

SEPTEMBER 2019

Hemyock Baptist Church

GENEROUS GOD
GENEROUS PEOPLE

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me!” *Malachi 3:8*

As Christians we are a forgiven people, and so we should be a forgiving people. And people who are forgiven and forgiving will also be *for giving!* The grace of God at work within us should overflow as we give to others.

The words of James 1:17 are emblazoned on the chapel wall – “Every good and perfect gift is from above”. We must never forget that God is the generous giver, after all, “What do you have that you did not receive?” (*1 Cor. 4:7*).

Before God made humankind, he prepared a rich and beautiful home for us in which everything was very good. As harvest time approaches, we are reminded that God placed order in this world; there is “seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease” (*Gen. 8:22*). Yet over the centuries, human beings have damaged the home God prepared for us and taken it for granted. If we’d only stop and consider all that Father has given us, we would surely be more generous.

God *is* the generous giver, but all too often man is the selfish robber (ever since our forebears took the fruit from God’s tree and ate it). People enjoy his gifts, even waste them, and yet forget to give to others or even give to God. In the Law of Moses, God commanded the people to bring tithes and offerings to him, promising to bless them if they did. “Honour the Lord with your possessions, and the first-fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine” (*Prov. 3:9-10*). In Malachi’s time, the Jews robbed God by giving him nothing, not giving him the very best, giving with a grudging spirit. Sadly, these same traits still plague us today; and when we rob God, we rob others *and* we rob ourselves! God wants to bless us, but our selfish disobedience grieves him and hinders him from pouring out blessings upon us (*Mal. 3:10*).

The good news is that the grace of God is the perfect (and only) cure for the selfish heart. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (*2 Cor. 8:9*). If we are truly experiencing the riches of God’s grace, then we’ll want others to do so too – and they will if we share with them what God has given us. By giving to the Lord and to others, we become channels of blessing. “And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work” (*2 Cor. 9:8*). We cannot out-give our gracious Lord!



Sunday 29th
Sept at 7pm

Do You Believe?

A dozen different souls all moving in different directions, all longing for something more. As their lives unexpectedly intersect, they each are about to discover there is power in the Cross of Christ ... even if they don't believe it yet. Inspiring their journey and fuelling their conviction is Pastor Matt, who, after witnessing the visible faith of an old street-corner preacher, is reminded that true belief always requires action. His response ignites a faith-fuelled journey that powerfully impacts everyone it touches in ways that only God could orchestrate.

