

Are You a Giver or a Taker?

Rich Nathan

January 24-25, 2015

The Generous Life Series

Mark 10.35-45

During a 1982 World Tour Van Halen

Photo of Van Halen

...made the now legendary stipulation in their contract that all brown M&Ms be removed from candy dishes in their dressing rooms. Ever since then fans and critics have made a hobby of finding ridiculous demands in celebrity contracts. They're often called "riders" concerning what venues have to provide them during their appearances. For example, Kanye West,

Photo of Kanye West

...has as part of his appearance agreement that the person who drives him around wears only 100% cotton clothing. Kanye is deeply disturbed by someone near him wearing manmade fibers like polyester.

Speaking of requirements for their chauffer, Katy Perry,

Photo of Katy Perry

...who will be doing the Super Bowl Halftime show next week, includes in her riders a 23-point set of principles for her driver. If you are going to chauffer Katy Perry around, you are not permitted to speak to her, or to look in the rear-view mirror at her when you drive her.

Mary J. Blige,

Photo of Mary J. Blige

...did a 35-city tour back in 2006 and she demanded that everywhere she went, they install a new toilet seat. 35 cities, 35 toilet seats.

Adele,

Photo of Adele

...just asks for beer, sandwiches and Marlboro Lights.

My favorite rider is from the group Coldplay.

Photo of Coldplay

They don't have any absurd requests. One of the only things they ask for is postcards so that they can write cards to their kids every day when they are on the road.

Let me introduce someone to you, who is not a household name outside of the field of organizational psychology. Organizational psychology is the study of workplace dynamics. This person's name is Adam Grant.

Photo of Adam Grant

Adam Grant is 32 years old and he is the youngest tenured and highest-rated professor at the Wharton School of Business. In the last 8 years he has published more papers in his field's top-tiered journals than colleagues who have won lifetime achievement awards. He advises massive companies like Google, the NFL, FaceBook, and the U.S. Army concerning how to get the most out of their employees and how to help their employees get the most out of their jobs. A year ago Adam Grant wrote the New York Times best-selling book,

Cover photo of Give and Take

We have copies available at our Cooper Road Bookstore. But in Give and Take, Dr. Grant divides the world into two categories – givers and takers. He cites a survey of thousands of adults from a dozen different countries across the globe who were asked the importance of different values. Here are a few examples.

List #1 - Rolling Bullet Points

- Wealth (money, material possessions)
- Power (dominance, control over others)
- Pleasure (enjoying life)
- Winning (doing better than others)

List #2 – Rolling Bullet Points

- Helpfulness (working for the well-being of others)
- Responsibility (being dependable)
- Social Justice (caring for the disadvantaged)
- Compassion (responding to the needs of others)

Takers favor the values in List #1 – wealth, power, pleasure and winning. Givers prioritize the values in List #2 – helpfulness, responsibility, social justice and compassion.

Now, the study wanted to know where most people would endorse giver values. Let me give you the list of countries.

List #1 – Rolling Bullet Points

- Australia
- Chile
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Israel
- Malaysia
- The Netherlands
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sweden
- The United States

Which countries would endorse giver values and which countries would endorse taker values? In every single country surveyed, the majority of adults said that they rated giver values above taker values. This is the way they thought they wanted to live their lives and they thought other people should live their lives. Above power, above achievement, about excitement; everywhere in the world people say that it is better to give than it is to take.

We're going to find today that Jesus endorses our deepest intuitions of the way the majority of people around the world and here in the United States believe we ought to live life. As we continue in our series on Generosity, I've called today's talk, "Are you a Giver or a Taker?"

20 centuries ago Jesus said that his followers would be distinguished by valuing giving over taking.

Mark 10:35–45 (NIV)

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

38 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

39 “We can,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, 40 but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

42 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 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.”

What does a taker look like?

Let’s look again at Mark 10:35-37

Mark 10:35–37 (NIV)

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

37 They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”

I know that some of you who are listening to me have not yet become Christian. One of the things that is holding you up is you wonder about whether you can trust the accuracy of these stories about Jesus in the Bible. The question that is in your mind, the question that is in lots of people’s minds is can we trust the Bible? What makes these accounts of Jesus that we find in the Bible trustworthy?

You know, one of the reasons why I find the accounts that we read in the Bible so credible is because the faults and flaws of the leaders of the church are not air-brushed away. The reality is, friends, that everywhere else we look outside of the Bible, people have a tendency to air-brush away the faults and flaws of their leaders and to write myths about their supposed greatness. So way back in the 19th century, a man named Parson Weems wrote a biography of George Washington making up stories regarding Washington’s great honesty. You know the story of Washington chopping down the cherry tree and when he is confronted by his father, he says, “I cannot tell a lie.” We always want our heroes to be without flaws – Eisenhower, Franklin Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. without their affairs. Lincoln without his depression. Thomas Jefferson without his racism.

But the Bible doesn't read like American mythology about our leaders. The Bible portrays leaders warts and all. And I find these accounts to be absolutely credible and trustworthy because the early church would have had no interest in developing a mythology that emphasizes their leaders' faults. Here they are trying to spread a message throughout the Roman Empire, they are trying to say, "We can trust these leaders and their eyewitness accounts of the resurrection of Jesus." Why add to the difficulty of spreading the gospel message by falsely writing that these eyewitnesses were flawed and confused and ambitious unless the stories were true?

Friends, the accounts we read in the New Testament are eye-witness accounts. They have the ring of truth that have the ring of authenticity.

Let's read again the request of James and John,

Mark 10:35–36 (NIV)

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

I love this prayer:

"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

Lord, I'm approaching you with great humility and I want you to do for me exactly what I'm telling you to do. Isn't that the way we often sound when we pray? Lord, I come to you as your humble servant, do what I'm telling you to do.

It is amazing that Jesus didn't laugh, or brush them off. He said, "Ok, what do you want?"

Mark 10:37–38 (NIV)

37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

38 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

When they asked to sit on his right hand or his left, they were thinking about Jesus reigning as a king over Israel and they want prominent places in his cabinet. Make us the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary.

The great irony of their requests concerns Jesus' moment of greatest glory. Where does Jesus reveal in the clearest way what God in heaven is like in all of God's love and in all of God's justice? Where did Jesus enter God's glory the most? It was at the cross. It was on the cross as Jesus died as our substitute. That was Jesus' moment of greatest

glory. James and John don't know what they're asking. To be at Jesus' left hand and right hand when he entered his glory, those places were reserved for two criminals who hung on crosses next to Jesus. James and John weren't asking for that because they were thinking like takers.

Takers are people who focus upon titles and roles

All of us at one time or another have been disappointed because we wanted to be chosen for a certain role, we wanted a certain position, or certain title, and we didn't get it. We wanted a certain job or a certain promotion. If you hang around a church long enough, you may desire to have a certain role in the church, or to gain a certain title, but there comes a point where we will all be denied certain roles or titles. You may want to be a pastor or a church planter, to play here on the stage as part of our worship team, to be hired for a certain position, but that role may be denied you.

Let me take as an illustration becoming a children's ministry pastor. Let's say you really want to be a children's ministry pastor and someone else is hired for that role. How you respond to not getting that role tests your heart regarding whether you are a giver or a taker. Givers will say, "Well, I didn't get that role, but goodness gracious, there are thousands of avenues open for me to care for and serve children. And if it is God who is burdening my heart, if I'm being motivated by divine compulsion, then I really don't care about my title. What I care about is serving kids. So I'm going to pray and ask the Lord to open up doors for me to teach children, to care for children, and to bless children, and evangelize children." "I will make myself available to teach in children's ministry. I will volunteer for our after school program called the Zone." You will be amazed at how many opportunities you have to serve the needs of children.

Listen to me now. If your ambition can be blocked by any other human being, if another human being can close the door on your ambition, if a "no" from a person can stop your activity, then you are still thinking like a taker. No human being can prevent you from giving. Because no human being controls God's agenda. So what if you don't get to be on our worship team? Lead worship in a small group. Help lead worship in children's ministry. Get some folks together and worship God in your home. Are you saying you can't worship God and lead some other people to worship God unless you have a title and a role?

Takers are people who focus upon self-promotion

There is an old New Yorker cartoon that some of you may have seen:

New Yorker Cartoon: A very talkative woman says to her friend: "Well, enough about me. What about you? What do you think about me?"

Taker ask in every encounter, “What’s in it for me? What about me? How will this benefit me?”

Let me tell you a story. A few decades ago a man who started his life in poverty went on to live the American Dream. He grew up in Missouri farm towns without indoor plumbing. To support his family, this young man worked long hours on farms. He put himself through college at the University of Missouri and earned Phi Beta Kappa. He completed his Master’s Degree, and then a doctorate in Economics. He has several important roles in government and earned the Navy Accommodation Medal and the National Defense Service Medal. And then he built his own company where he was the Chairman and CEO for 15 years. By the time he stepped down, this man’s company was worth \$110 billion and had more than 20,000 employees in 40 countries around the world. For five consecutive years Fortune Magazine said his company was America’s most-innovative company, one of the best 25 places in America to work. When asked about his secret for success, he said:

It’s all about the Golden Rule. Absolute integrity in everything I do.

And then this man was indicted. His name was Kenneth Lay.

Picture of Kenneth Lay

He is best remembered as the disgraced CEO of the Enron Corporation. He was convicted. Enron was an energy company headquartered in Houston. They were found guilty of fraud on a massive basis, wildly overstating their earnings. And when they went bankrupt, 20,000 people lost their jobs.

People have debated how much Ken Lay knew about the illegal activities and fraud of Enron. But as the book Give and Take so plainly points out, Ken Lay lived his life as a taker. He looked like a giver to many outsiders, but he was a complete faker. He felt entitled to use Enron’s resources as his personal piggy bank. He took exorbitant loans from the company. And his staff put his sandwiches every day on silver platters and fine china. One time an Enron employee wanted to reserve an Enron plane for executives to do business, only to find that Ken Lay and his family were actually using three Enron jets for personal travel. But all the time he masqueraded as this great giver.

It is interesting that Jesus at his Last Supper said this in Luke 22:25:

Luke 22:25 (NIV)

25 Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.

There are lots of folks who look like givers. They love the title “benefactor.” But they are just fakers. They’re actually takers.

The signs of Ken Lay being a taker were everywhere. Two professors studied the annual reports of companies and whether they were led by givers or takers because in large measure you can determine the future of a company by whether the leader of the company is a giver or a taker. And so they studied hundreds of companies' annual reports. How did they find whether someone was a giver or a taker? They didn't look at any of the financial data. What they did was they simply looked at the size of the CEO's photo in the annual report. Givers had tiny little photos that took only a small portion of the page with a letter from the CEO. Takers? The photo of the former CEO of Enron, Ken Lay, who looted the company of millions of dollars just before it went bankrupt, and 20,000 people lost their jobs, occupied an entire page – actually two pages.

You can see this with pastors. Some pastors have huge photos of themselves all over the church. You know that person believes that the solar system revolves around them. You can tell a taker whenever they talk about their company, their family, their church or ministry. Just count up the number of first person singular words in their statements. It is always I, me, I – not we, our, or these other wonderful people. It's me. Takers are people who focus on self-promotion.

What is a giver?

Givers are people who are willing to be servants

Mark 10:42–45 (NIV)

42 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 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.”

You know, it is interesting that the followers of Jesus in the early church really embraced this identity of being a servant. So, for example, the apostle Paul frequently refers to himself as the slave, or servant of Christ. Romans 1.1

Romans 1:1 (NIV)

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—

1 Corinthians 3:5 (NIV)

5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

Galatians 1:10 (NIV)

10 Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Philippians 1:1 (NIV)

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

We see the same self-identity in James in James 1.1

James 1:1 (NIV)

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

We see the same thing in Peter, 2 Peter 1.1,

2 Peter 1:1 (NIV)

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

And with Epaphras in Colossians 4.12,

Colossians 4:12 (NIV)

12 Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

Followers of Jesus in the New Testament saw themselves as servants of the Lord.

And Jesus himself, who is Lord of the universe, shows the way that God exercises authority in the world. Not by indulging his every whim or acting as if the rules don't apply, or dominating and shaming people under him. Instead, Phil. 2.6-7 read this way:

Philippians 2:6–7 (NIV)

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (NIV)

What does it mean to see yourself as a servant – first of God, and then of people? Concerning God, gives understand that God has certain assignments for us to accomplish in this life.

We read in Eph. 2:10 these words:

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We followers of Christ are God's masterpieces. You followers of Christ are his works of art, created in Christ Jesus, not self-created, not self-made men and women. The spiritual life in every Christian man or woman that comes through the born-again experience was created in Christ. And the purpose of our new lives in Christ was to fulfill the unique assignment that God has given to each of us according to his sovereign will. The Apostle Paul teaches here that if you are a servant of the Lord, there is a plan, a destiny that God has in mind for you. Life worth living, the good life, is about discovering God's purpose for you, God's assignment for you in this world. And to miss your assignment, is to live a wasted life.

Life is not about indulging as many of your wants as you can – buying as much as you can, driving the best car you can afford or not afford, or trying to live above the rules, or creating your own dreams, and going after those things. People who live with no sense of God's assignment, folks who live with no sense of God's purpose, constantly drift from one experience to another. They move from one job to another, one relationship to another, one location to another, one ministry to another, always discontent, always searching, always on the move, always frustrated, never at peace.

Friend, do you believe with all your heart that God had a unique destiny in mind when he created you and saved you? And that you are the only person on earth that can fulfill your destiny? That there are good works which God has prepared beforehand that only you can do?

It is absolutely the truth that there is a portion of this world, there are situations, there are people, there are decisions that only you can touch in the unique way that God has purposed this world to work. It is absolutely the case that only you can impact the world the way that God has uniquely assigned you to impact the world.

And friend, here is a little secret. Life is all about choosing for or against your assignment from God. Sometimes the choice is huge. There is an obvious fork in the road and if you take the one fork, it is going to lead to a mammoth life change, a

radically different trajectory than if you take the other fork in the road. And Jesus is saying to you, “Follow me on this one fork in the road. You are on assignment from me.”

But these mammoth decisions come along very infrequently in life. Most of the assignments from the Lord are very small. There is a phone call that God wants *you* to make. There is a person in the hospital that God wants *you* to visit. There is a dishwasher that God wants *you* to empty. There is a difficult conversation that God wants *you* to have. There is a relationship that God wants *you* to reconcile. There is a prayer that God wants *you* to pray.

Would you say that when you wake up in the morning you have a sense of purpose, you have a sense of identity that you wake up and say, “Today, I am a servant of the Lord. I am on assignment from Christ. I’m not just a servant of my clients, or my boss, or my customers, my children, or my patients. I am not just a servant of my schedule. Sitting in this cubicle or working in this office, or serving these customers may not be my life’s dream. This class in college, this meeting may not be the be-all, end-all of my life. But I am called today in every encounter to uniquely impact people in my sphere in a way that no one else can. As a servant of the Lord I am on assignment to make choices and decisions that only I can make.”

You matter. There is a purpose to your life. You have a destiny. Your choices matter. Whether you smile or not; whether you forgive or not; whether you pray or not; whether you give or not – it all matters.

What does it mean to serve people? To serve God, we say, “Look, I’m on assignment whether I’m a student or a mom, or I’m driving a truck or I’m in some business meeting; I’m on assignment from God. What do you want of me, Lord, in this encounter?” What does it mean to serve people? I think it is just asking the simple question, “How can I be most helpful here?” You can translate the word “serve” when you encounter it in the Bible as being helpful. I’m here to help you.

Now, helpful doesn’t mean that we always give everyone what they want whenever they demand it. Helping an addict is not giving them more money to spend on their addictions, or eliminating the pain of all consequences for someone else’s life or refusing to confront or hold people accountable. Being helpful doesn’t mean that we always go along with everyone’s dream of what they want to do with their life. We don’t hire everyone person who applies for a job. I’ve had some very painful conversations with folks who believed that they were called to World Missions, called to this or that ministry. It is easy to accommodate someone else’s dream and say, “Yes, go for it.” Servants want to bring maximum benefit to the other person. The question of a servant is not, “Will you make like me right now?” How can I be most helpful to you and your future? Sometimes, it means saying “no” to this other person’s dream. “I think if you

do that, you are not going to fulfill God's call on your life. I think this thing is actually going to end up bad for you. This might hurt your family."

That's hard. It's hard to hear "no."

Servant givers constantly ask the question: How can I be of greatest benefit to this other person? How can I offer the most help here? Is what this person needs is a word of encouragement, a hug, is it being willing to listen, to say no, is it washing the dishes, is it helping with homework, taking out the trash?

Givers are people who are willing to be inconvenienced

As servant givers we are on assignment from God. The question constantly is, "Lord, what are the good works that you prepared beforehand for me to do?" And sometimes, the good work which God has prepared beforehand are really inconvenient and feel like a waste of time.

If you are one of those Type-A people like me, who like to be highly productive all of the time, if you are one of those people who tries to squeeze production out of every minute, it is hard to do activities that don't feel terribly productive. It is especially difficult to be inconvenienced and to waste time if you already feel incredibly stretched. Many folks in their 40's and 50's are living in what is called "the sandwich generation," sandwiched between the demands of children and the demands and needs of aging parents. But if your identity is that you are a servant of the Lord first, then you allow him to determine what a productive use of your time is going to be.

And so, the Lord might determine that a productive use of your time is to attend your 8-year old daughter's soccer banquet in which each of the 25 girls in the league receives an award and has cute things said about them regarding why they won the award for team spirit, or most improved, or most helpful. God may want you to go to your 8-year old daughter's soccer banquet without a book.

I remember when I attended law school, I think I was in my second year, but I was incredibly busy. I was serving in the church, discipling some men, teaching on Sunday. I got a call from a friend in the church saying, "Hey, we need help moving a family on Saturday morning." I thought to myself, "Saturday morning? That's my big study time." But I thought, "OK, I'll do this. I will get done by 11:00 a.m. I will have the rest of the day to study."

So a few of us guys show up at the house at 9:00 a.m. We ring the bell several times; not a good sign. The family is just getting up. The wife greets us at the door in her bathrobe. I walked into the house – nothing is packed. All the books are still on the bookcases. I remember this as clear as if it was yesterday. The wife walked around the house real slowly and then gets a broom and hands it to me saying, "Here, I guess you

could carry this out to the truck.” I’m walking out to the truck with a broom. She handed me things like a bucket, a sponge. At one point, this is not exaggeration, she hands me wet clothes from the washing machine. There is still water in the washing machine. She hands me sopping wet clothes. “Here, carry these out.” I think I got done at 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon.

I am a servant of the Lord. I am a servant of the Lord. Generous giving is often inconvenient and can feel like a waste of time.

Miroslav Volf in a fantastic new book titled *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace*, writes this:

Every word and every deed, every thought and every gesture, even the simple act of paying attention can be a gift and therefore an echo of God’s life in us. You sit on your couch, beer or soda in your hand and junk food by your side watching TV for hours – that’s ordinary. You work around the clock not because you have to feed your family, but for no other reason than to park a better car in your garage than your neighbors have – that’s ordinary. You get up from the couch to pray with your kids or you give time and energy to help educate a prisoner or to lend an ear to an elderly person – that’s extraordinary. Why? Because you are giving. Every gift breaks the barrier between the sacred and the mundane and floods the mundane with the sacred. When a gift is given, life becomes extraordinary because God’s own gift-giving flows through the giver.

The bottom line is that if you live your life as a giver, sometimes it feels like a waste of time. It is not always glorious. You don’t always win “Giver of the Year” at the annual banquet. Sometimes you just go home and say, “WOW, I wouldn’t have done this for anyone else but you, Jesus. But this was the assignment you had for me today. I just spent six hours carrying wet clothes.”

Givers are people who are willing to sacrifice

Listen to what Jesus says.

Mark 10:45 (NIV)

45 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.”

Jesus came not to be served, but to die, to give his life. This sets Jesus apart from every founder of every other religion. Every other founder of every other religion came to teach, they came to set an example of the way to live. Jesus said, “My life’s purpose is to die, to be a sacrifice.” He said, “My life purpose is to be your substitute; to offer my life

in the place of yours.” Jesus models for us what it means to be a giver. To be a giver is to sacrifice, to pour your life out for someone else.

Listen, all around us there are emotionally wounded people coming from families in which they never knew they were loved. All around us are people with really broken emotional foundations. And when these people come up to us, we can quickly make our escape, or we can pour ourselves out so that God can heal them. How many of us would say even as adults we’re transformed because we met a giver who poured themselves out to touch us in a place of need?

The most obvious example of sacrifice, of course, is parenting. Our kids come to us with a bundle of needs. And every parent has a choice – am I going to pour myself out, give up my independence, give up what I want to do to sit and read with this child, to help with homework, to play a game with this child, to listen and keep on listening. There are plenty of parents who aren’t willing to be givers and their kids grow up needy, demanding, exhausting to other people. But the children whose parents have sacrificed and poured themselves out for them, they become the kind of people who can become givers.

Last thought.

Givers are people who have the greatest impact

Friends, so often when we hear a talk on being a giver and being a taker, we immediately restrict the teaching only to our families, our closest relationships, those in our circle of friends, our personal dealings. So often when we read the words of Jesus about the way we ought to live, we say, “Yes, that’s great for a personal situation. It is great for religion.” But we compartmentalize it off and we say, “Of course, Jesus’ teaching would never apply in the workplace. The workplace is dog eat dog. The only way to survive in the workplace is to be a taker. If you try to be a giver in the way I described it today, you’re just a chump. You’re going to be taken advantage of. Nice guys finish last.

The book that I mentioned at the onset, Give and Take, on organizational psychology cites dozens and dozens of studies in which nice guys finish first, not last. The highest producing engineers, the highest producing financial advisors, the highest producing physicians, the highest producing sales people, and on and on, they’re all givers. When you think about it, it makes sense. Who do you want to take your business to? Someone who you think is using you or someone who is interested in your well-being whether they profit or not? Who would you give a recommendation for? Who would you point people to – a giver or a taker?

The wisdom of Jesus is that if you want to be great in anything, be a giver! The greatest teachers, the greatest coaches, the greatest leaders, the greatest parents, the greatest people in business, they're all givers. This is the Jesus Model for living life. Let's pray.

Are You a Giver or a Taker?

Rich Nathan

January 24-25, 2015

The Generous Life Series

Mark 10.35-45

I. What does a taker look like?

- A. Takers are people who focus upon titles and roles
- B. Takers are people who focus upon self-promotion

II. What does a giver look like?

- A. Givers are people who are willing to be servants
- B. Givers are people who are willing to be inconvenienced
- C. Givers are people who are willing to sacrifice
- D. Givers are people who have the greatest impact