

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, cupped together, holding a small pile of coins. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands, with the background being dark and out of focus. The person's face is partially visible at the top, showing a slight smile.

THE GENEROUS LIFE

Parable

a simple short story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson.

Luke 15:11-32

Matthew 6:24 (NIV84)

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Luke 15:11–16 (NIV84)

¹¹ Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

¹³ “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:17–20 (NIV84)

¹⁷ “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Luke 15:21–27 (NIV84)

²¹ “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.

²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

Luke 15:28–32 (NIV84)

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹ “ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ ”

My mother-in-law grew up the daughter of a Southern Baptist Pastor in Kentucky. They were poor, I mean P.O.O.R. poor! In fact she said that many times the family would gather around the dinner table and there would not be one crumb of food in the house and they would hold hands and pray for the Lord to provide. And she said that EVERY SINGLE time that they prayed this prayer there would be a knock on the door and someone from the church or the community would be there with food. "Oh I cooked too much!" Or, "I just wanted to thank you for your service." Or some other reason but they would always be there with food. My mother-in-law told me once, "You know I am incredibly grateful that my children or grand-children have never known that type of desperation before, but I am also sad that they have never had the opportunity to see God come through like that either."

Generous

showing a readiness to give more of something, as money or time, than is strictly necessary or expected.

we are encouraged to live generous lives

- Psalm 112:5 (NIV84)

⁵ Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely,
who conducts his affairs with justice.

- Proverbs 11:25 (NIV84)

²⁵ A generous man will prosper;
he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

- 2 Corinthians 9:11 (NIV84)

¹¹ You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, cupped together, holding a small pile of coins. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands, with the background being dark and out of focus. The person's face is partially visible at the top, showing a slight smile.

THE GENEROUS LIFE