The Kingdom of God; 2. God the Father; 3. Faith; 4. Money; 5. Satan

So, did we think that money and wealth might be an issue in the hearts of humanity?

God always being first, and the first always belonging to God.

Our Time – in seeking to love those who don't know Jesus and seeing our time as valuable and able to be spent on kingdom things.

Our Talent – no matter our skills, using our hands and our lives to serve God in his church to His glory!

Our Treasure – the resources that we have that we give generously to God to see His kingdom flourish!

Reflection and Discussion

1. What does trusting God look like in your life? Where do you trust Him, and where do you rely on yourself?
2. What does that self-reliance do to your level of faith and trust that God will provide?

3. What are the blockages and challenges in your life to fully submitting to Jesus' lordship, and dying to your old life?
4. If Jesus is Lord, He's Lord of everything. What does that mean in your life? Are there areas that you struggle to submit to Him?
5. If there are these areas, this is a great time to stop, to pray through releasing them to Him today, and dying to that old way of life. There's nothing as joy-filled and hopeful as handing over areas of brokenness to God and letting them die.
6. When we have released our lives fully to God, everything is now His, and nothing apart from Him determines our worth or our happiness. What would it look like to fully surrender your life to Him? How differently would you approach your relationships, resources and effort in life?
7. God is Lord over our time, talent and treasure (and everyone has them, no matter how 'talented' you think you are!). Are any of these things getting in the way of you being obedient and saying 'yes' to God? Now is a great time to prayerfully surrender them to Him!
8. If we need to check with anything in our lives before we say 'yes' to God, it's an idol (an empty and non-God thing in our lives that is trying to take the place of God). Is your money, your time, or a relationship an idol to you? If yes, ask God what He wants you to do to break that hold in your life?
9. Where do you spend your time, talent and treasure? Is it for God's glory, or your own benefit? What does that say about the Lordship of Jesus in your life?
10. As you have reflected and prayed, spend some time laying out your life before Jesus in prayer, and allow Him to free you of burdens, blockages and idols, and ask Him to pour the freedom of His new life into you afresh today!