

In thinking about gratitude and gratefulness—there is often a significant link to generosity
Gratitude begets generosity—feeling grateful naturally spills over into generous actions

It has been said that gratitude is the parent of all other virtues (Cicero)

Gratitude is like breathing in – letting ourselves be touched by the goodness in others and in our world. Generosity is like breathing out – sensing our mutual belonging and offering our care.
(Tara Brach)

As we leave this Thanksgiving season and move into Christmas...
Let's hold on to gratefulness and generosity as gifts for our spirits to move into new ways of being
Not just for the season of Christmas—but year-round
And not just towards our loved ones—but for those outside our natural circles of giving

Generosity creates a connection between us—moving us towards a sense of interdependence
That we are in this world together—sharing resources and working for the good of all

True generosity doesn't assume a reciprocal pay back—it simply gives without expectation
In that, generosity is free to go forth and bless others

Banquet—Luke 14:16-24—Jesus tells a story where a man threw a great dinner party and invited many
But everyone had an excuse and couldn't come
The master said go and bring the poor, crippled, blind and lame
It is an invitation from God to stop being so busy all the time—come and join the banquet
The generosity spilled out into the marginalized—everyone was welcome
They were told to bring everyone—the good and the bad
God's banquet is for everyone and is not dependent upon status or your goodness
It's this wild "you all come" invitation to enter into the lavish love and generosity of God

There is incredible generosity in God's love and care for us
But this isn't just how God is generous towards us...
It is an invitation for us to live grateful and generous lives towards others
Generosity doesn't exist in a vacuum—it flows out from us to touch people around us

I will read 4 different scriptures taken from the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew and Luke
All are from the Message Bible

Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously. Luke 6:30

You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you. Matthew 5:48

Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity. Luke 6:38