

All In – 3 (A Culture of Generosity)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed,
do it **ALL IN** the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
~ Colossians 3:17

We live in a culture that is saturated with **stuff!** The average American home has more than 300,000 items in it.

Folks compare their stuff with the stuff of their neighbors,
People dedicate their entire lives to acquire more of it,
Nations go to war over it,
Families are broken apart because of it,
Success and identity are defined by it,
People spend their entire lives worrying about it.

As followers of Jesus Christ, I thought it would be great for us to spend a little time to talk about the **theology of stuff**. How we understand this defines our lives and the lives of those we influence.

With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—
all of these in large quantities.
~ 1 Chronicles 29:2

David is captivated by this dream of building a place where people can go and meet with God. And then he issues a challenge:

“Now, who is willing to consecrate themselves to the Lord today?”
~ 1 Chronicles 29:5

Someone steps forward and says, I am All In. Then someone else steps in, I am All In.

Then the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of the king’s work gave willingly.
~ 1 Chronicles 29:6

There is an explosion of generosity among the leaders of this community. They are leading the way. **And the people rejoice!**

Here’s the key point –they understood the difference between an **owner** and being an **overseer**.

Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from **your hand**.
~ 1 Chronicles 29:14

We are like little kids giving gifts to our parents. God, you are the owner, I am just the asset manager of all the stuff *I think I own*.

Now **finish the work**, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, **according to your means**.
~ 2 Corinthians 8:11

The Bible teaches that giving comes from a heart filled with God’s grace and joy. It is not a rule, it is a way of living. And so Pastor Paul in this chapter is very careful. He uses words like willingness, voluntarily, eagerness, according to your means; he is being very careful, and we want to be very careful and we want to keep saying this – **your giving and my giving is under grace, not law**.

It is coming out of an overflowing joy, not from a crushing law.

And so Paul says, finish the great work you are doing. Excel in the **grace of giving**. Take that next step.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.
~ 2 Corinthians 8:9

The greatest thing that Pastor Paul writes about the Macedonian churches is not really about their culture of generosity. In my opinion, the greatest thing Paul says about them is found in verse 5.

...They gave themselves first of all to the Lord...
~ 2 Corinthians 8:5

The greatest thing for all of us in this journey, the greatest thing for me and my family, for us as a church would be – Damascus Road Community Church **gave themselves first of all to the Lord**.