

# LEGACY

OF GRACE DEVOTIONAL  
MAN IN THE MIRROR

OCTOBER 31, 2021

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** Who are some generous people you know? What makes them generous?

**Key Text:** “One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.”  
(Proverbs 11:24)

It was after midnight. Trying to get out of the pouring rain, an elderly couple approached the front desk of the hotel hoping to get some shelter for the night: “Could you possibly give us a room here just for tonight?” the husband asked. The friendly clerk, with a winning smile, explained that there were three conventions in town. “I’m sorry, but all our rooms are taken—there are no vacancies.” Then the clerk continued, “But I can’t send a nice couple like you out in the rain at one o’clock in the morning. I have a room that I sleep in, and I’m working the night shift—I won’t be needing the room tonight. It’s not exactly a suite, but it’s safe, clean, and you’d be comfortable at least for tonight.” When the couple declined, the clerk pressed on: “Don’t worry about me. I’ll be fine.” So, the couple agreed.

The next morning, as the couple was checking out of the motel, the elderly man said to the clerk, “You’re the kind of manager who should be the boss of the best hotel in the United States. Maybe someday I’ll build one for you.” The clerk looked at the couple and smiled, and the three of them had a good laugh. As they drove away, the elderly couple agreed that the helpful clerk was indeed exceptional—finding people who are both friendly and helpful isn’t easy.

Two years passed. The clerk had almost forgotten the incident when he received a letter from the old man. It recalled that stormy night and enclosed was a round-trip ticket to New York, asking the young man to visit them. The old man met him in New York and led him to the corner of Fifth Avenue and 34th Street. He then pointed to a great new building there, a lavishly designed palace of reddish stone, lush gardens, and elegant watchtowers thrusting up into the sky. “That,” said the older man, “is the hotel I have just built for you to manage.” “You must be joking,” the young man said. “I assure you that I am not,” said the older man, his mouth forming a sly smile. The young clerk who became the hotel’s first manager was George C. Boldt. The old man’s name was William Waldorf Astor, and the magnificent structure was the original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Boldt became famous for setting new standards in the hospitality industry worldwide.

The Bible has much to say about generosity. Jesus said, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive*” (Acts 20:35) and “*Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you*” (Luke 6:38). When we give, God notices—and He promises to bless us and return to us in measure of what we have generously given.

**Discuss:** In what sense is it more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)?

**Discuss:** When have you given to a need and received a blessing as a result (Luke 6:38)?

### 3 Principles of Generosity

#### 1. Learn to give when you don't have much.

“And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. <sup>42</sup> And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. <sup>43</sup> And he called his disciples to him and said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. <sup>44</sup> For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’” (Mark 12:41-44) Some people avoid generosity because they have much and want to keep it all for themselves, while others hide behind having too little. The poor widow in the story above did not hide behind her poverty—out of her love for God she gave generously. Generosity is not a matter of amount but of the heart.

**Discuss:** Why is it important for us to give generously when we don't have much?

**Discuss:** 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, “God loves a cheerful giver.” How would you advise a fellow Christian to be cheerful in his/her giving?

#### 2. Give more than you can afford.

C.S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*: “I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc. are up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.”

**Discuss:** Do you agree with Lewis' statement? Why or why not?

#### 3. Always keep moving toward your treasure.

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 16:21). With every expenditure, we are either moving away from our treasure or closer to it. Jesus gives us a choice in the matter.

**Discuss:** Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. What are some practical truths we can learn from Paul's wise words here in 1 Timothy 6:17-19?

**Discuss:** How would you advise a new Christian about the importance of generosity?

#### For Further Study:

“Why is Giving So Emphasized in the Christian Faith?” article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

*The Treasure Principle* by Randy Alcorn

[www.ramseysolutions.com](http://www.ramseysolutions.com)