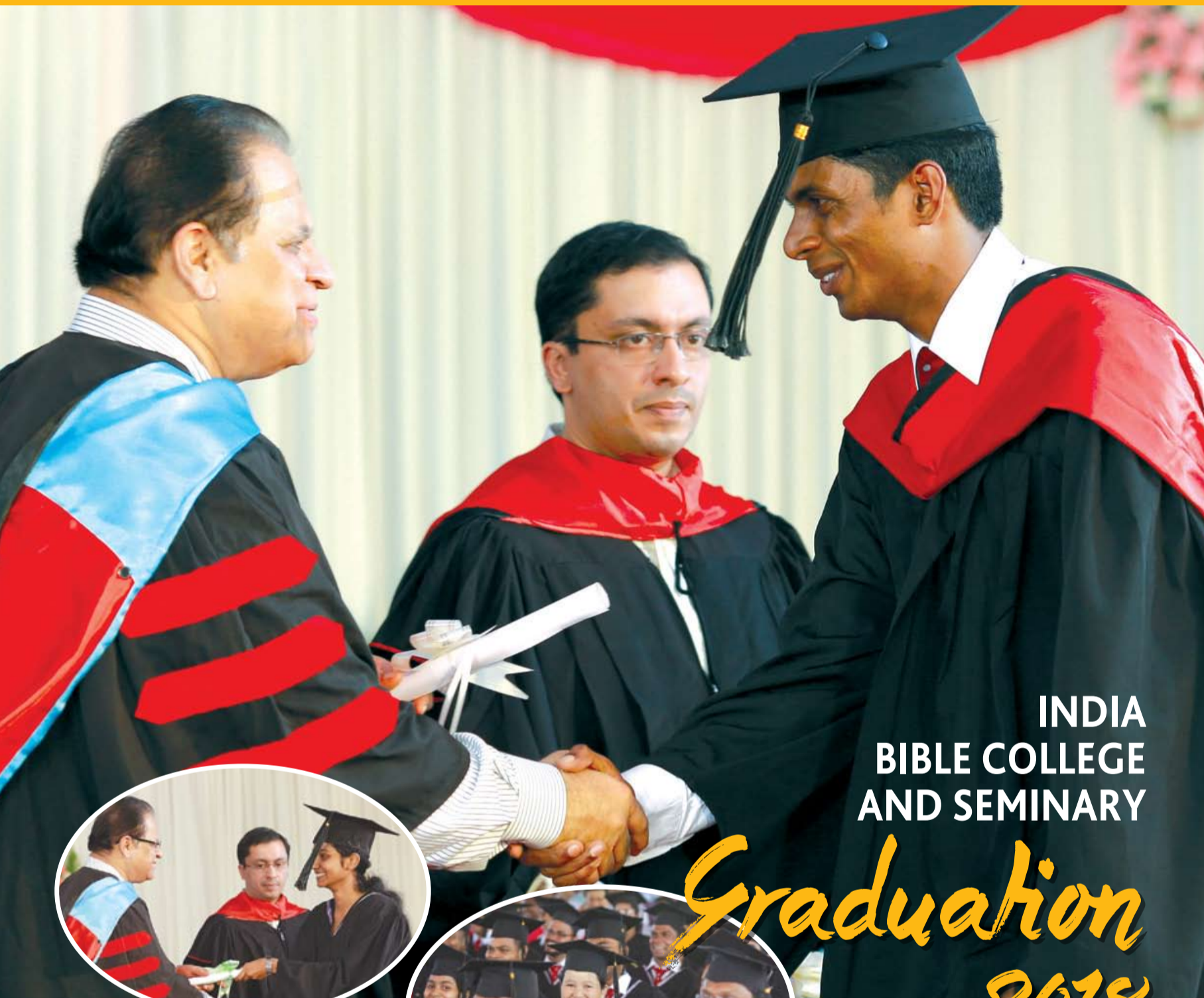


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INDIA
BIBLE COLLEGE
AND SEMINARY

Graduation
2018



THEME : GENEROSITY



IBC and Seminary, Graduation Service 15th March 2018



Presidential Charge : Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham, President of the Seminary. Translation: Pastor Saju Joseph.



Dr. John Alex, Principal welcomes the dignitaries and dear ones.



Pastor Saju Joseph, Director, presents the Report for the Academic Year 2017-'18.



Keynote Address: Pastor Paul Russell spoke on the theme GENEROSITY, "Don't give up. When the going gets rough, remember you are standing on the brink of a miracle. Freely you have received, freely give !" Translation: Pastor Phinni Joseph.



IBC Melody - vocalists and musicians were students, trained and led by our former graduate Pastor Manoj Mathew, in powerful singing. Jeeson, the flute accompanist, drew everyone's attention.



Mathew John - a special invitee, who rendered exceptionally melodious songs.



Staff and audience.





Commissioning Prayer for the Graduates : **Pastor Sunny Kurian**, Senior Pastor of the IPC and Faculty Member.



Awarding Certificates: Vice-Principal, **Pastor P. A. Mathew** awards certificate to **Bro. John Joseph**.

FELICITATIONS



Pastor M. V. Varghese appreciates the 40 years of teaching ministry of Pastor C. I. Cherian and prays for his continued health.



Dr. M. Stephen, Principal, Faith Theological Seminary, Manakala



Pastor C. T. Cherian, President, IPC NAWR.



Pastor Johnson Daniel, Founder President, New Life Biblical Seminary, Cheruvakkal.



Pastor T. A. Joseph, Secretary, IPC Kumbanad District.

GRADUATE SPEAKERS



Silla P. S. M.Div, brought the English graduation message based on II Corinthians 8:9 - "Generosity."



Jejoie S. Varghese spoke representing the Malayalam medium graduates.



Starlin Samuel Raj M.Div. receives the Academic Proficiency Award from **Rev. Dr. GeeVarughese Mathew**, Faculty, IBC and Former Principal, MarThoma Seminary, Kottayam.



Geevarghese Pannicker, B.Th Malayalam receives the Academic Proficiency Award from **Dr. B. Varughese**, former Principal, FTS, Manakala.



Ninan P. Mathews is awarded M.Th in Counseling by **Rev. Dr. Jacob Thomas**.



Prem Kumar receives the college gift from **Dr. Jose L.**



Prasadu Chukka is awarded the Academic Proficiency Prize for the Dip. Th (Eng.) by **Bro. Jacob Thomas**.



Geo Philip and Robin Mammen receive from Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham the Pastor K. E. Abraham Award for BEST STUDENT, 2018 -'19, representing the English and Malayalam medium batches respectively.



Luissy Tethem Chongloi, a former M.Div graduate of IBC, from Manipur, being recognised and appreciated for her commitment in moulding lives of young girls in Balasore, Odisha.



Mrs. Annie Jacob, hands over the Pastor P.T. Chacko Award for Best Student Evangelist, English medium, to Daniel A.



Yashoda Pun receives a special award from Mrs. Aliamma Cherian - Mrs. Mary Abraham Award for Full Attendance for Three Years.



Mrs. Sini Rajesh, ICA - USA, presents to Ratheesh R. the Academic Proficiency Award for B.Th Malayalam batch.



Hepzibah S. accepts the Dr. & Mrs. T. V. Thomas Award for Proficiency in English from Dr. George Thomas.



Bro. John Philip from our Evening Class at Kottayam earns the Academic Proficiency Award for this batch and receives the same from Pastor T. J. Abraham, Faculty at IBC and Associate District Pastor, IPC Kumbanad District.



Dr. Shaibu Abraham and Pastor K. Y. Thomas, Chaplains, lead the graduates, faculty and congregation in Responsive Prayer of Dedication.



Ileyperumaal, a B.Th graduate, used a wheelchair, all the time he was on campus. An exceptional student who was always assisted by Kingsly and Arputharaj. Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham awards the B.Th certificate and appreciates the hard work, attitude and spirit of service of these students.



Pastor John George, President, New Hope Bible College, Nilambur, gives away the Award for Best Student Evangelist from Malayalam Medium to Bro. C. V. Mathew, instituted by Pastor Varghese Mathew.



Major V. I. Luke expresses thanks to all.



Recession - Evening Class graduates.

ETYMOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECT OF GENEROSITY



Christopher Varughese
Faculty, IBC and Seminary

THE ETYMOLOGY OF GENEROSITY

The modern English word “generosity” was derived from the Latin word *generōsus*, which means “of noble birth,” which itself was passed down to English through the Old French word *genereux*. The Latin stem *gener* – is the declensional stem of *genus*, meaning “kin,” “clan,” “race,” or “stock,” with the root Indo-European meaning of *gen* being “to beget.” It is from these roots that we have the words: *genesis*, *gentry*, *gender*, *genital*, *gentile*, *genealogy*, and *genius*, among others.

Up to the 16th Century, to be generous reflected an aristocratic sense. It meant “to belong to nobility.” During the 17th Century the meaning and use of the word began to change. Generosity began to be associated with a nobility of spirit than that of a family heritage. Nevertheless, this quality was believed to be possessed by those of high birth and that it also varied from person to person. In this way generosity increasingly came in the 17th Century to signify a variety of traits of character and action such as: gallantry, courage, strength, richness, gentleness, and fairness. In addition to describing these diverse human qualities, “generous” became a word during this period used to describe fertile land, the strength of animal breeds, abundant provisions of food, vibrancy of colours, the strength of liquor, and the potency of medicine.

Then, during the 18th Century, the meaning of “generosity” continued to evolve in directions denoting the more specific, contemporary meaning of munificence, open-handedness, and liberality in the giving of money and possessions to others. This more specific meaning came to dominate English usage by the 19th Century. Thus, over the last five centuries in the English speaking world, “generosity” developed from being primarily the description of an ascribed status pertaining to the elite nobility to being an achieved mark of admirable personal quality and action capable of being exercised in theory by any person who had learned virtue and noble character.



MODERN USAGE OF THE WORD

Despite significant evolutions in its meaning over the past centuries, it cannot be said that the historical tag over the word has been entirely erased. Generosity, even today, is not considered as a normal trait of the ordinary, or of all people. Rather, it is believed to be a virtue practiced by those of higher quality or greater goodness. While truth, respect, and other similar qualities are considered as ideals achievable by the common man, generosity in its positive side, is still seen as something attainable by someone who belongs to a higher standard. This automatically points to a negative side whereby the majority find it an excuse from wanting to practice generosity on the pretext of falling within the perceived status of being common or ordinary and not the elite.

UNDERSTANDING GENEROSITY TODAY

After having evolved through various stages of development, generosity is today understood as 'readiness or liberality in giving' or as 'freedom from meanness or smallness of mind or character' or the 'virtue of giving good things to others freely and abundantly'. Thus, it reflects a character trait that involves both attitude and action. Generosity is therefore a basic, personal, moral orientation to life that on one side entails the moral good and on the other rejects many moral vices such as selfishness, greed, fear, meanness. It also involves giving to others those things that enhances the true wellbeing of the recipient. It must be noted that the tendency to perceive generosity in mere financial terms limits the scope that it encompasses. Generosity extends its boundaries to relate to possessions, time, attention, aid, encouragement, emotional availability, and more.

Several forms of generosity can be seen today. The failure of someone to guard their purse can lead to unintentional generosity. Sometimes, generosity is reluctant, particularly when one feels pressured to give. Generosity can also be manipulative, especially in situations where a gift is given for some ulterior motive. And it is not uncommon for generosity to be self-serving when one gives to gain some attention or advantage. Nevertheless, in stark contrast, there is another form of generosity that is intentional, not the least bit reluctant, not manipulative and definitely not self-serving.

THE CULTURE OF GENEROSITY: A HISTORICAL SEARCH

In the Western tradition, the culture of generosity has long been continuing within a broader context. It can be understood in connection with hospitality, liberality, love, and charity. A careful search can lead us to the discovery that the nature of generosity has most

often involved fundamental religious questions concerning the nature of humanity, God, and the human-divine relationship.

The special place of the virtue of hospitality throughout the Middle East has often been noted. The Arab/Islamic tradition in particular emphasizes that the faithful have a duty to God to show generous hospitality towards the stranger, offering them shelter and the best food and drink available. This virtue has deep historical roots, as is witnessed by the Hebrew Bible. It is exemplified in Abraham's eagerness to host the three strangers who approach his tent in the wilderness, strangers whom the text identifies as Yahweh appearing to Abraham. In showing hospitality to strangers, Abraham has thus honoured God and has been enabled to hear God's covenantal promise of a son in his old age. Aliens, together with widows, orphans, and the poor, are lifted up for special moral attention, and the Israelites are repeatedly reminded that "you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Thus, care for those marginal to the community and those in danger of being excluded from basic resources, is mandated both as a response to the needs of those persons and as a response to God's salvific care for the people of Israel.

For Christians, to be generous is to be conformed not just to Christ but also to the loving divine Father, whose sacrificial self-gift of His Son into the world makes possible human fellowship in the divine life (John 3:16). Apostle Paul regarded generosity as a proof of the genuine character of Christian love. This is especially clear when he talks of the gifts given by other Christians to the Jerusalem Church. For Paul, this love is exemplified by Christ who, "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor" (2 Cor 8.9). Biblical generosity also involves giving beyond one's means.

Generosity was also a virtue in the classical pagan context. It is the third of the virtues of character discussed by Aristotle, following on the heels of courage and temperance. The generous person, for Aristotle, is one who gives of his or her wealth in a way that achieves a mean between wastefulness and covetousness. The generous person does not give indiscriminately, but seeks to give in a way that is good and fine. This, in turn, requires giving to the right people, in the right amounts, at the right time, with pleasure, and without looking out for oneself. Aristotle suggests that giving to those who lack good character, or to those who respond with flattery, is not true generosity. Generosity is proportionate to one's resources, so it is not contingent on possession of great wealth. However, it is closely allied to the virtue of magnificence, which for Aristotle does involve large-scale giving for worthy ends, in particular those that benefit the community as a whole. Following in a parallel line of thought, Thomas Aquinas, enhanced the Aristotelian view by calling forth for a freedom from attachment to external goods. He opined that this disassociation helps make possible the good use of money and possessions.

The heart of Aquinas' account of giving is found in his discussion of the outward acts of charity, notably beneficence and the giving of alms to the poor. Most fundamentally, these acts are significant because they are a way of being conformed to God, whose nature is self-communicative goodness. Human beings are called to respond in gratitude to God's love by loving God and one another. Aquinas insists that these acts of charity should in principle extend to all, in the sense that we should be ready to do good to everyone, including strangers and enemies.

Today, we associate the word "charity" primarily with charitable giving to the poor. Care for the poor, together with widow and orphan and prisoner, have always been central activities of Christian churches. Generosity was not simply a virtue of individuals but a corporate responsibility, institutionalized in myriad ways.

An influential strand of contemporary continental philosophy has argued that the dominant received conceptions of generosity are insufficiently unconditional and betray expectations of reciprocity. Emmanuel Levinas insists that true generosity does not differentiate between more or less deserving recipients, nor does it give in the expectation of return. Rather, it is an unconditional openness to the Other, an opening of oneself to otherness in a way that is willing to have one's own identity called into question. Jacques Derrida has developed this line of reflection into an assertion of the impossibility of gift. As soon as something is recognized as a gift, the receiver becomes indebted and obliged to offer a return; free gift thus collapses into economic exchange. A gift can only exist so long as it remains unrecognized by both giver and receiver. The intense interest that has been aroused recently is an indication of the fact that generosity is endangered in today's world, a world dominated by contract or economic exchange, which is indeed strictly conditional.

Continued on page 10



March Past - Students



Opening prayer - Dr. James George

A CHRISTIAN DEFINITION OF GENEROSITY



Dr. John Alex
Principal, IBC and Seminary

INTRODUCTION

“Give until it hurts” are the famous words of Mother Teresa from her address to the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C on 3 February 1994. She repeats the same statement eight times in the sermon but at the last time she says “give until it hurts – with a smile.” Generosity is an inward attitude which reflects in our outward life style. The Christian approach of generosity calls for a lifestyle of the self denial and the well being of others. The article tries to elucidate the meaning of generosity from a Christian point of view.

MEANING OF GENEROSITY

Etymologically the term generosity means a 'noble birth'. Generally, generosity is understood as the virtue of being detached from all worldly possession and having the quality of sharing what they possess. It is also to be noted that the word “miser” is etymologically related to the word miserable. Generosity brings well-being and possession brings misfortunes.

Almost all world religion has the concept of almsgiving. The generosity is quite often considered as the measuring rod for evaluating the spiritual maturity. Almsgiving is one of the five pillars of Islam. Gautama Buddha said “generosity brings happiness at every stage of its expression. We experience joy in forming the intention to be generous. We experience joy in the actual act of giving something. And we experience joy in remembering the fact that we have given.”

Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics is a philosophical inquiry into the nature of the good life. He explains five important virtues for human happiness. They are bravery, temperance, generosity, munificence and magnanimity. According to him, generosity is a mean between wastefulness and stinginess. A generous person will take care of his possessions. It is not the quantity that determines generosity but it is the habit of giving that determines generosity. Descartes in his book *Passions of the Soul*, (Part III) explains generosity as the key of all the virtues and a supreme remedy for all the disorders of passions.



M.Th. & M.Div. graduates



B.Th. Ladies

Sociological studies relate generosity with the well-being. In a recent book, *The Paradox of Generosity: Giving we Receive, Grasping we Lose* by sociologists Christian Smith and Hilary Davidson, highlights the importance of generosity in enhancing the well being of the individual. After studying the American society on a data based analyses, they write: "The more generous Americans are, the more happiness, health and purpose in life they enjoy." The book brings the conclusion that the reluctance to give not only deprives those in need, but also diminishes the happiness of those who could, but don't help them. Generosity is the key for happiness.

OLD TESTAMENT (OT) AND GENEROSITY:

The essential matrix of thought of the Old Testament understanding of generosity is the retributive justice. Generally, in the Old Testament material possession (Land, wealth, descendants) is considered as a reward of God. The promise to Abraham was "I will bless you and you will be a blessing." (Gen. 12:1-3). Torah makes clear that this privilege of blessing carries the responsibility to be generous. God commanded the people of Israel: "Open your hand to the poor and the needy neighbor in your land." (Deut. 15:11).

Equilibrium between have and have-not is the thread that brings justice in the wisdom literature. "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD (Prov. 19:17)." It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice" (Psalm 112:5). The above passages highlight on the belief that there is a special relationship between poor and God such that the former serves as proxies for the latter. Almsgiving is thus considered as the deposit into this treasury and God can be trusted to repay in the form of future benefits. In other words generosity brings greater blessings which include longer life. In short, the fundamental principle of Old Testament is: "we give since God gives us"

NEW TESTAMENT (NT) AND GENEROSITY:

Though almsgiving was part of Judaism of Jesus' time, he was critical of the hypocritical attitude of the practice of almsgiving. Tithing was considered as the act of generosity of Jesus time. The approach of Jesus towards generosity was more than money (cf. Matt. 5: 38-42).

The interior motives were considered to be more important for Jesus. Jesus challenged the approach to generosity as an act for the recognition or to show the status quo. New Testament has not taught how much to give but why and how we give. "God loves the cheerful giver (II Cor. 9:7)."

Jesus the model of generosity: Jesus has set the model of generosity by self-emptying. The very act of incarnation shows generosity as the character of God. Jesus took the very nature of the servant (Phil 2:7). "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45; cf. John 13:12-15)." The generous act of Jesus is well narrated by Paul. "Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).

Affirming the Lordship of Jesus as the basis of Christian generosity: The Christian generosity is not an act of one's own righteousness. The underlying principle is that God is the owner and we are the stewards of our entire possessions. Everything we possess belongs to God. While explaining the generous act of the Macedonian church Paul says that "they give themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God to us. (2 Cor. 8:4)." In other words Paul says that the act of generosity should originate from giving ourselves to God.

Acting on the need of others is the outward expression of Christian generosity: Bible makes it clear that God has a special concern for the poor and needy. The transformation which the gospel affirms is not just merely deliver our "the soul from sin" but **open our hands towards the needy**. Gospel of Luke narrates the difference between "the rich ruler (18: 18-25)" not ready to open the hands and the conversion of Zacchaeus, who was ready to open his hands at his conversion.

The heart of true religion according to New Testament is caring for the poor and needy. The generous giving is the visible expression of our love for God (Luke 10:27, 36,37). The epistle of James also explains: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27). Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." (Romans 12:13). Jesus taught his disciples: "When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matt. 6:3-4). Generosity implies that it is an expression of our love and not with an intention of any kind of repayment.

Christian generosity comes not merely out of the abundance but a thoughtful and sacrificial act (2 Cor. 8:2; 9: 5-7). Jesus had all praises for the widows' two copper coins since "she out of her poverty has put all she had to live on." (Luke 21:4). It is also noted that the act of generosity is not a one time or an irregular act but a continuous regular and systematic act (2 Cor. 16:2).

CONCLUSION

Any definitions of generosity include the well being of others. Caring for the widows, orphans and poor is the common element of Old Testament and New Testament understanding of generosity. Christian act of generosity is more than money. It is of more a thoughtful sacrificial act of cheerful giving. Jesus showed himself as the model of generosity. He wants the community which affirm his Lordship also "to go and the likewise" (Luke 10:37). ●

THE
Christian generosity is not an act of one's own righteousness. The underlying principle is that God is the owner and we are the stewards of our entire possessions. Everything we possess belongs to God

Theme Verse : 2 Corinthians 8:9 was recited in 24 languages that are represented at IBC this year

"For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he become poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." II Corinthians 8:9



Malayalam - Samuel K. S.



Hindi - Anjali John



Kannada - M. Chinna Naganna



Marathi - Rebecca Paul

GENEROSITY — A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE



Rev Dr. Mathew Varkey

Director, Emeritus: CSI Synod Chennai
Secretary, Emeritus: Bible Society of India
Faculty, IBC and Seminary.

Words like ‘generous’ and ‘generosity’ are so familiar which refer to the virtue of giving good things to others freely and abundantly. Generosity is regarded as a virtue by various world religions and is often celebrated in cultural and religious ceremonies. It involves both attitude and action.

The present study deals with an overall view of the concept of generosity in the Bible. The main thrust here is to look into the concept which is pervaded all throughout the Bible.

GENEROSITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

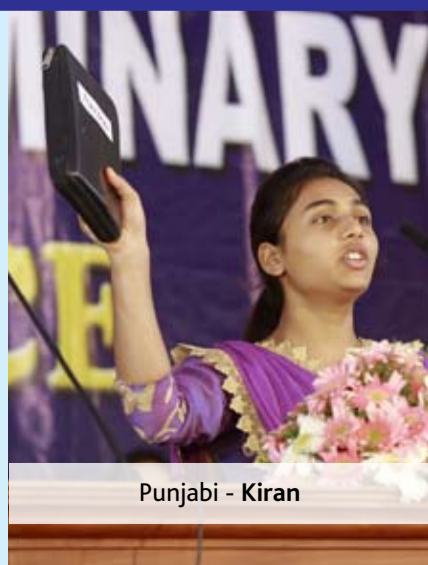
While the Old Testament speaks rarely of the concept of Divine generosity, the New Testament is very lavish in using the same concept. The main exponent of the Divine generosity in Saint Paul who wrote most of the books.

Generosity in the Christian sense is God's unmerited, free, spontaneous love for sinful man, revealed in Jesus and efficacious through the vicarious death and resurrection of Him. Hence, generosity is very significant and lies in the heart of Christian faith. Generosity is a divine activity in human history and in human lives. What is the nature of generosity in Christian Tradition? For the answer we have to glance at the Old Testament first. The Old Testament speaks of God as generous toward helpless humanity and often at the same time declares that he is merciful, full of compassion slow to anger, plenteous in mercy and will abundantly pardon. The gracious love of God to man was the real foundation of the Old Testament religion. The Old Testament teaches that every creation live by the generosity of God. Generosity of God is typified mainly through the election of a special people, covenant relationship with them, the great deliverance from Egyptian slavery and restoration from Babylonian captivity. Prophet Hosea describes the love and generosity of God using the analogy of husband - wife relationship; while the loving husband restores his estranged wife out of his sheer mercy. When the prophets indict the people, they refer to God's loving guidance and protection in the past ‘You were strangers in the land of Egypt’ is an eye opener to the people of God. God in his generosity forgives sinners who have no claim against him.

Theme Verse : 2 Corinthians 8:9 was recited in 24 languages that are represented at IBC this year



Gujarati - Jaisy James



Punjabi - Kiran



Chattisghari - Bikku Ram Rawat



Sumi Naga - Rachel Katty

The idea of generosity more than any other idea binds the two testaments together into a complete whole. For the Bible is the story of the saving act of God which is of the generosity of God. The Old Testament use of the word 'generosity' is intertwined with the New Testament idea that 'Charis' is Jesus Christ.

GENEROSITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament 'generosity' has a special meaning i.e. God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ and the self-giving of himself to the whole cosmos. By the generosity of God the N.T means God's unmerited love which takes the initiative in freely giving and forgiving, in receiving sinners and seeking the lost, in restoring the fallen and the unworthy and in giving comfort and strength to the afflicted and oppressed. God has taken initiative in intervening the human history without considering the merits or demerits of human beings, thus became the objective ground and content of generosity in every instance of its Biblical use.

GENEROSITY IN THE NON PAULINE WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospel or good news as a whole is the expression of divine generosity through the divine intervention of God in Jesus Christ. The explicit use of this concept is found in the fourth gospel, where the Christ event is identified as act of generosity as in Pauline epistles. The being and action of God was revealed and actualized in incarnation where Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which the grace reaches men. The quintessence of God's glory is revealed as generosity in the Johanne writings. The generosity of God in Jesus Christ is revealed in his teachings, preachings, and actions. Seeking the least, last and lost, healing of the sick and

dying, bringing life to dead ones are examples of God's generous acts. The parables of Jesus for example, Lost sheep, Prodigal son, and workers in the vineyard etc are the revelation of God's generosity.

The name Emmanuel (God with us) connotes the free and spontaneous love of God bestowed upon human beings out of his redemptive purpose. The redemptive purpose of God that is embodied in Jesus Christ whose life, death and resurrection is identified as pure generosity of God. Our faithful action and service rendered are considered as mere duty and reward is bestowed upon us out of God's bounty. In short, the gospels explain that the incarnated messiah Jesus - is the embodiment of divine generosity.

As the name - Acts of the Apostles - indicates, this book deals with the mighty works of the disciples of Jesus, and the spreading of the message of God's generous acts. The inclusion of men of all castes and creed within the 'Shekinah' (Radiance) of God's redeeming act found expression in the book of Acts. The success of the apostolic mission was based on the free flowing generosity of God. The miracles and wonder works explained in this book are pictured as God's steadfast love only.

The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Christ tasting death for every one by the generosity of God. Hence generosity is descriptive of God's loving concern and readiness to aid all who turn to him in need. Generosity, the pivot of Biblical message intends to represent the fact of Christ - is the crux of all the New Testament Books.

GENEROSITY IN PAULINE WRITINGS

A study of the Pauline writings throws more light to the understanding of this concept. St. Paul, the author of major portion of the Bible can be rightly called the efficient exponent of Divine Generosity in the Bible. Generosity is explained in connection with the Salvation History. Paul says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake, he became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). God gave his only son, because he loves us so much and the son died on the cross for us. It sets a model that generosity in God's people should be sacrificial. The 'modus operandi' of redemptive activity of God was vested in generosity, actualized by Jesus Christ. Since Jesus Christ is pre-existent, naturally his generosity also is eternal. Therefore Paul argues that God is the God of generosity, yesterday, today and forever. The calling and commissioning of Paul as an apostle is by the will of God. The very existence of Paul is strongly founded the cornerstone of God's bounty. On the cross a divine exchange took place. All the evil due to us came upon Jesus and all the good due to Him came upon us. The all sufficient basis for all our provision is God's generosity shown to us on the cross. We thank God for his indescribable gift - Jesus Christ and his sacrificial death on the cross. In the epistles of Paul, generosity is applied exclusively to God's undeserved kindness toward mankind in general through the descent of Jesus both in his birth, death and resurrected life.

The essence of Pauline theology is to narrate vividly what the Lord has done for us, and encourage us to reciprocate. Are we generous enough to meet the challenge before us? May the good Lord bless us. Amen ●

ETYMOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECT OF GENEROSITY Continued from page 6

This is where one of the most important principles for balanced Christian living, 'the Law of Hilarious Generosity' comes to play says Dave Sutherland and Kirk Nowery. The word translated as "cheerful" in most English Bibles literally means "hilarious." It carries the idea of one who is uproariously delighted to give. Not grudgingly, but freely and openly and happily. It's the absolute opposite of one who gives to God because he feels he can't refuse to give, or because someone else

is giving and it would reflect poorly on him if he didn't give. Living by the Law of Hilarious Generosity, one does not give under the whiplash of necessity, complaining inwardly or being bitter in any way. Rather, one is thankful to even be able to give.

Think of all the reasons to give with hilarious generosity. God, with a heart full of perfect love and compassion, gave His only Son to purchase our salvation. He gave the Holy Spirit as our eternal comforter, guide and teacher. He gave us the promise of life abundant here and life forever with Him in heaven. He gave free access into His presence, allowing us to come with our petitions, and promising to hear and answer when we pray. He gave all this and so much more! How can we not reflect this generosity? ●

Theme Verse : 2 Corinthians 8:9 was recited in 24 languages that are represented at IBC this year



Santali - Raghunath Soren



Urdu - Neetesh Verma



Manipuri - Shaiphu R. K.



Dzongkha - Reymon Gurung