

#1 *A Generous God*

I'm Paul Donison, from St Peter & St Paul's Ottawa, and for the next few weeks I want to talk with you about going on an adventure with God. I could have called it this a conversation about stewardship, but few of us see stewardship as an adventure with God. But it is. Think, for example, about God's generosity. Scripture describes his generosity all over the place. Think about just these few verses.

James 1:17

**“Every good gift comes down
from the Father of lights**

**His mercies are new every
morning**

**He gives us all things richly to
enjoy.”**

**St Paul goes even further
describing his generosity. Rom**

8:32 "He who did not spare His own son but gave him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him graciously give us all things"!!

What an extravagant Father!!

Then, to top it all off, Psalm 104 paints the Lord God as having an open hand.

"When you open your hand they (i.e. all creatures) are FILLED with good things"

God's loving hand is open to us right now. An older version of Ps 66:19 says,

"Blessed be the LORD who daily loads us with benefits." Christians too should be people of the

open hand because we seek to live more and more as people made in the image of God – to be more and more like Christ.

In contrast are the 'scrooges' of this planet.

Their trademark is a clenched fist. They grasp with whitened knuckles everything they feel is theirs. But a closed fist not only shuts out love from your heart, but it also blocks out the blessings God would bestow on an open hand.

In Acts 20:35 Paul quotes

Jesus saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive". He doesn't say it is not a blessing to receive. He says giving brings more blessings. When we close our hands, we rob ourselves as well as those in need.

Francis Chan puts it this way (I'm paraphrasing), "It is such a gift to be generous. If the goal of sanctification is to be Christ-like, and Jesus Christ's amazing love is displayed not in grasping, but in giving, then our

growing in generosity is a sign of our sanctification”

In a few moments you will have an opportunity to worship God with your hard-earned cash. I would suggest that you open your hands widely. When you empty them, God will pour blessing into those empty palms. Just you wait and see.

Winston Churchill made this thought-provoking observation.

“We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give”.

So what will it be for you?

**An open hand or a
clenched fist?**

**I know what I'm going to
do with my hand**

- and my heart!

**To the Glory of God and
the extension of his
Kingdom. Amen.**