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# CHRISTIAN MANAGER

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE FOR TODAY'S CHRISTIAN LEADERS



## GENEROSITY

# CHRISTIAN MANAGER

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## Generosity

Generosity is embedded in all human beings since we are created in the image of God. Generous leadership will make a lasting impact and create a compassionate culture in any community. In this issue, we present a bouquet of articles on 'Generosity' inspired by God's Word. The strongest synonyms for generosity in the thesaurus include goodness, hospitality, kindness, largesse and unselfishness. Are these not integral to the fruit of the Holy Spirit?

In the secular world, generosity ranges from simple almsgiving to grand philanthropy. However, Biblical generosity transcends these worldly definitions. Lord Jesus teaches that generosity is a matter of the heart. It's an attitude of goodness and compassion that stems from love for others and is driven by the presence of God within us. However, in our Christian circles, there are leader stereotypes who often fail to demonstrate generosity in their professional, communal or workplace environments.

Joshua Harber's introductory article, *Generosity as a Corporate Value and a Personal Obedience*, underscores the importance of corporate leaders embodying generosity as a core company value. Harber encourages those who have yet to embrace this principle to consider thoughtfully adopting it in the future.

Generosity is vital for advancing Kingdom work, requiring Biblical principles and effective strategies to overcome challenges, says Atul Patnigere (*Generosity of Treasure: Unlocking Kingdom Resources*). He says, A balanced approach, combining faith, sound financial management and clear impact, helps churches sustain and expand their missions, support community projects and enhance congregational life, resulting in a unified, engaged community pursuing shared spiritual and social goals.

Sunny Kuruvilla's article, *The Impact of Generosity on Leadership*, highlights examples and offers practical ways to express kindness in many settings. One such example is showing personal appreciation and recognition for employee contributions. Investing in people and encouraging them to achieve greater goals is another.

Sas Conradie, the International Partnerships Manager for Tearfund, has written a report on the Global Generosity Forum, which took place in October 2023 in Manila, Philippines. The report is an eye-opener on practical generosity. Conradie has provided 33 links to learn more about generosity activities around the world.

In conclusion, the demonstration of generosity must be authentic since those around us observe our behaviour critically. Lord Jesus did not shy away from criticising hypocrisy and warned us of its consequences. We hope this issue inspires readers to discuss and discover ways to express genuine generosity. Remember Generosity is a verb, an action word.

We also have two other interesting articles besides the thematic ones: *Challenges in Balancing Grace and Accountability* by Anand Joshua encourages us to embrace mutual responsibility to balance grace with accountability; and the continuing series *Leadership Lessons from Nature: The Donkey is Not a Dumb Animal* by Chiradeep Patra, helps us learn from the humble donkey how to serve with purpose and uplift others.

I wish you all a happy reading!

**Guest Editor**

**Jacob C. Varghese**



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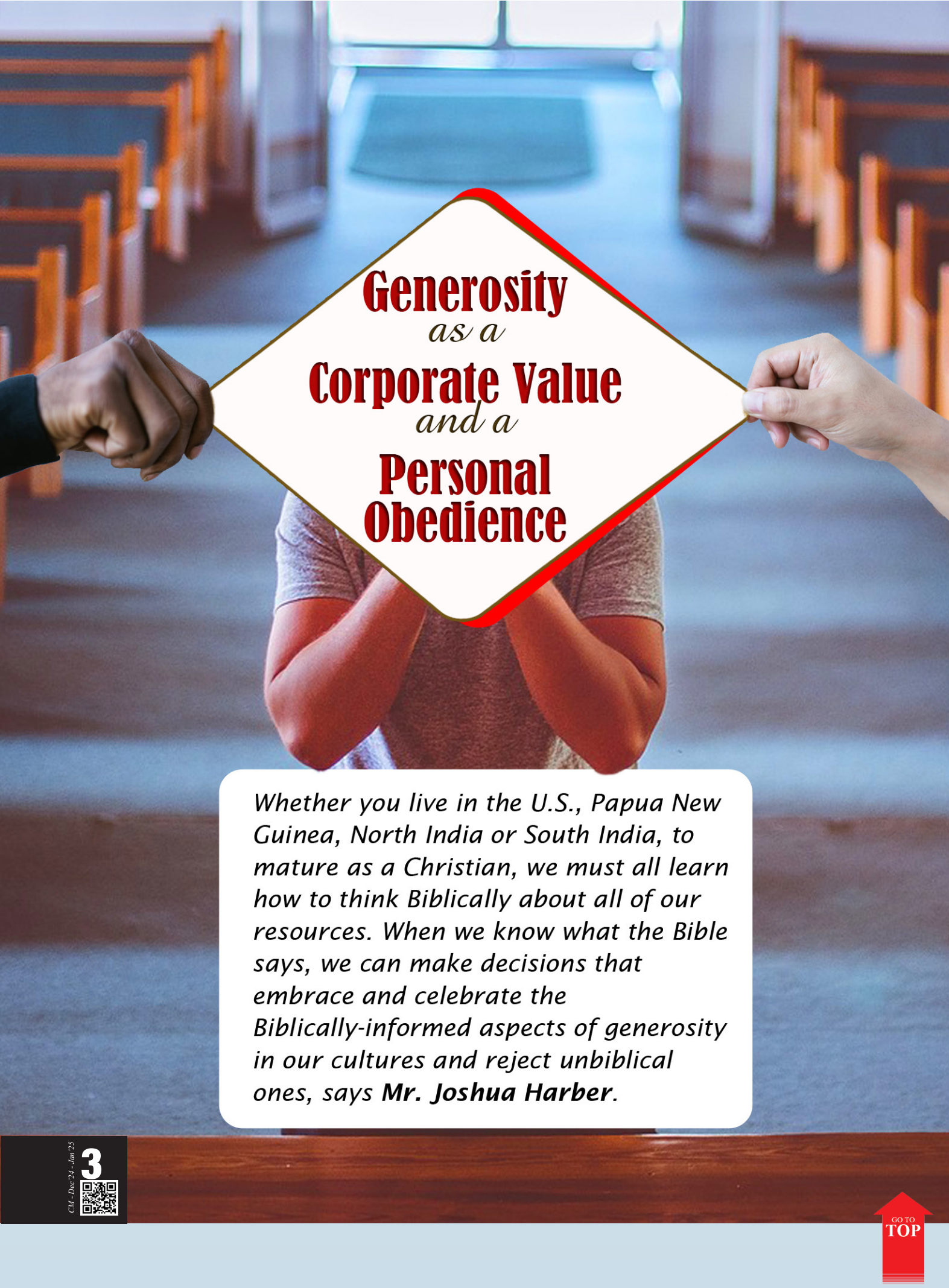
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A person is seen from behind, holding a large diamond-shaped sign with both hands. The sign has a white center with a red border. The background is a church interior with wooden pews and a bright doorway at the end of the aisle.

# **Generosity** *as a* **Corporate Value** *and a* **Personal** **Obedience**

*Whether you live in the U.S., Papua New Guinea, North India or South India, to mature as a Christian, we must all learn how to think Biblically about all of our resources. When we know what the Bible says, we can make decisions that embrace and celebrate the Biblically-informed aspects of generosity in our cultures and reject unbiblical ones, says **Mr. Joshua Harber**.*





**D**o you want your organisation to be successful? Please consider the impact that generosity—as a corporate value—could make on your organisation’s future.

Top-quality companies and organisations often are clear—internally and externally—about their corporate values; a set of aspirations that guide them, not only in the C-suite, but also at all levels of operation. Oftentimes, however, there is a disconnect between those core values and the day-to-day practices of organisations.

Whether your organisation abides by their corporate values or disregards them, is generosity part of your current company value system? Generosity matters personally and professionally. If your company does not already include generosity as an expressed company value, my hope is that you may consider it in the future. While corporate values and culture do not change overnight, intentional decisions – even small ones – toward generosity will have a positive impact on your company culture.

What comes to mind when you think about ‘generosity’? For many people and cultures, the mental image may be one person giving money or some other object of value to another. You might see two people in your mind: a giver and a receiver. Or perhaps the first thing you thought of was a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. But these may not be the full, Biblical idea of generosity. Consider again your mental image of ‘generosity’. Why is the giver making the gift? What motivates him or her?

While I applaud the growth of CSR efforts by many firms around the world, giving doesn’t need to stop there. Let’s think bigger than the act of giving and move toward true,

Biblical generosity.

We must look to the Bible as our main source of wisdom and guidance. After studying the Scriptures and reading many books by Christian authors from around the world on the topic of generosity, my personal and professional working definition of generosity is ***“a lifestyle of giving, stewarded well, that glorifies God, and makes His children more like Him”***.

This definition helps us recognise that generosity has a *person* at their core. It is not merely limited to an *act*. Acts of genuine, Biblical generosity are a reflection of a person’s heart. Giving a monetary gift, in the right way and with the right motivation, is *part of* what the Bible has in mind when it talks about generosity.

As a manager of a Christian business or not-for-profit ministry, you have an incredible opportunity to intentionally give through your organisation in addition to being generous in many other ways. Ask yourself: *“What would it look like for this organisation to demonstrate Biblical principles of generosity in the ways we interact with and respond to our customers, vendors, and stakeholders?”*.

There are many meaningful ways to do so, other than monetary gifts. Here is a short list, based on my reading of reports from management consulting firms who study successful businesses and ministries:

- Giving of yourself in authentic relationships. Teams are made up of people! The success of your endeavour relies on both C-suite and entry-level teams of people working well together. How could a commitment to *valuing others more highly than yourself* (a form of giving) increase the success of your mission and

improve your bottom line?

- Discounted services & products. Are there products or services that you could, on a case-by-case basis, offer at greatly reduced prices to select customers? Could those customers be among the church and mission agencies?
- Business Learnings. Some of the most successful companies in the world open source their research and development in ways that ‘lift all boats’ while still preserving the core of their intellectual property.
- Youth networking and internships. Every young professional needs job experience. Does your organisation make it easy for young workers to get early job experience through volunteering, internships, apprenticeships or entry level positions?
- Employee benefits. Schedule flexibility, mentoring programmes, leadership development tools, health and savings account matching... The list of ways a firm can be generous to its employees is lengthy. No doubt your organisation is already doing many of these, but where could it ‘excel still more in the grace of giving’ by expanding employee benefits this year?

Being generous in these and other ways may create anxiety as you struggle with bottom-line needs. It is understandable. You may be asking *“Why, as a manager of a Christian business or ministry, should I take on the risk of giving?”*. I would encourage you to consider two main reasons.

The first is spiritual: As a Christian, we must walk by faith. You don’t leave that faith at the door when you walk into the office. Trust God. He wants His children to be like

Lord Jesus, and Lord Jesus was very generous. As you seek to be generous in your role as a Christian manager, God will help you and bless you. He is the God of all resources.

The second reason is less spiritual and more self-improving. There are many proven benefits to companies that foster healthy generous relationships among their teams, do good in their communities, and treat their employees generously. You will find those company names among the top-performing organisations in the world.

Generous decisions on behalf of organisations of all types – businesses, not-for-profits and government agencies – are made by individuals (decision makers as well as front-line employees). As organisations are bound by their by-laws, founding documents, legislation and all relevant laws, internal and external, it is the people, operating out of their own spirit of generosity, that drive this change at the organisational level.

Therefore, let us move from our consideration of how corporations and organisations might express generosity, to consider how the reader, as an individual, might move toward adopting generosity in all parts of life.

**One of my biggest fears when I first started giving advice to Christian nonprofit ministries globally, was that I would be guilty of exporting a Western perspective on generosity. Then I realised Biblical principles always must supersede culture. Generosity is no different.**

The Bible is like a lens through which we must view all other information, including management and stewardship principles.

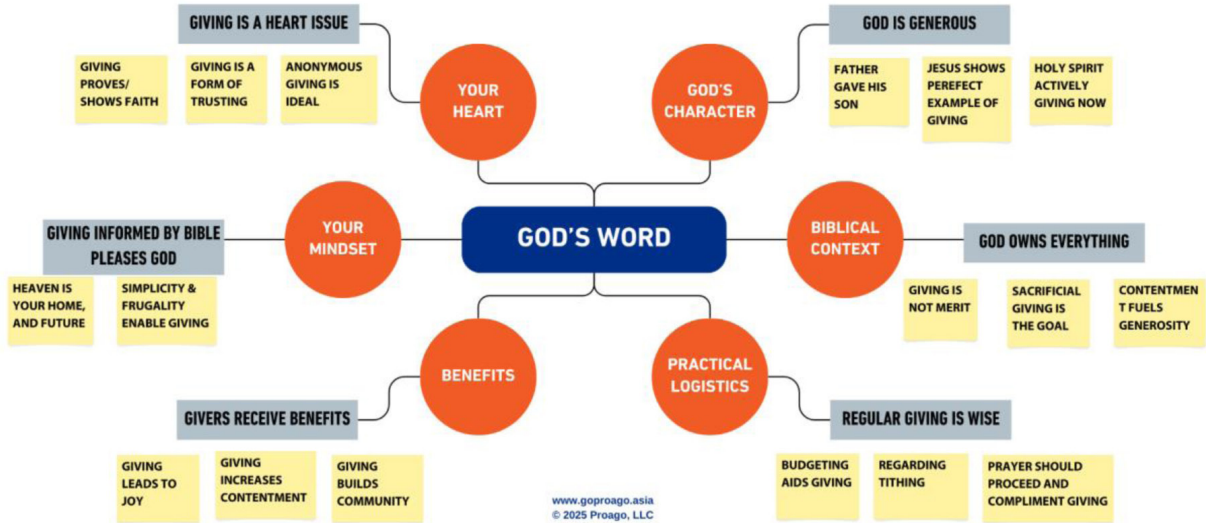
When we view our own cultural norms through this ‘lens’, we sometimes find that our cultural attitudes about money must be brought in line with Scripture. In my home country (United States), there are many attitudes about money that come into direct conflict with the call to live for Christ. And yet, there

are many things in my home culture which align with and support a Biblical view of wealth and giving. I can confidently say that some aspects of US generosity culture are Biblically-informed, and other aspects are sinful and wrong.

For seven years, I lived in Papua New Guinea, a developing nation in the South Pacific. During that time, I spoke to many indigenous people about their attitude about generosity. In that country, they have an active give-and-receive culture. Some aspects of their culturally ingrained generosity are Biblically-informed, and other aspects are sinful and wrong.

Whether you live in the U.S., Papua New Guinea, North India or South India, to mature as a Christian, we must all learn through the course of our lives, how to think Biblically about all of our resources. When we know what the Bible says, we can make decisions that embrace and celebrate the Biblically-informed aspects of generosity in our cultures and reject unbiblical ones.

# 24 PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL GENEROSITY



You may know professional Christians who have studied the Bible and have found a long list of business principles. There's a good chance you know a doctor or attorney who actively applies general Biblical principles to their work. Certainly, you know a pastor who has studied the Bible his entire life and gleaned numerous theological insights to apply both personally and share with others.

So now I ask, how many Christian professionals do you know whose organisation has required them to study what the Bible says about generosity? By reading this introductory article, perhaps you will choose to join that small group of men and women, from a wide range of nations and cultures, as I have had the pleasure to know.

Recently I felt led, during a time of focused prayer, to compile a list of **24 Principles of Biblical Generosity**, based on what I have learned over 20+ years of studying this topic. My library has dozens of books on topics related to finances, money and giving. However, I must admit that only a handful of these books are written by Indian authors.

If generosity really is *a lifestyle of giving, stewarded well, that glorifies God, and makes His children more like Him*, I offer you this list of Biblical principles on generosity.

I believe the Lord is highly pleased

with His children when we walk with the same generous heart He has for us. I believe that God's Word informs us that:

- Giving is a Heart Issue (*Mt 6:21-24*)
- Giving is a Form of Trusting (*Lk 16:10*)
- Giving Demonstrates Faith (*Lk 6:38*)
- Anonymous Giving is Good (*Mt 6:1-4*)
- God's Love Results in Giving (*Jn 3:16*)
- Our Father Generously Gave His Son (*Rom 8:32*)
- Jesus' Life is our Perfect Example of Generosity (*Eph 5:2*)
- The Holy Spirit is Actively Giving Even Now (*I Cor 12:4*)
- God Owns Everything (*Psa 24:1*)
- Giving is Of Great Worth When You are In Christ (*Eph 2:8-10*)
- Contentment Fuels Generosity (*Heb 13:5*)
- Sacrificial Giving is a Worthy Goal (*Lk 21:1-4*)
- Giving Pleases God (*Heb 13:16*)
- Heaven is Our Home and Future (*Phil 3:20*)
- Simplicity and Frugality Enable Greater Giving (*Mt 6:19-21*)
- Giving Leads to Joy (*Acts 20:35*)
- Giving Increases Contentment (*Phil 4:11-13*)
- Giving Builds Community (*Lk 10:36, 37*)

- Budgeting Aids Giving (*Prov 21:5*)
- Regarding Tithe, Considering OT and NT Together is Necessary (*Prov 3:9; II Cor 8:12*)
- Regularity in Giving is Wise (*I Cor 16:2*)
- Prayer Precedes Giving (*II Cor 9:7*)

What is your response to these principles? I invite you, through this article, to share your feedback on these principles. To participate, please scan the QR code to complete a short survey that will help refine our understanding of your approach to these Biblical principles.



As a Christian, I hope this list of principles will be used for your edification as you prayerfully consider each one in the months ahead. If you are also a leader of a Christian organisation – whether a business or a ministry – I hope your personal movement toward generosity will also increase the impact of your organisation.

As 2025 unfolds, let us ask ourselves how we can be more generous. In doing so, we are actually asking ourselves “*how can I be more like Lord Jesus?*”.



**Mr. Joshua Harber, MPA, is the Principal of Proago LLC, an international consulting firm, serving not-for-profit clients globally, with associates in India and the United States. Joshua has enjoyed several years of progressively challenging and rewarding experience in fundraising. Concurrent to his professional work for one of the largest international Christian ministries and many other small-shop development teams, he has consulted with a small number of not-for-profit organisations in the United States, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, Ghana, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Until his recent move to his new home in Papua New Guinea, he also served as Elder for a large, missions-minded church in the United States, College Park Church.**







Generosity  
of Treasure:

# Unlocking Kingdom Resources

*Unlocking Kingdom riches necessitates a balanced strategy that combines faith teaching, realistic financial oversight and unambiguous evidence of effect. By focusing on these factors, Indian churches can continue and expand their missions, support community projects, and eventually improve their congregational life, explains Mr. Atul Patnigere.*



India's vibrant Christian community, comprising over 27 million believers, is growing rapidly with an increasing presence in urban and rural areas. As leaders, managers and administrators of churches, missions, theological institutions and mission hospitals, we are stewards of God's resources. Our role is to manage these resources effectively, ensuring our plans align with Kingdom purposes. The Indian Church is uniquely positioned to impact the nation and beyond with growing economic influence, increasing access to education and technology and rising social and cultural relevance.

However, challenges persist such as poverty and inequality, persecution and religious intolerance and limited resources and infrastructure. In this context, generosity of treasure becomes crucial. By embracing Biblical principles of giving, we can empower local churches and communities, support mission and evangelism efforts and address social and economic needs.

This article explores the Biblical foundation of generosity, its importance and practical strategies for cultivating a culture of generosity within our organisations, specifically tailored to the Indian Christian context.

### **Biblical Foundation**

Scripture emphasises the importance of generosity. It says, *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap... (Lk 6:38)* and, *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor 9:7).*

### **The Benefits of Generosity**

#### ***Advances Kingdom work:***

Generosity plays a pivotal role in advancing Kingdom work,

as it enables the spread of the Gospel, supports missions, and meets the physical and spiritual needs of many. By giving freely, believers demonstrate their trust in God's provision and participate in His redemptive plan. Through generosity, we can fund evangelism efforts (Phil 4:15-16), support missionaries (III Jn 1:5-8), and care for the vulnerable and needy (Mt 25:31-46). Ultimately, generosity advances God's Kingdom, bringing glory to His name and hastening the day when *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes (Rev 21:4)*. By giving generously, we become co-labourers with God, extending His love and mercy to a world in need.

#### ***Demonstrates faith and trust***

***in God:*** Generosity is a tangible expression of faith and trust in God, reflecting our reliance on His provision and sovereignty. By giving freely, we declare that our security and identity rest in Him, and not in our possessions. As Scripture affirms, *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding (Prov 3:5)*. When we give, we demonstrate faith that God will provide, acknowledging He owns everything (Psa 24:1) and blesses generosity. Our generosity becomes an act of worship, surrendering our resources to God's purposes and trusting in His unfailing goodness. As the Psalmist declares, *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want (Psa 23:1)*, we too can confidently trust in God's provision, guided by His promise to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory (Phil 4:19).

#### ***Fosters community and unity:***

In the Indian Christian context, generosity has the power to bridge cultural, linguistic and socio-economic divides, fostering a sense of community and unity. By sharing resources and supporting

one another, believers demonstrate the love of Christ and strengthen bonds within the body of Christ. As Scripture says, *Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others (Phil 2:4)*. In India's diverse Christian landscape, generosity helps transcend denominational and regional boundaries. By giving freely, we embody the Biblical principle of bearing one another's burdens (Gal 6:2) and loving our neighbours as ourselves (Mk 12:31). This unity is exemplified in the early Indian Church, where believers shared their possessions, ensuring *there was not a needy person among them (Acts 4:34)*. As Indian Christians, we can follow this example, using generosity to build a harmonious and supportive community, reflecting Christ's love to our nation.

#### ***Encourages spiritual growth:***

In the Indian Christian context, generosity serves as a catalyst for spiritual growth, deepening one's relationship with God and fostering Christ-like character. By letting go of material attachments, we experience freedom from worldly entanglements, allowing us to *seek first the kingdom of God (Mt 6:33)*. Generosity helps Indian Christians cultivate humility, recognising that everything comes from God (I Chron 29:14). As we give, we mirror Christ's selfless love, exemplifying the Biblical truth that *it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)*.

Through generosity, we can develop a heart of gratitude (Psa 100:4), practise sacrificial living (II Cor 8:1-5), experience joy in abundance (Psa 126:5-6) and mature in faith, reflecting God's generosity (Jas 1:17). By embracing generosity, we can embark on a transformative journey of spiritual growth, becoming more like



Christ and shining His light in our communities.

**Brings joy and fulfilment:** In the Indian Christian context, generosity unlocks the doors to unparalleled joy and fulfilment. As we share our resources, time and talents, we discover a deeper sense of purpose and contentment. Scripture reminds us, *A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed (Prov 11:25)*. Generosity brings joy to the giver, as seen in the Macedonian churches, that *in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality (II Cor 8:2)*. In India's diverse cultural landscape, generosity can transcend social and economic boundaries, spreading love, kindness and happiness.

By embracing generosity, we can find joy in giving (II Cor 9:7), experience God's abundance (Lk 6:38), reflect God's selfless love (Jn 3:16) and discover true fulfilment (I Tim 6:18, 19). As we give generously, we will reap a harvest of joy, fulfilment and spiritual richness.

### Challenges to Generosity

**Fear and uncertainty:** In the Indian Christian context, fear and uncertainty often hinder generosity, causing believers to hold tightly to their resources. Financial constraints, cultural pressures and uncertainty about the future can lead to a mindset of scarcity rather than abundance. However, Scripture encourages us to trust in God's providence, reminding us that God will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory (Phil 4:19). Fear and uncertainty can be overcome by trusting in God's sovereignty (Eph 1:11), choosing faith over fear (Heb 11:6), and remembering God's faithfulness in times of uncertainty (I Sam 7:12).

We can break free from fear and uncertainty by fixing our eyes on

Christ, who *richly provides us with everything to enjoy (I Tim 6:17)*. By choosing generosity, we can find peace in God's presence (Isa 26:3), discover freedom from anxiety (Mt 6:25-34) and experience God's guidance (Prov 3:5-6). As we overcome fear and uncertainty, we will unlock a life of generosity, reflecting God's abundant love and provision.

**Limited resources:** In the Indian Christian context, limited resources can pose a significant challenge to generosity. Financial constraints, modest incomes and pressing family needs can lead believers to feel we have little to give. However, Scripture reminds us that generosity is not solely dependent on abundance, but on willingness and faith. The widow's mite, for instance, demonstrates that even small offerings can be *more than all the others (Mk 12:43-44)*. We can overcome our challenge of limited resources by trusting in God's provision and multiplication (Mt 14:13-21), giving proportionally, not necessarily abundantly (II Cor 9:6-7) and sharing time, talents and skills beyond financial resources (I Pet 4:10). As we give generously despite our limited resources, we will experience God's faithfulness and blessing. By embracing generosity and discovering creative ways to give (I Jn 3:16, 17), we can reflect Christ's selfless love (II Cor 8:9).

**Competing priorities:** In the Indian Christian context, competing priorities can divert attention and resources away from generosity. Pressing family obligations, career demands and personal aspirations can lead believers to relegate giving to a secondary role. However, Scripture reminds us that generosity is an integral part of our faith, taking precedence over earthly pursuits. Lord Jesus teaches, *Seek*

*first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you (Mt 6:33)*.

We can rebalance our priorities by prioritising Kingdom purposes (Mt 6:19-21), recognising generosity as worship (II Cor 9:12-13), integrating giving into daily life (I Cor 16:2), and embracing a stewardship mindset (Psa 115:16). By reordering our priorities, we can align with God's heart for generosity (Prov 19:17), experience freedom from materialism (I Tim 6:17-19), reflect Christ's selfless love (Mt 20:28) and store treasures in heaven (Mt 19:21).

### Lack of vision and communication:

In the Indian Christian context, a lack of vision and effective communication can hinder generosity. When we are unclear about the purpose and impact of our giving, we may hesitate to participate. Scripture reminds us that generosity fuels Kingdom advancement and transforms lives. As Apostle Paul says, *...your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God (II Cor 9:11)*.

To overcome this challenge, we need a clear vision for Kingdom impact (Prov 29:18), transparent communication about needs and outcomes (III Jn 1:5-8), inspiring stories of transformed lives (Matthew 25:34-40) and regular updates on the fruit of our generosity (Phil 4:14-18).

By casting a clear vision and communicating effectively, Indian churches can mobilise believers to fund Kingdom initiatives, foster a culture of generosity and stewardship, demonstrate God's faithfulness and provision, and empower believers to partner in the ministry (Phil 1:4, 5).

### Case Studies

A prominent example of increased church-giving through visionary leadership and stewardship is that

of Piedmont Church in Marietta, Georgia, USA. This church effectively raised contributions via strategic leadership and stewardship instruction. During the pandemic, head Pastor, Ike Reighard, and finance coach, Ed Miller, led the church to develop a systematic yearly donation strategy. This strategy featured stewardship education programmes, a 90-day Tithe Challenge, digital giving efforts and estate planning workshops, among other things. As a consequence, the church's weekly donation jumped by 18%, allowing them to extend their community outreach initiatives and maintain important ministry operations.

Large congregations in India like New Life Fellowship Association, Gateway Ministries International, NFI churches and The Assembly of God Churches in Mumbai and pan India are well-known for their effective leadership and stewardship techniques which include transparency and accountability.

Giving is a major pillar of growth for many megachurches. Their strategy involves substantial philanthropic efforts, funding numerous social services, and investment in ministries and full-time pastors. They efficiently develop networks of cell groups to foster community and inclusion, which help spread their purpose and encourage increased involvement and contributions from members. Positive preaching and an annual stewardship series are effective ways for the Church leadership to engage its congregation. This

strategy seeks to encourage happy giving by emphasising the spiritual delight connected with generosity. The focus on practical, heart-led stewardship is critical in improving member involvement and financial support.

### Strategies for Cultivating Generosity

- Visionary Leadership: Cast a compelling vision, highlighting Kingdom impact.
- Transparency and Accountability: Ensure clear financial reporting and governance.
- Prayer and Fasting: Seek God's guidance and provision.
- Stewardship Education: Teach Biblical principles of giving.
- Gratitude and Celebration: Acknowledge and celebrate generosity.

### Best Practices

- Regular Giving: Encourage consistent, proportionate giving.
- Special Offerings: Designate special offerings for specific Kingdom projects.
- Planned Giving: Foster legacy giving through wills and estates.
- Digital Giving: Leverage technology for convenient, secure giving.

### Action Steps

- Conduct a generosity assessment within your organisation.
- Develop a stewardship education programme.
- Establish clear financial reporting and governance.

### Recommended Resources

- THE TREASURE PRINCIPLE by

Randy Alcorn

- GENEROUS LIVING by Ron Blue
- THE GENEROSITY LADDER by Nelson Searcy

### Conclusion

Generosity of treasure is essential for advancing Kingdom work. By embracing Biblical principles, overcoming challenges and implementing effective strategies, we can unlock Kingdom resources and fulfil our mission. Effective stewardship in India frequently entails instilling a sense of giving as both a spiritual and societal obligation. Churches that stress openness in financial management and speak freely about resource allocation have experienced an increase in contributions. This responsibility connects powerfully with congregations, producing a culture of giving that embodies key Christian principles such as compassion and mutual assistance.

Unlocking such kingdom riches necessitates a balanced strategy that combines faith teaching, realistic financial oversight and unambiguous evidence of effect. By focusing on these factors, Indian churches can continue and expand their missions, support community projects, and eventually improve their congregational life. The end effect is not simply more giving, but a healthy, engaged community working together to achieve common spiritual and social goals. By embracing generosity, we can unlock Kingdom resources, advance God's work, and bring glory to His name!

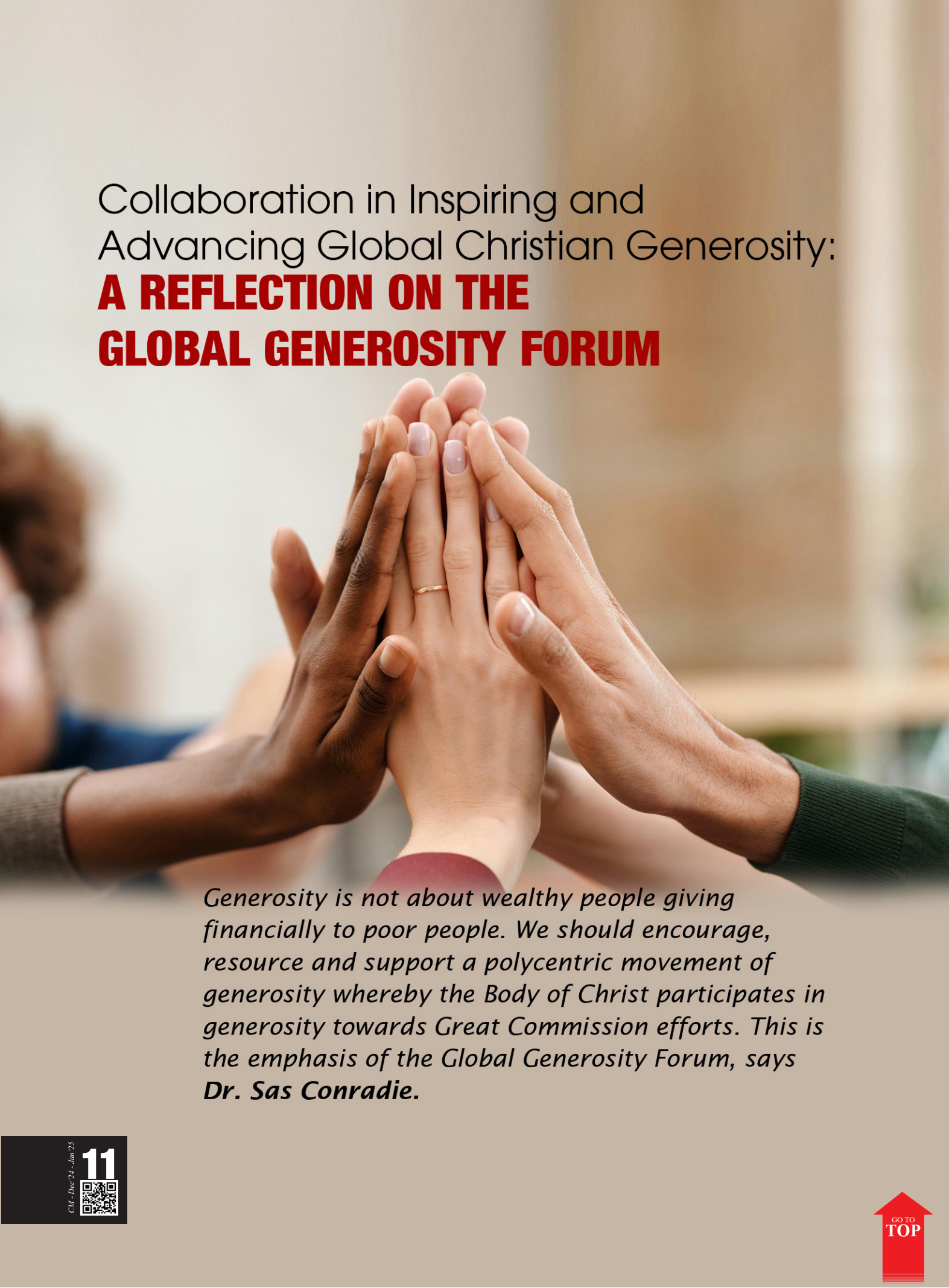


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# Collaboration in Inspiring and Advancing Global Christian Generosity: **A REFLECTION ON THE GLOBAL GENEROSITY FORUM**



*Generosity is not about wealthy people giving financially to poor people. We should encourage, resource and support a polycentric movement of generosity whereby the Body of Christ participates in generosity towards Great Commission efforts. This is the emphasis of the Global Generosity Forum, says **Dr. Sas Conradie**.*



In a world characterised by instability, conflict and spiritual and other forms of poverty, Christians have an opportunity to live out Biblical stewardship, generosity and Kingdom focused-giving as a witness to the world, and as part of their discipleship while being accountable to God, each other and the communities they serve. This was the core message from the Global Generosity Forum that was held from 27-29 October 2023 in Manila, Philippines. The Forum was co-hosted by the Global Generosity Network (an initiative of the World Evangelical Alliance), the Christian Stewardship Association Philippines, the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), Global Trust Partners and Tearfund.

Sixty global Christian leaders from 27 countries and a wide range of Christian networks, organisations and generosity initiatives met during the Forum. They discerned what God is saying to the global church about stewardship (looking after the resources God has entrusted to people), generosity, giving, accountability and God-honouring fundraising as being part of whole-life discipleship. With various

generosity ministries and initiatives emerging and growing in the past decade, participants also discussed how to collaborate to integrate Biblical stewardship, generous living and Kingdom focused giving into the theology and life of the global church.

The Global Generosity Forum started with a Manila Generosity Breakfast on 27 October that was attended by 60 Forum participants and 30 Christian leaders from the Philippines. Attendees heard how God is catalysing a global movement of generosity and reflected on the state and future of generosity and giving in the Philippines. In the global movement generosity ministries, initiatives and networks are praying and working together to see God's Kingdom advanced through Christians living more generously.

Speakers at the Generosity Breakfast shared key messages that were discussed during the Global Generosity Forum:

**a) Generosity is a message of hope and love.**

Bishop Leo Alconga, Executive Director of International Needs,

President of the Philippine for Jesus Movement (PJM) and Board Member of PCEC, shared how he is a product of generosity, growing up in an orphanage. His very life is a reminder that our seemingly insignificant act of sharing our resources with those who have very little can have great, eternal impact.

**b) Make lifestyle changes to be generous.**

Emil Jonathan Soriano, the Theology Network and Engagement (TNE) Manager for Asia, shared Tearfund's call for Christians to make lifestyle changes to be generous – whether they have much or little to share. For every dollar donated, the churches give \$7 worth of their time and service. Being generous is not just about money. Thus, our bigger goal is for churches to become centres of generosity by restoring broken relationships. In this kind of paradigm, the church and community (business, NGOs, academe, government, etc.) are working together using the resources that are readily available to them towards sustainable transformation.



Participants at the Global Generosity Forum





**c) Generosity is more than a financial gift or transfer. It is a whole-of-life transformation.** Dr. Timo Plutschinski, General Secretary of World Evangelical Alliance Business Coalition, called for advancing Biblical stewardship, generous living and Kingdom focused-giving in the Philippines and beyond. He warned the audience against “deep pockets with lost cause”. Businesspeople are not just capital or financial providers – they are part of Christ-centred discipleship. He shared that more and more young professionals are interested in starting “business as ministry/mission” and “business for transformation”. They are longing for integration of business and generosity into their faith life. Business is as much a spiritual venture as any other activity in the church. Business is a place for spiritual transformation and

growth through which generosity can be lived out.

**d) Everybody is hardwired to be generous as God has provided us with enough.**

Patrick Johnson, Executive Director of Generous Church, said that there are those who can preach that people could be raised from the dead but are afraid of talking about money. The narrative of scarcity is what hinders both rich and poor countries from being generous. We have to help the church reframe who God is through the narrative of abundance since God is a generous, loving and faithful provider.

**e) We have to unleash the natural spirit of generosity. Duplicating each other's work is a waste of resources.**

Dr. Zenet Maramara, CEO of the Christian Stewardship Association Philippines, affirmed that God

wants to use all Christians in His Kingdom through being generous. We just have to trust and obey Him. We have to unleash that natural spirit of generosity, work together, and not duplicate each other's work. Collaboration in inspiring and advancing global Christian generosity is essential.

**f) Generosity is shifting from being a container to being a conduit of God's blessings.**

Dr. Gary Hoag, President/CEO of Global Trust Partners, emphasised that generosity is a lifestyle of good works. We can do this everywhere because there is no law against giving, serving and loving. We should not just live for today but be willing to die for our values. We always say that we are blessed to be a blessing. Generosity is our opportunity to be a blessing to others. The apostle Paul commanded the church to *give what you have*

*decided in your heart to give... for God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor 9:7). God promises us that the generous will themselves be blessed (Prov 22:9). Therefore, generosity is an opportunity for us to experience God's unending provision in our lives and to be part of God's agenda of discipling nations.*

With the theme 'Collaboration in inspiring and advancing global Christian generosity', the participants of the Global Generosity Forum focused on two specific initiatives:

- A Generosity Declaration in the present global context that could assist the global church in integrating stewardship, generous living, giving, accountability and perspectives on Biblical fundraising into the theology and life of the Body of Christ.
- A resource repository that identifies and distributes resources and information about initiatives that encourage Biblical stewardship, generous living, Kingdom-focused giving, peer accountability and Biblical fundraising in churches, ministries and workplaces across the globe.

God is clearly raising generosity initiatives that have the ability to transform the global church to follow Lord Jesus in living generously in all aspects of life. These initiatives complement each other in an ecosystem of how Christians manage, share and give the resources that God has entrusted to them. Unfortunately, there is a danger that competition between initiatives could minimise what God wants to do through the initiatives. The greater Kingdom of God should be the focus of generosity and giving, and not a single church, ministry, individual, organisation or business. Participants expressed

a desire that Biblical stewardship, generosity and giving must be more integrated into the theology and life of the global church. They committed themselves to achieving this vision by collaborating in a movement of generosity that can change nations.

A core part of the Global Generosity Forum was to draft a Generosity Declaration to inspire and challenge the global body of Christ to make a commitment to whole-life, fully surrendered generosity as an essential priority of the global church's mission. The Declaration expresses anew what global generosity leaders believe about generosity, why generosity is critical to the global church today, and the action the global church must take to make it an integral part of its work of taking Christ to the nations.

Recognising that generosity is not about wealthy people giving financially to poor people, generosity leaders and ministries should 'encourage, resource and support a polycentric movement of generosity whereby every local expression of the Body of Christ is participating in generosity towards the Great Commission efforts'. This means that stories and resources, including from India, have to be shared to understand and reflect the truly global tapestry of generosity being lived out by Christians around the world. Using these often locally developed understanding of Biblical generosity and resources, the global Body of Christ is encouraged 'to teach, embrace and practice generosity and stewardship as a manifestation of being disciples in God's Mission'.

The Generosity Declaration closes with a call for the Global Church to:

- 1) Integrate Biblical stewardship, generous living and Kingdom-focused giving into the theology

and life of every local church, group, network, ministry and organisation.

- 2) Prioritise stewardship, financial discipleship, generosity and giving into all of its evangelism and discipleship practices.

### **Generosity Declaration**

*Matthew 28:19-20 records Jesus' last words to all who follow him, "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*

*As the body of Christ, we are called and commanded to make disciples of all nations. This Great Commission is to be the central driving focus of our work as followers of Jesus.*

*We believe the body of Christ cannot carry out this Great Commission without a similar Great Commitment to whole-life generosity. Generosity is an irreplaceable component of the Great Commission. We have created this Generosity Declaration to inspire and challenge the global body of Christ to make a commitment to whole-life, fully surrendered generosity as an essential priority in our pursuit of the Great Commission.*

*This Declaration builds on the work of Lausanne Cape Town 2010. The following four commitments were made at the conference, and all of them are foundational to this declaration.*

1. *We affirm that generosity is the life the Bible requires. The Bible portrays a quality of life that should mark the believer and the community of believers. From Abraham, through Moses, the Psalmists, prophets, and wisdom of Israel, and from Jesus and the apostles, we learn that*



such a biblical lifestyle includes justice, compassion, humility, integrity, truthfulness, sexual chastity, generosity, kindness, self-denial, hospitality, peacemaking, non-retaliation, doing good, forgiveness, joy, contentment, and love - all combined in lives of worship, praise, and faithfulness to God.

2. We embrace the witness of the whole Bible and God's desire both for systemic economic justice and for personal compassion, respect, and generosity towards the poor and needy. We rejoice that this extensive biblical teaching has become more integrated into our mission strategy and practice, as it was for the early Church and the Apostle Paul.

3. We affirm that we must replace self-interest and greed with the biblical teaching on surrender and generous giving as the marks of true discipleship to Christ. We likewise affirm Lausanne's historic call for simpler lifestyles.

4. We affirm our calling to make disciples. The biblical mission demands that those who claim Christ's name should be like him, by taking up their cross, denying themselves, and following him in the paths of humility, love, integrity, generosity, and servanthood. To fail in discipleship and disciple-making is to fail at the most basic level of our mission. The call of Christ to his Church comes to us afresh from the pages of the gospels: 'Come and follow me'; 'Go and make disciples'.

*This Generosity Declaration expresses anew what we believe about generosity, why generosity is critical to our work today, and the action we must take to make it an integral part of our work of taking Christ to the nations.*

### **What We Believe About Generosity**

1. The word 'generosity' is widely misunderstood by the Church and has been used in a narrow and restrictive way for too long. The term must be reframed by Scripture and reclaimed in its fullness for the edification and education of the Church. It must become integral to discipleship as a command to be obeyed, not an option to be considered.

2. Generosity is whole-life discipleship. It is not limited to money and possessions. Instead, it is an outflow of a life fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our relationship to God, our self, our neighbor, and the creation are gifts from God that we steward for Him. Our vision for making disciples of all nations must include this surrendered, selfless stewardship.

3. Disciples embrace generosity because we are made in the image of a giving, generous God. When we are generous, we live out our identity in Christ. Generosity comes from our experience of the grace of God and is an expression of gratitude and love. We cannot share the good news of Christ without including His generosity towards us, and His expectation of our generosity toward others as His image bearers.

4. Generosity is an expression of our trust in God who is able to provide for all our needs. The discipleship journey must bring us closer to Christ in faith, trust, and obedience. This includes teaching generosity and our work of making disciples whose hearts are rich toward God.

5. Generosity is a cure for materialism and discontent, and an antidote to fight worry, anxiety, and depression that is overwhelming our world. Biblical, whole-life generosity sets us

free from the bondage of fear, isolation, and insecurity. Disciples are stewards whom the Son has set free to experience 'life in all its fullness.' (Matthew 10:10) This is the good news of the Gospel we must proclaim.

### **Why Generosity is Critical to Carrying Out the Great Commission**

1. Discipleship and evangelism flow from a generous spirit. Generosity takes us to God. When we are generous, we demonstrate that we understand the heart of God, which leads us to share the love of God with others.

2. We are losing an entire generation to a crisis of trust, cynicism, materialism, and secularization. Generosity is our witness to the watching world that there is a better way. Generosity bridges generational gaps and attracts people to a God of abundance, grace, and purpose.

3. Generosity includes the gift of presence. Our world desperately needs to humanly reconnect to overcome isolation and loneliness, especially in a digital culture.

4. Generosity is necessary to mobilize resources for kingdom work where the need is greatest. Now is the time for the body of Christ to give in unprecedented ways to catalyze a mission movement that will fulfill the Great Commission. This will only happen when the global church has embraced generosity as an indispensable component of discipleship.

5. The body of Christ must live and model for the world a radical new worldview that bears witness to the coming of the kingdom of God. As faithful followers of the Prince of Peace, we must be disciples and make disciples who overflow with a spirit of

*generosity in the face of the hostility, anger, and divisiveness of our present age.*

### **What Action We Must Take as a Result**

- 1. We must use all opportunities and platforms to catalyze a global generosity movement that will inspire deeper discipleship among current believers, give power and relevance to our work of making new disciples, and raise the resources to fund the greatest mobilization of the proclamation and demonstration of the Gospel in word and deed in our lifetime.*
- 2. We must encourage, resource, and support a polycentric movement of generosity whereby every local expression of the Body of Christ is participating in generosity towards Great Commission efforts. The global Body of Christ is encouraged to teach, embrace, and practice generosity and stewardship as a manifestation of being disciples in God's Mission and the Great Commission invitation.*
- 3. We must focus our efforts on helping the children and youth in the global church understand, experience, and practice joyful generosity. Together we can reach a lost generation and help them catch a vision for following Jesus as joyful stewards.*
- 4. We must collaborate with existing groups and organizations that are already envisioning, equipping, and resourcing willing leaders with generosity training within their specific contexts. This includes specialized programs for full-time pastors, bi-vocational pastors, lay leaders, Christian business leaders, ministry leaders, military, and government leaders.*
- 5. We must champion faith and work integration so that just as discipleship is fully integrated into*

*all facets of the life of a believer, so too generosity will permeate every part of our journey with Jesus in every aspect of our life.*

*6. We must create resources and provide training so that every new believer who responds to the Gospel enters into a discipleship program that includes the formation of a generous spirit and the joy of the faithful steward as a follower of Christ.*

### **Therefore, we call on the Global Church to:**

- 1. Integrate Biblical stewardship, generous living, and Kingdom-focused giving into the theology and life of every local church, group, network, ministry, and organization.*
- 2. Prioritize stewardship, financial discipleship, generosity, and giving into all of its evangelism and discipleship practices.*

There are many very good resources to support the global church in integrating stewardship, generosity and giving into its theology and life. These resources include generosity ministries, devotionals, training, stories and case studies such as the Handful of Rice video, generosity campaigns and books. However, many church leaders do not know about these resources and initiatives. Some churches and ministries might not even know that they have resources that could be of value to others. A global generosity resource repository that gathers and distributes information about generosity related resources would therefore be of great value. An ongoing workgroup is working on such a repository.

Here is a list of resources and initiatives which are already being widely used:

- 1. The Global Generosity Network – [Global Generosity Network](#) |*

*[World Evangelical Alliance](#)*

- 2. The Palmful of Maize video - <https://www.gtp.org/pom/>*
- 3. Christ-Centred Generosity book - <https://kingdomlifepublishing.com/product/christ-centered-generosity/>*
- 4. Your Money Counts - <https://www.yourmoneycounts.org.uk/downloads>*
- 5. Resources from Global Trust Partners - <https://www.gtp.org/resources/directory/>*
- 6. Compass (<https://compass1.org/>)*
- 7. Christian Stewardship Network (<https://www.christianstewardshipnetwork.com/>)*
- 8. Christian Stewardship Association - <https://www.christianstewards.org>*
- 9. Generous Church - <https://generouschurch.com/>*
- 10. Generous Generations - <https://generousgenerations.org/>*
- 11. Gospel Patrons - <https://www.gospelpatrons.org/>*
- 12. I Like Giving - <https://ilikegiving.com/>*
- 13. NABLA Initiative - <https://nabla-initiative.org/>*
- 14. Financial Health Generosity - <https://naefinancialhealth.org/>*
- 15. The Journey and Joy of Generosity initiative of the Summer Institute of Linguistics - <https://www.sil.org/>*
- 16. Center for Steward Leader Studies - <https://www.thecslls.org/>*
- 17. Transform World - <https://www.transform-world.net/>*
- 18. Generosity Path - <https://www.generositypath.org/>*
- 19. Global Trust Partners - <https://www.gtp.org/>*
- 20. Tearfund - <https://www.tearfund.org/about-us>*
- 21. 40 Acts Lent resource of*



Stewardship - <https://www.stewardship.org.uk/40-acts-lent-resource>

22. Faith Driven Entrepreneur Foundation Groups that have a strong emphasis on generosity - <https://www.faithdrivenentrepreneur.org/groups>
23. t-Factor Summits that facilitate the transformation of workplace cultures for God, for good and for growth - <https://t-factor.com/>
24. Crown Financial Ministries – [www.crown.org](http://www.crown.org)
25. Ministry Fundraising Network - [www.ministryfundraisingnetwork.org](http://www.ministryfundraisingnetwork.org)
26. Generosity Design Lab - <https://www.generouschurch.com/generosity-design-lab/>
27. Journey of Generosity - <https://generousgiving.org/events/jog/>
28. Financial health of pastors and churches - [NAE Financial Health](http://NAE.FinancialHealth.org)
29. Stations of Generosity - <https://www.stationsofgenerosity.org/>
30. Pastor & Church Leaders #BiblicalGenerosity Online Committee Training with videos and materials (<https://naefinancialhealth.org/translate/>) on the <https://globalgenerosity.org/> website in different languages
31. Mission Increase (<https://missionincrease.org/>) which helps ministries, churches and donors fulfil their God-given mission and increase

their Kingdom impact through transformational giving.

32. Biblical Principles of Fundraising: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vTUoBRChD3wgOo0vW6nxLBaQcA7RwaDB/view>
33. The [Stewardship Study Bible](#)

On Sunday, 29 October, Global Generosity Forum participants visited 14 churches in Manila to spread the message of generosity. They had opportunities to share during the services, meet with leaders and establish relationships that will advance generosity in churches across the Philippines in the years to come. Pastors and other church leaders commented on the importance of these visits to help them understand the message of generosity and inspire generosity in their churches.

The Global Generosity Forum is an important step in facilitating greater global collaboration between different stewardship, generosity and giving initiatives as well as supporting a global generosity movement. We can see national generosity movements already emerging in places such as the Philippines, Egypt and India as national generosity leaders work together. The Forum also clarifies what generosity leaders feel God is saying to the Global Church including the Indian Church about integrating stewardship, generosity and giving into its theology and life.

Our hope is that churches, organisations and networks will discuss the Generosity Declaration and reflect on how to respond to the Call of the Declaration. They can then use the wide variety of resources and initiatives to prioritise Biblical stewardship, generous living and Kingdom focused giving into discipleship practices. Churches are also encouraged to adapt the resources for their contexts and develop their own resources possibly with the assistance of generosity initiatives. In addition, the Manila Generosity Breakfast showed the potential of generosity breakfasts and consultations to bring Christian leaders in a city or country together to discern how to cultivate a culture of stewardship, generosity and giving in their city or country.

The Global Generosity Forum affirmed that Christians should live generously as part of their identity because they have received God's great love and His gifts of life and salvation. This is the central message of the Bible from Genesis when God created the earth because of His generosity to Revelation when God will create the new earth because of His generosity. Christians, also in India, are therefore called to become better stewards of their resources among others as financial disciples, share more of what they have with the needy through living generously and give more of their finances and talents to advance God's Kingdom.



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# THE IMPACT of GENEROSITY on LEADERSHIP

*Leadership rooted in generosity is a powerful force, often demanding sacrifices that transcend personal comfort. True leaders create a culture of selflessness through their actions, inspiring others to follow suit, posits **Mr. Sunny Kuruvilla**.*





**T**he parish committee of St. Francis Xavier Church in Vadanappally, a village near Thrissur in Kerala, faced an extraordinary challenge in 2009. They resolved to raise ₹12 lakhs to fund a life-saving kidney transplant for Gopinathan, a deserving villager in need. With relentless effort, they achieved their target. However, at the next meeting chaired by Father Davis Chiramel, the parish priest, a far more difficult question arose: *“Where will we find a kidney donor?”*.

Gopinathan’s wife was willing to donate her kidney, but medical tests revealed they weren’t a match. During the discussion, someone suggested contacting an agent who could arrange a donor—for a price. Father Davis immediately dismissed the idea, expressing his disapproval of unlawful means.

Then came a moment of profound leadership. Rising to his feet, Father Davis declared, “I will give my kidney”. His bold decision shocked everyone. Gopinathan wasn’t a member of the church, nor was he of the Christian faith, but Father Davis remained resolute. Following the necessary formalities, the transplant was successfully carried out.

When asked about it, Father Davis explained, “What do we preach? If you see someone in need and have the means to help, not doing so is a sin. If we preach this, we must act when the opportunity comes. I didn’t think twice—because thinking twice often stops us from doing what’s right”.

Father Davis’ selfless act made headlines, inspiring many. One such person was Kochouseph Chittilappilly, the founder and owner of V-Guard Industries and Wonderla Holidays, who has been featured on the Forbes India

Billionaires List. Around Christmas 2010, Kochouseph reached out to Father Davis. “Do you need a kidney?”, he asked. The priest replied, “Are you offering to donate?”. Kochouseph confirmed, expressing his desire to make a meaningful difference.

A year later, Father Davis informed Kochouseph about Joy Ulahannan, a lorry driver from Kottayam, in dire need of a kidney. Joy’s wife had been willing to donate, but was not a match. “Maybe mine will”, said Kochouseph and went on to donate his kidney. Moved by gratitude, Joy’s wife later donated her kidney to another person in need. Reflecting on his actions, Kochouseph described giving as a privilege, saying, “I just did something larger with my life”.

The chain of generosity didn’t stop there. In February 2013, Father Sebastian, another priest, encountered Rasad Mohammed, a man in distress, on a bus to Ernakulam. He was a mechanic who had returned from Saudi Arabia due to deteriorating health, and had been on dialysis for over a year. Now, only a kidney transplant could save his life. Moved by Rasad’s plight, Father Sebastian spontaneously offered to help. “If my kidney matches, I’ll give it to you”, he said. Though initially sceptical, Rasad was soon reassured when the priest followed through on his promise. Father Sebastian’s act was inspired by the story of Father Davis, proving that one act of kindness can ignite another.

Generosity takes on a deeper and more transformative significance when embraced by leaders. It extends far beyond financial support or material resources, though those are certainly part of it. The impact of a leader’s generosity ripples through their colleagues, organisations, and

community, creating a powerful and lasting influence.

When leaders align their actions with their beliefs and values—when they ‘walk the talk’—they not only build their credibility but also inspire others to follow suit. Acts of genuine generosity set a precedent, fostering a culture of giving that extends throughout the community and organisation. This culture isn’t just about material contributions; it includes upholding values, creating opportunities for others, empowering teams, honouring dignity, and offering heartfelt appreciation.

Leaders naturally hold more visibility and influence. They are noticed more easily, have access to vital information, wield the power to drive change, and often enjoy privileges that can be harnessed for the greater good. Generous leaders use these advantages not for personal gain but to uplift others and advance organisational goals. This is the noblest form of generosity in leadership—putting others’ needs ahead of personal priorities.

Leadership also presents countless opportunities to demonstrate generosity. Here are some examples:

- Who gets the credit when a project or initiative succeeds?
- Who gets sponsored for a career-enhancing trip or conference?
- Who benefits from discounts on essential resources?
- Who receives recognition for and exposure to major projects, events or publications?

These moments test a leader’s generosity and provide opportunities to lead by example. Often, embracing generosity comes with sacrifices that might make the leader appear to be at a disadvantage in

the short term. Yet, this selflessness often leads to long-term gains—not just for the leader but for the entire organisation.

Generosity in leadership fosters loyalty, builds trust and creates an environment where collaboration and mutual support thrive. Leaders who prioritise giving over personal gain pave the way for a more inclusive, value-driven culture that benefits everyone involved. Leadership rooted in generosity is a powerful force, often demanding sacrifices that transcend personal comfort. True leaders create a culture of selflessness through their actions, inspiring others to follow suit.

A shining example is the story of Prof. Satish Dhawan and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam during the SLV-3 mission in 1979. When the mission failed, Dr. Kalam, the project leader, was heartbroken. Yet, Prof. Dhawan, the then chairman of ISRO, stood as a shield, taking full responsibility for the failure during a press briefing. He assured the public of the team's eventual success.

True to his word, the SLV-3 successfully launched the Rohini satellite in 1980. But this time, Prof. Dhawan stepped aside, allowing Dr. Kalam and his team to shine in the limelight. This act of selfless leadership—absorbing blame in failure and sharing credit in triumph—deeply influenced Dr. Kalam. Throughout his illustrious career, he championed the contributions of his team, always celebrating their achievements and recognising their efforts by name.

Dr. Kalam's own leadership embodied this spirit of sacrificial generosity. While leading critical missile projects at DRDO and ISRO, he recognised the relentless dedication and sacrifices of his team

and their families. Understanding the strain this placed on their loved ones, especially their children, he went the extra mile to bridge the gap. On one occasion, he personally organised and attended events for the children of his team members, making them feel valued and connected to their parents' work. Generosity, when sincerely practiced by leaders, fosters a spirit of giving that permeates organisations and communities.

Sacrificial generosity has always carried a timeless, transformative power. Lord Jesus commends a poor widow who gave all she had, saying, *This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others...she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on (Mk 12:43, 44)*. True generosity isn't about giving from abundance—it's about giving with heart, even in scarcity.

The early church embodied this ideal, sharing their possessions to ensure no one was in need. The Macedonian churches, despite extreme poverty and trials, exemplified sacrificial giving. As Paul highlights in II Corinthians 8:2: *In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity*.

When leaders embrace sacrificial generosity, they not only meet immediate needs but also create a culture of compassion and purpose. Their selfless investments—of time, resources and effort—shape their communities and organisations, leaving a legacy that inspires others to rise higher and give more.

Generosity practised by leaders in the examples above transformed the culture of their communities. Sacrificial generosity among organisational leaders extends far

beyond financial contributions; it involves giving their time, energy and resources selflessly for a greater purpose. Here are practical ways leaders can embody this profound quality:

### **1. Commit to the Values of Your Organisation**

True leaders dedicate themselves fully to the core values of their organisation, understanding that generosity extends far beyond material gifts. It's about giving of oneself—sacrificing personal preferences and comforts for a higher mission. In moments when principles are at risk, these leaders stand tall, choosing integrity over convenience, even when doing so means putting their own reputation or short-term gains on the line.

By prioritising generosity through their actions and decisions, these leaders protect the soul of the organisation and ensure that its purpose remains clear and unshaken. They understand that behind every institution known for its ethical standards and enduring success are leaders who have given themselves to a cause greater than personal ambitions. Their generosity isn't just about resources—it's about their time, energy and unwavering commitment to the values that guide the organisation's journey.

These leaders inspire those around them to embrace the same spirit of selfless giving, creating a culture where generosity becomes a shared responsibility. Their legacy is built not on individual accomplishments, but on the lasting impact of a purpose-driven community that thrives through collective giving and shared values.

### **2. Recognise and Celebrate Contributions from All**

True generosity in leadership is found in the simple yet profound



act of recognising the contributions of others. A leader who humbly acknowledges the efforts of junior staff or colleagues creates an environment of gratitude and respect, strengthening morale and inspiring those around them to rise higher. This act of giving—giving credit and appreciation—fosters loyalty, sparks excellence and cultivates a culture of mutual respect.

Generosity in recognition doesn't always require grand gestures; often, thoughtful, personalised acts make the biggest impact. Practical ways to give recognition include:

- **Public Acknowledgment:**

Celebrate accomplishments in meetings, presentations or forums, ensuring everyone's contributions are seen and valued by the wider community.

- **Personalised Appreciation:**

Take the time to write a heartfelt handwritten note, send a tailored email, or engage in one-on-one conversations, expressing genuine gratitude for everyone's hard work.

By giving recognition freely and generously, leaders create a ripple effect that encourages people to give their best, making the entire team stronger and more united in purpose.

### 3. Invest in and Empower Your Team

Leaders who prioritise empowering others to succeed are not just shaping individuals—they are building a legacy of strength and resilience for their organisations. True giving in leadership is about offering the tools, resources and support that enable people to reach their full potential.

Empowering employees through generosity involves:

- **Investing in Growth:** Offer mentoring, coaching and career

development opportunities that help employees grow both professionally and personally.

- **Providing Support in**

**Difficult Times:** Extend a hand of generosity during personal crises, offering extended leave or financial assistance when needed, showing that leadership cares for people beyond the work they do.

- **Celebrating Successes:**

Generously reward the efforts of your people, even if it means redirecting resources or sharing accolades that you might otherwise claim yourself.

- **Nurturing Future Leaders:**

Give the gift of opportunity by mentoring, and stepping aside when needed, creating space for others to rise and shine.

By giving selflessly in these ways, leaders not only elevate their teams but also lay the foundation for a future where generosity, collaboration and success are shared by all.

### 4. Give Without Expecting Recognition

True generosity is not about seeking recognition, but about creating lasting impact. For leaders, the most powerful acts of giving are those that remain humble and selfless, focused on the well-being and growth of others.

Leaders can:

- **Perform Acts of Kindness**

**Quietly:** Offer help and support in ways that keep the spotlight on the recipient's benefit, rather than drawing attention to the giver. The impact is what truly matters.

- **Foster a Culture of Giving:**

Encourage a collective spirit where the effort of the group is valued more than individual accolades. When everyone gives generously, the entire community thrives.

In this way, leaders inspire a culture where generosity flows freely, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the immediate moment, transforming individuals, and the organisation as a whole.

### 5. Lead with Compassion

Compassionate leadership is about being there for your team, especially in moments of challenge or uncertainty. True leaders give not only their guidance but also their presence, showing that they stand with their team through the toughest times.

Leaders can demonstrate compassion by:

- **Walking Alongside Their**

**Teams:** Be present during times of difficulty—whether it's layoffs, restructuring or crises—offering guidance, reassurance and a steady presence to help your team navigate through uncertainty.

- **Contributing Personally:**

Go beyond professional responsibilities by offering financial, emotional or practical support to employees in need, showing that leadership isn't just about work but about caring for the whole person.

In doing so, compassionate leaders not only provide stability but also inspire a culture of kindness, trust and unwavering support that strengthens the entire team.

Sacrificial generosity is more than a single action—it's a way of thinking and leading. Generosity is one of the defining traits of truly effective leadership. It transcends material contributions, encompassing the gift of time, knowledge, encouragement and recognition. A generous leader fosters an environment where people feel valued, supported and inspired to reach their full potential.

By practising sacrificial generosity,

leaders cultivate stronger, more resilient teams while leaving a lasting legacy—not just within their organisations, but in the

lives of their employees and the communities they serve. This kind of leadership is an investment in people, paving the way for a future

built on compassion, collaboration and shared success.

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## The Leader's Hand

The leader's hand is not a fist,  
But an open palm with a generous gift.  
It gives and gives, with a heart of caring,  
And finds true joy in the act of sharing.

It lifts and guides, with a gentle touch,  
And helps others rise, by giving much.  
It wipes away tears, and calms the storm,  
And brings peace to the troubled, safety from harm.

The leader's hand is not a grasping claw,  
But a helping hand, seeing beyond the flaw.  
It serves and sacrifices, with a willing heart,  
And finds its reward in giving a brand new start.

The leader's hand is a symbol of their soul,  
A reflection of their heart, and their pure goal.  
It shows leading is not about power or might,  
But about serving others, and generosity done right!





# **Challenges in Balancing Grace and Accountability**





## Introduction

A senior staff, due to various reasons, had been drifting from fulfilling her duties. Even after repeated caution and advice, she was unable to correct her actions. Trust and accountability took a severe beating such that we had to force a disciplinary action after an inquiry that resulted in requesting her to relinquish her duties with notice.

In another case, in spite of advice and warning, a staff member was repeating the same mistake again and again so that a disciplinary action had to be initiated to avoid a reputational risk to the organisation.

In both the cases, both at the staff and at the management level, we went through personal challenges as we struggled to let them go due to the relationship that had been built over the years. It was a huge struggle since Grace was pulling us back from taking disciplinary

action while Accountability to organisational ethics and values compelled us to take disciplinary action.

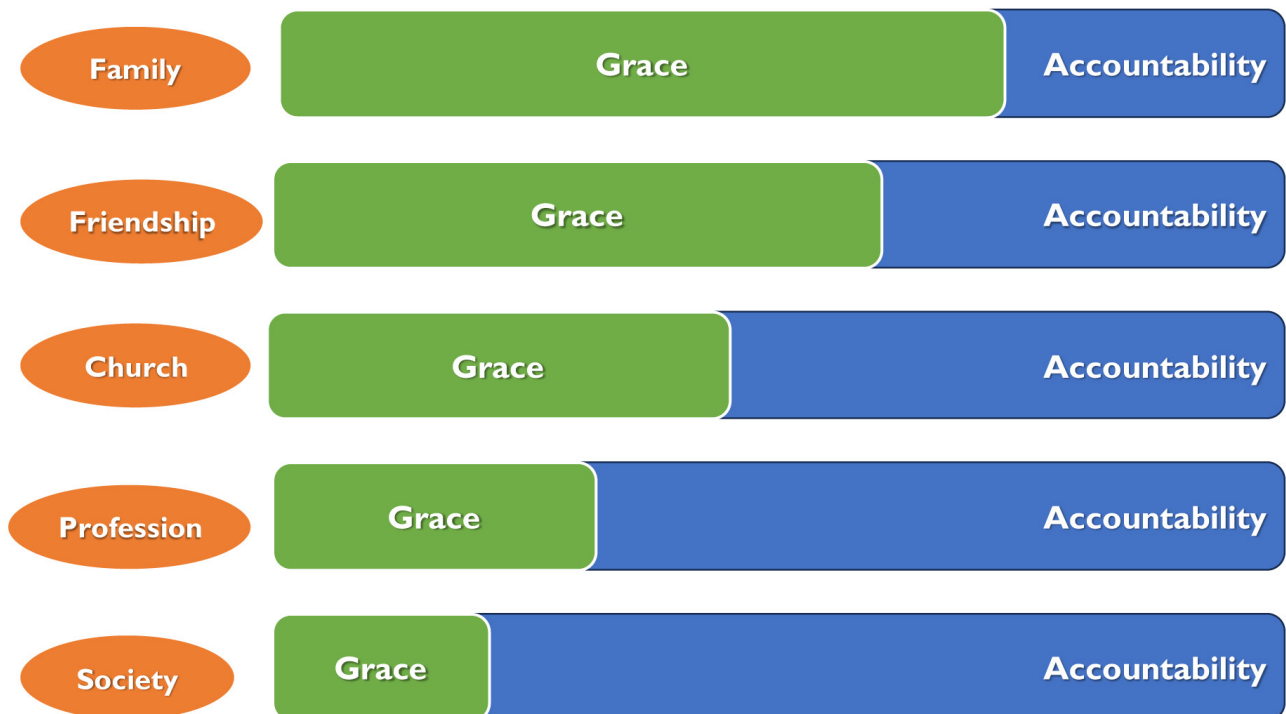
Such instances have been disturbing us for quite some time, and we continue to grapple with how to avoid such actions. The irony of the case was that in spite of building a few safety measures into the system, we found that the human nature was at its stubborn height such that Trust and Accountability took a severe beating. Justification and counter justification played its part to such an extent that we started seeing the ugly face of the difference between what we speak and what we do.

In corporate circles, they have several measures at all levels to ensure an amount of protection is built into the system for both the organisation and the staff. After discussing the subject with a few leaders from the Corporates, I understood that in a few specific

cases, this still turns out to be a huge struggle. Sometimes, it even brings in several other players from both inside and outside the system into the case, which hurts the staff, leaders, management and the organisation at large.

Several instances of such cases have helped corporates and institutions to build appropriate safety measures, clear service level agreements, KPAs, performance appraisals, etc., to handle such cases effectively. However, ultimately, it all boils down to the integrity and accountability of the individual and the organisation's commitment to its staff.

On the other hand, I also had the opportunity to discuss this subject with a senior Christian leader who had only Grace in mind, and was of the opinion that the staff at any level should not be sent out at any cost. He said the organisational commitment must ensure that the



## Understanding Grace and Accountability



staff is given all opportunities and unlimited opportunities to correct themselves.

I encountered a totally different point of view from another senior leader who was of the opinion that every staff member at any level should be subjected to disciplinary procedures in the case of violation or offence that could undermine the values and ethics of the organisation. He was of the opinion that all may not fit into a role or an organisation with their calibre and experience. When they are graciously allowed to move out, they may find an appropriate fit in another role in another organisation and may even shine exceptionally in their roles. He says that the message is loud and clear: keeping non-performers and troublemakers in the system not only hurts the organisation, but everyone else in the system including the perpetrator. Guidance, counselling and support to move on helps them to discover and discern their true calibre and shine where they fit in.

My introductory notes revolve around an organisational perspective. But this challenge of balancing Grace and Accountability permeates all spheres of life. I tried to visualise this through the graphical representation above. Though it might not include all aspects of life, it can give an overview of the challenges we face at various intersections of life.

Here is a breakdown of the thought process that is visualised on the pattern above.

The graphical representation in the image is to illustrate a balance between 'Grace' and 'Accountability' in various spheres of life, including Family, Friendship, Church, Profession and Society. Each bar shows varying proportions

of grace and accountability within these areas, suggesting that different contexts might require different balances between offering grace (understanding, forgiveness, compassion) and enforcing accountability (responsibility, discipline, integrity).

**Family:** The bar is inclined more heavily toward 'Grace', with a smaller portion dedicated to 'Accountability', suggesting that in family relationships, grace, like forgiveness and unconditional support, is primary, though accountability still has a role.

**Friendship:** This sphere of life also emphasises grace but includes a significant accountability. The balance may reflect that, while friendships are rooted in understanding and compassion, there is an expectation for friends to hold each other accountable. I'm sure this is reflected in our practical behaviour and expectations.

**Church:** As we interact within the community of Faith, we also experience and expect that Grace and Accountability are more evenly balanced, possibly reflecting the idea that a church community should be a place of grace, but also a setting where members are held accountable to shared beliefs and moral standards. We cannot afford to operate in this society with our own whims and fancies. God, in His wisdom, has created us to thrive and survive within this social and spiritual community so that we live as faithful witnesses for His glory, and reflect Him and His love with one another.

**Profession:** We are placed within the context of one more community, our profession, that has close interactions with us. Here, as you can see, the bar is skewed more towards accountability, with a

reduced weightage on grace. This suggests that, in a professional environment, responsibility, reliability and accountability are crucial, though packed with some amount of grace (flexibility, understanding). Here again we love to play our own game and interpret it differently for Christian organisations and for others. We love to demand more grace than accountability, leading to a huge amount of struggle from the perspective of integrity, accountability and governance.

**Society:** Though Society is shown to be having the highest emphasis on accountability, with grace taking a smaller role, it continues to be the most compromised and challenging sphere of life. Yes, this implies societal structures rely more on rules, laws and systems of accountability to function effectively, with grace, while still present, playing a smaller role. Hence, we may struggle, unable to understand and comprehend the discipline that is expected when we are placed in a social structure and to operate within the scope of our responsibilities.

We must ask ourselves, "are we drifting too much from reality so that we are unable to see a balance between grace and accountability in a society that is deeply lost in a marred understanding of trust, discipline, responsibility, accountability, etc. Somehow, we see that the social dispensation is more confused than ever before. As time goes on, more books, conversations and seminars, workshops and perspectives are placed before us on both Grace and Accountability. However, the more knowledge that is available to us, the more we drift away from the truth and make it all meaningless. The more laws we have the more we seem to have become undisciplined

and lawless.

Coming again to the thought process as shown in the image, it implies that each sphere of life may require a different balance between grace and accountability, with personal relationships (family, friends) emphasising on grace, and more formal or structured relationships (profession, society) placing a greater emphasis on accountability. This approach highlights a nuanced view of relational dynamics, recognising that, while both grace and accountability are valuable, their proportions should adapt to the context.

### **Balancing Grace and Accountability**

We can learn valuable lessons from the scriptures on this challenge of balancing Grace and Accountability. I want to focus on two passages that help understand Christ's perspective on and approach to the subject. The one that stands out for me is John 8:1-11, the incident of the woman caught in adultery.

We see here Lord Jesus extending grace to the woman caught in adultery. While the law prescribed death by stoning for her sin, Lord Jesus shows compassion by forgiving her. Yet, He also holds her accountable by telling her to *go and sin no more (Jn 8:11)*. This, to me, sounds like a clear example of grace (forgiveness) balanced with accountability (call to repentance and change).

The second passage is where Apostle Paul is very straight forward and clear on the subject in Galatians 6:7-8: *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

This passage highlights the principle of accountability, showing that actions have consequences, while also affirming the spiritual transformation through grace that leads to eternal life.

The Scriptures demonstrate that both grace and accountability are vital for healthy relationships, leadership and spiritual growth. Grace extends forgiveness, offers second chances and restores brokenness, while accountability ensures integrity, growth and alignment with God's standards. The challenge lies in holding both in the right tension, discerning when to show compassion and when to hold someone responsible, just as Lord Jesus exemplified throughout His ministry.

I would like to call your attention to the recently published, well researched and documented report by the Lausanne Movement, "State of the Great Commission: A state of the current and future state" (<https://lausanne.org/?s=Great+commission+report>). You will draw a wealth of lessons from this report, but I would like to call your attention to a particular aspect which intrigued me: the State of Trust. The report provides valuable insights into how individuals, during this specific period in history, perceive, expect and frame their understanding of this fundamental aspect of human interaction.

Surprisingly, Indians still have a huge amount of trust operating in their relationships. Our level of Trust is at 74% along with China, UAE and Indonesia who have more than 70% Trust, while many other countries are struggling with Trust. This research connects well with my perception from the graph, and gives meaning to the fact that "life conversations with family members" are the most trusted by

the youth. Also, it draws attention to the core aspects of integrity, honesty and humility which continue to be the most expected from the leadership of all countries while a 'lack of accountability' frustrates them the most.

Accountability is closely tied to integrity, and trust is damaged when accountability is compromised or manipulated. In all our social interactions where we are called to serve God, it is essential for everyone involved to understand, respect and act with sensitivity at all levels. Unfortunately, we often struggle to honour and respect the dignity of one another.

Embracing mutual responsibility is key to balancing grace with accountability. If God's children could consistently demonstrate this character in public life, we would make a significant impact, modelling kingdom values for a society that can draw inspiration and lessons from God's people!

Here are a few resources that could be of help:

#### **1. Books**

- **THE GRACE AND TRUTH PARADOX** by Randy Alcorn - This book explores how Lord Jesus embodies both grace and truth, providing insights on living in a way that combines compassion with accountability.
- **THE DISCIPLINE OF GRACE: GOD'S ROLE AND OUR ROLE IN THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS** by Jerry Bridges – In this book, Bridges delves into the concept of grace in the Christian life and examines how to practise discipline and accountability while fully embracing grace.
- **BOUNDARIES: WHEN TO SAY YES, HOW TO SAY NO TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE** by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John

Townsend - This book emphasises setting personal boundaries, a practical way of balancing accountability with grace for yourself and others.

- **LEADERSHIP AND SELF-DECEPTION** by The Arbinger Institute - This book provides a perspective on understanding self-accountability in relationships and offers frameworks that are both compassionate and corrective.

## 2. Articles and Papers

- **GRACE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**



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**IN MINISTRY** by Christian Leadership Alliance – This article on balancing pastoral grace with the need for accountability in leadership can be very insightful, focusing on practical ministry contexts.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CHURCH: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN GRACE AND RESPONSIBILITY** by Christianity Today – This article series is aimed at church leaders, and

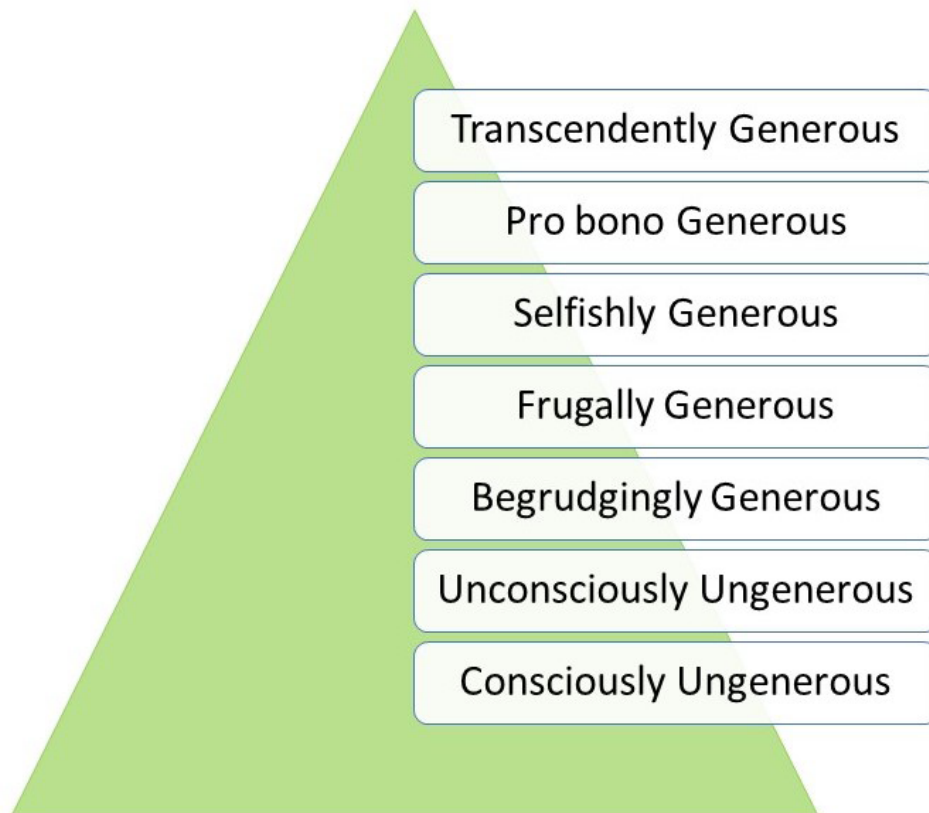
discusses how to structure accountability while cultivating a grace-filled community.

## 3. Podcasts and Videos

- **BALANCING GRACE AND TRUTH IN RELATIONSHIPS** by John Piper (Desiring God) - This series of videos and podcasts examines relational dynamics and addresses how to maintain a balance of grace and accountability in various contexts.

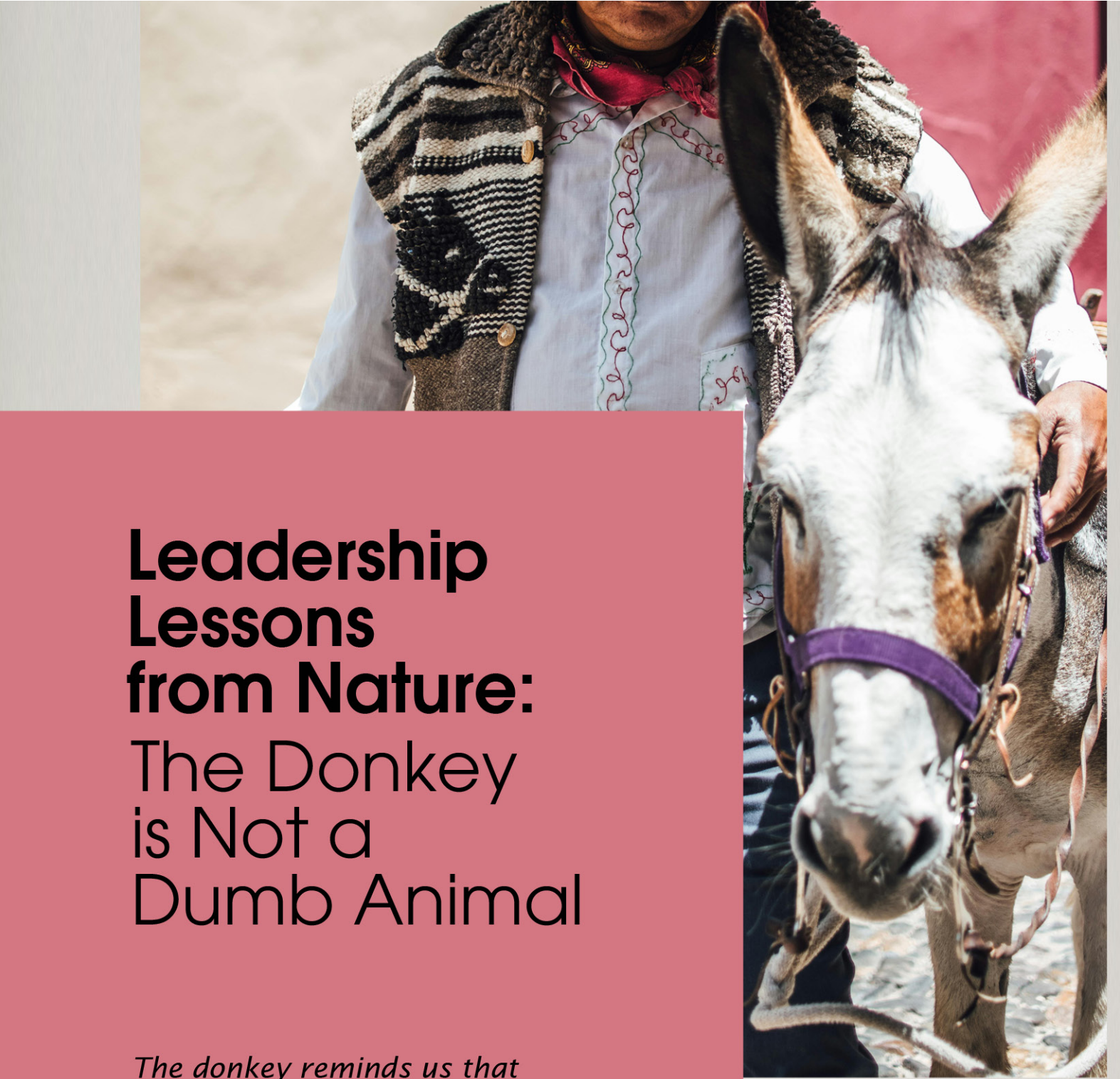


# 7 Degrees of Generosity



Source: Gonser Gerber





# Leadership Lessons from Nature: The Donkey is Not a Dumb Animal

*The donkey reminds us that leadership is not about grandeur or dominance, but service, purpose and the ability to uplift others, elucidates Mr. Chiradeep Patra.*

The donkey, scientifically known as *Equus asinus*, is a member of the equine family, closely related to horses and zebras. Despite its often-unflattering reputation in modern culture, the donkey is an intelligent, resilient and highly adaptable animal with a long history of domestication. It has served humans for thousands of years, contributing significantly to agricultural, transport and labour needs, especially in harsh and arid environments.

### Habitat and Adaptability

Donkeys are highly adaptable animals, capable of thriving in a variety of environments, though they are especially suited to arid and semi-arid regions. Their natural habitat includes:

- **Deserts:** Donkeys are originally from the deserts of North Africa, where they developed their hardy nature. In desert environments, they can survive with minimal water and food, often grazing on sparse vegetation that other animals might not tolerate.
- **Semi-arid and mountainous regions:** Donkeys are frequently found in hilly or mountainous areas where their sure-footedness makes them ideal for traversing difficult terrains.
- **Farms and rural areas:** Today, donkeys are commonly used in agricultural communities worldwide, particularly in developing regions where they serve as beasts of burden.

Because of their adaptability, donkeys are found in various regions, from Africa and Asia to the Middle East and South America.

### Types of Donkeys

Donkeys come in various types and sizes, ranging from miniature breeds to large, muscular ones. Some common types include:

**1. Wild Donkeys:** These include the African wild ass and the Asiatic wild ass. Wild donkeys are native to Africa and the Middle East and are ancestors of the modern domesticated donkey.

**2. Domesticated Donkeys:** These donkeys are bred for various purposes such as work, transport and companionship. They are found in rural and agricultural areas worldwide.

**3. Miniature Donkeys:** Originating from Mediterranean islands, miniature donkeys are smaller versions, standing about 36 inches tall. They are primarily kept as pets and for companionship.

**4. Mules:** A mule is a hybrid animal, the offspring of a male donkey (Jack) and a female horse (Mare). Mules inherit strength from horses and resilience from donkeys, making them valuable work animals.

### Nature of the Donkey: Strengths and Characteristics

Donkeys have several unique traits that set them apart from other equines like horses:

- **Intelligence:** Contrary to popular belief, donkeys are not foolish animals. They are highly intelligent and have excellent memory, capable of remembering people, places and other animals for long periods.
- **Cautiousness:** Donkeys are known for their cautious nature. This characteristic is often mistaken for stubbornness or stupidity, but it is actually a survival trait. Unlike horses, donkeys are less likely to panic and run from danger. Instead, they stop to assess the situation, making them more reliable in dangerous or unknown terrains.
- **Resilience:** Donkeys are

incredibly resilient animals, capable of working in extreme conditions, especially in hot and dry climates. They can survive on sparse diets and tolerate dehydration better than horses, making them essential in regions with limited resources.

● **Strength and Endurance:** Donkeys are known for their physical strength. They can carry heavy loads for long distances, especially over rough or hilly terrain. This is why they have been used for transportation and farming for centuries.

● **Companionship:** Donkeys are social animals that bond closely with other animals and humans. They are often kept with horses or other livestock to provide companionship and reduce anxiety.

### Usefulness to Humans

For thousands of years, donkeys have served humanity in various capacities:

**1. Beasts of Burden:** Donkeys have been used to carry loads and pull carts, particularly in regions where other animals might struggle. In many developing countries, donkeys are still vital for transporting goods, water and agricultural products.

**2. Agriculture:** In rural areas, donkeys are used to plough fields, transport harvested crops and carry supplies. Their endurance makes them ideal for farming in remote and mountainous areas.

**3. Transport:** In history, donkeys were commonly used for personal transport, carrying people over long distances in rugged terrains where wheeled vehicles could not go.

**4. Guard Animals:** In recent times, donkeys have been used as guard animals to protect livestock.



Their loud braying, instinct and ability to confront predators make them excellent protectors against coyotes, wolves and dogs.

#### **5. Milk and Meat Production:**

In some cultures, donkeys are also raised for milk, which is known for its medicinal properties and is also used to make cosmetics. Though less common, donkeys are also consumed as meat in certain parts of the world.

**6. Therapeutic Uses:** Donkeys are used in animal-assisted therapy programmes for people with disabilities, autism or emotional challenges. Their gentle and calm nature makes them ideal companions in these therapeutic settings.

#### **Leadership Lessons from the Donkey: Biblical Insights and Applications**

The humble donkey, often seen as a lowly beast of burden, carries profound Biblical significance that provides rich leadership lessons. From humility to resilience, its role in Scripture invites leaders and managers to reflect on their approach to authority, service and decision-making. Drawing from Biblical references, let us explore how the lessons embodied by this modest creature can transform modern leadership practices.

#### **Four Leadership Lessons from Balaam's Donkey**

The story of Balaam and his donkey in Numbers 22:21-33 is rich with lessons, demonstrating how God can use even the humblest of creatures to teach profound truths. By examining the donkey's actions and responses, we can glean valuable leadership principles that are vital for anyone seeking to lead with integrity and purpose.

#### **1. Vision and Discernment: A Leader Must See Beyond the**

#### **Ordinary**

*...the donkey saw the angel of the Lord with a drawn sword in his hand... (Num 22:23).* The donkey saw the angel of the Lord obstructing its way three times. Even when Balaam, the prophet, was blind to the spiritual reality, the donkey's eyes were open to discern God's intervention.

**Lesson:** Vision as well as discernment are critical traits for leaders. A leader must have the discernment to recognise when God is guiding them in their path or obstructing their path. This requires spiritual awareness and the ability to perceive situations beyond what is visible. Leaders often face situations where patience and discernment are necessary to make the right decisions. Strategic leadership involves knowing when to pause and reevaluate circumstances, even when under pressure to act quickly. Leaders who take the time to consider long-term consequences demonstrate wisdom, avoiding rash decisions that could jeopardise their mission.

#### **2. Obedience: Vision Alone is Not Enough**

*When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field...it pressed close to the wall....it lay down... (Numbers 22:23, 25, 27).* Seeing the angel wasn't enough; the donkey responded by turning away, stepping to the side, or stopping altogether. Each time it adjusted its actions to align with what it saw.

**Lesson:** A leader must not only recognise God's direction but also act on it. Obedience to God's will and guidance is essential for effective leadership. Vision without action is incomplete.

#### **3. Endurance: Stand Firm for**

#### **What is Right**

*The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times..." (Num 22:32, 33).* Despite being beaten by Balaam three times, the donkey endured the torment but never compromised or moved forward against God's will.

**Lesson:** Leadership often involves enduring criticism, opposition and even mistreatment. Yet, a true leader must stand firm for what is right, prioritising God's direction over personal comfort or the demands of others.

#### **4. Loyalty: Faithfulness in Service**

*...the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?"... "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" (Num 22:28, 30).* The donkey's loyalty to Balaam is evident. It carried him faithfully, even when misunderstood and mistreated. When God opened its mouth, the donkey defended its actions and proved its faithfulness, with even the angel of the Lord testifying to its integrity.

**Lesson:** Loyalty is a cornerstone of leadership. A leader must demonstrate steadfast commitment to their team, organisation or mission, even in challenging circumstances. Faithfulness builds trust and ensures that leaders remain aligned with their purpose.

#### **Two Leadership Lessons from the Donkey Lord Jesus Rode**

Throughout the Bible, the donkey is often portrayed as a symbol of humility and service. These traits



are not just incidental; they carry profound spiritual lessons for us. By reflecting on its role in key Biblical narratives, we uncover truths about humility, availability and the importance of serving others.

### **1. Humility: The Donkey as a Symbol of Lowliness and Approachability**

In Matthew 21:1-11, Lord Jesus instructs His disciples to bring a donkey and its colt for Him to ride into Jerusalem. This act fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, which proclaimed, *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey*. In stark contrast to the grand chariots and warhorses that ancient kings used to display their power, Lord Jesus chose a donkey—a humble, unassuming animal. This decision was intentional, reflecting the nature of His kingdom: one built on peace, humility and servanthood.

**Lesson:** The donkey teaches us that true greatness lies in humility. Leaders and individuals alike are called to set aside pride and self-importance, adopting a mindset that prioritises service and approachability. Lord Jesus' triumphal entry reminds us that God values the lowly and can use them for extraordinary purposes.

### **2. Availability: The Donkey as a Carrier of Human Burdens**

*The disciples...brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on (Mt 21:6-7).* Donkeys have been an integral part of human life since ancient times, serving and being used by humans. Their strength, resilience and calm temperament made them

ideal for transporting goods and people. This inherent availability and service are reflected in countless Biblical stories, including the account of Lord Jesus' triumphal entry, where the donkey was not only available but also submitted willingly to its role in the divine plan.

**Lesson:** Being available to serve others is a hallmark of humility and love. Just as the donkey carried Lord Jesus, leaders and followers of Christ are called to carry the burdens of others, offering support and strength when needed. This includes being approachable and present, much like the donkey, who was not only physically available but also symbolically represented submission to God's will.

### **One Leadership Lesson from Ishmael's Depiction as a Wild Donkey**

The Bible often uses the imagery of animals to convey profound truths, and the donkey holds a special place in these teachings. In Genesis 16:12, Ishmael is described as *a wild donkey of a man*, reflecting not only the animal's untamed spirit but also its incredible strength and stamina. This description, though specific to Ishmael's descendants, highlights traits of the donkey that leaders and individuals alike can draw lessons from: resilience, hard work and the ability to bear burdens.

### **1. Perseverance and Assertiveness: Harnessing the Untamed Spirit to Bear Burdens**

Genesis 16:12 portrays Ishmael as, *He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers (Gen 16:12).*

This symbolises independence, untamed energy and strength. Wild donkeys are known for their fierce spirit and ability to thrive in harsh environments, embodying a sense of freedom and determination. Similarly, leaders must sometimes channel this boldness and stamina to overcome obstacles and lead decisively in difficult situations.

**Lesson:** While humility is crucial, leaders must balance it with strength and assertiveness. There are moments when bold risks and decisive actions are necessary to advance and overcome challenges. However, this strength must be tempered with wisdom to ensure decisions are rooted in purpose and foresight. Donkeys, long valued as carriers of goods and humans, symbolise hard work, endurance and perseverance. Their example reminds us to carry life's burdens with resilience and dedication, turning challenges into opportunities and thrive through diligent effort with stamina.

### **Conclusion**

The Biblical portrayal of the donkey reveals profound insights into leadership and management. From humility and servant leadership to resilience and strategic patience, the lessons drawn from this humble creature are timeless. The donkey's role in the lives of men and women in Scripture reminds us that leadership is not about grandeur or dominance, but service, purpose and the ability to uplift others. By embracing these principles, leaders can inspire their teams to achieve greatness while fostering a culture of trust, collaboration and unwavering commitment to shared values.



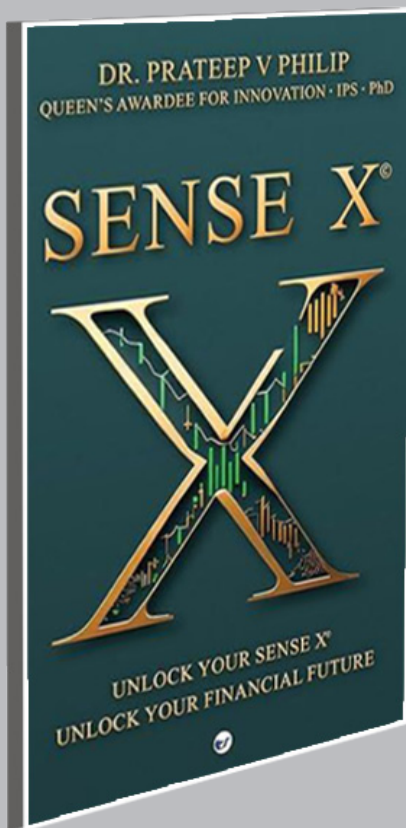
*Mr. Chiradeep Patra was an accountant for a mission organisation for many years. Currently, he is a published author, life coach and guide. He holds a master's degree in commerce, and certifications in CBT life coaching, ICF-CCE life coaching and positive psychology. In 2023, he founded "I LISTEN", a space that promotes active listening, character building and strengthening meaningful relationships. Mr. Patra lives with his family in Cuttack, and they worship at the Cuttack Oriya Baptist Church. For more information about him, please visit: <https://linktr.ee/chiradeep>*



A Book Review

# SENSE X

by Dr. Prateep V. Philip



This book is written by a Director General of Police paradoxically on Management of Personal Finance. But Dr. Philip is very well qualified to write as he has done his Doctoral Research in Economics and has also served as a bank manager prior to his IPS service. He is a high innovator, the author of five books and the winner of several awards, and he is deeply committed to Biblical ethics and witness.

Dr. Philip gives down-to-earth practical advice on personal finance management to us non-professionals. He teaches us how to make long term finance planning, family budgeting, informed decisions, intelligent decisions, how to control liabilities and debts, how to make small savings and small investments with long term goals, how to prioritise spending and minimise expenditures, develop frugality, saving habits, develop financial literacy, learn risk management, planning for retirement and contribution to charities.

This book is written for non-professional ordinary persons, and is very easy to read and understand and practise. It is a great contribution to the general public by a high-end civil service officer.

The book has been published by Clever Fox Publishing, Chennai, and is available on Amazon and at [www.prateepphilip.com](http://www.prateepphilip.com).

**Dr. Ebe Sunder Raj,**  
**Founder, Christian Institute of Management (CIM)**



# Management Education in Theological Institutions (METI)

## About this book...

*I am extremely pleased that most of the contributors to this book are not the typical 'theologians'. Seminaries and Bible colleges need to allow space for the 'non theologian' follower of Christ to speak to us. This publication has made this possible.*

*My prayer is that this book is read and used widely in the formation of men and women, who will soon be taking on significant leadership roles in the Indian Church. It must become an indispensable resource for every theological institution in this country. May God use these writings for the sake of His Kingdom!*

**Paul Cornelius**

Regional Secretary, India, Asia Theological Association

*The Church is at crossroads, even as the State takes a serious position of scrutinising the behaviour and conduct of churches and organisations in the management of finance and other areas.*

*The concerns mentioned above has played a vital role in the development of this resource book for the use of theological students, teachers and Church leaders at all levels. We expect that this book will bring a sea change in the formation of right Christian thinking with a clear Biblical understanding on the topic. We wish and pray that together we could empower the Church and institutions by developing models of integration in theological education.*

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