

EMPOWERING GENEROSITY

Inspire

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Introduction to the Letter:

Through the month of October/November I've been preaching on the book of Philippians. It is a letter that is full of praise, confidence and rejoicing despite the fact that Paul was under house arrest and being undermined by believers with bad attitude and wrong motives (Philippians 1:15), others with false doctrine (Philippians 3) yet nothing could shift him from that place of victory and confidence.

He planted the church under divine direction (Acts 16:6-10) and supernatural encounter (Acts 16:16-34). A place that Paul learned first hand, to praise God in all circumstances.

The purpose of Philippi

The purpose of the Philippians letter was to acknowledge their giving and generosity and thank them for a specific gift. Philippi was Paul's first connection to the Macedonia area where they went on to plant many more churches. He speaks of their generosity on a number of occasions *"I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed."* 2 Corinthians 11:8-9

"And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us." 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

After reading these verses concerning their giving, besides being incredibly challenged—you have to ask yourself: "What is it that stimulated that kind of generosity?" Let's look through the book of Philippians to discover some of those keys.

Releasing Generosity

"I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11 I am not

saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength. 14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. 17 Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. 18 I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. 20 To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Philippians 4:10-20

Concern

Verse 10 *"I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it."*

Concern comes from desire and passion but more than just an emotional response—it is an intelligent response as well. One that comes from an understanding of the situation.

I challenge you to get an informed view of what you're giving into, get to know the heart of that mission, church or ministry because when you do, you begin to move into a heart and a head level of giving and not just give in a casual or traditional way when it comes to giving. You might not feel it important to give with the right heart and head but God looks at that stuff. It says in Isaiah 1:19 *"If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land"* and in 2 Corinthians 9:7 *"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

And I tell you this, when your heart is

good and concerned for a good cause, your dollars will follow.

Contentment

Verses 11-13 *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength."* Paul calls it the secret, it is like it's this hidden and unknown key to generosity because it probably is the most unlikely principle. Some would even say it would work against you prospering and being generous but contentment is a powerful principle that causes a person to be happy in whatever circumstances they are in. Life is not based on what they have and don't have.

Contentment can be viewed from a wrong perspective as something that causes us to stagnate and not progress forward but stay in a low position. But it is not that at all! The spirit of contentment is what releases us from being a consumer or a person that lives by their own greediness or even by their own neediness. Someone who has the love of money and things are like Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 5:10 *"Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless."* These people are generally stingy

Having no contentment is what:

- ◆ pushes a gambler to ruin in the quest for the next win.
- ◆ It is what pushes a young income family to over extend their mortgage.
- ◆ It is what pushes a low income family to live on high purchase.
- ◆ It is what pushes a business person to overwork and jeopardize the more important things.
- ◆ It is what pushes some one to try to keep up with the Joneses.

I know that contentment has allowed me to make wise moves in regard to my financial future.

I remember the day of when I first started preaching a church living on Tracey's income because the church couldn't afford to employ me. We rented a place for \$80.00 a week, no electricity, no gas, and only tank water. We had to heat up a donkey stove to get hot water. We had no TV or modern appliances. We lived there for four years but we were happy and content. Being content allowed us to continue to tithe, give offerings and be generous. One time we finally saved up a housing deposit but we were so content, we were able to give it away to the church building fund.

Today we have bought two houses, have two cars and have just come back from an overseas trip with the family. We are still giving as much as ever, probably more. Tracey and I have learned the secret of contentment. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

It is a Good Thing

14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles."

It is a privilege to be able to give to God. We should never think it any different. That is why Jesus was not backward in coming forward about money.

16 off his 32 parables were about money. One time He stood over the offering plate while people were giving, counting, not what they put in but what they put in compared to what they had. He once challenged a rich guy to give his money away and then with another person, celebrated when he did. Why? Because it is good to give to God.

Paul spoke of giving regularly in fact one in every six verse in the epistles were on giving money. The Macedonian church pleaded for the privilege of giving into the ministry of Paul. 2Corinthians 8:4. All this says to me is "It is good to give." Good for me, good for the Kingdom, and good for the receiver. God actually created giving for you, as He doesn't need your money, he's doing o.k. but we need His blessing on our money. Giving releases the blessing of God over our finances. *"But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today."* Deuteronomy 8:18

When I give, I am declaring:

- ◆ Jesus is Lord
- ◆ God is in control
- ◆ I believe in His word
- ◆ I want to say thanks
- ◆ I believe in thy kingdom come on earth
- ◆ I believe and love the local church and all it entails
- ◆ It is good to give

It is not just a matter of giving but receiving

15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;

Like I said, God doesn't need our money and He didn't create giving for himself. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10), He owns all the gold and silver (Haggai 2:8), He created the world and everything in it. (Psalm 24).

The word speaks in many places of the blessing, prosperity and receiving that comes from giving. *"One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. 25A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."* Proverbs 11:24-25 I know some people are so humble and would say I don't want to receive when I give, I just want to give, but for that you will have to talk to God, because this is a spiritual law and principle that sets in motion:

"Give and it will be given"
"Sow and you will reap"

I remember when I was traveling to speak at conferences or churches, I would always take someone with me and would buy them a domestic ticket—usually out of the love offering I received from ministering. It wasn't long before business guys started inviting me to fly overseas with them to spend time with them and support them. Some of them flew me first class. here is no doubt when you give, you will receive—pressed down shaken together and running over!

Your giving goes to God

18I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a

fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

Whether it is when you give to the church, the building offering, missions, a ministry or even the poor you are giving to the Lord. *"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done."* Proverbs 19:17.

Cornelius discovered that giving goes to God in Acts 10:2, *"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly."* when an angel turned up and told him *"Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.* That gift opened his household to the salvation of God. Your giving releases God to move over your world because it goes to Him.

You can rest in Him

19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

When you enter into giving you can rest in God's abundance, His willingness to bless, His commitment to His promises, His absolute commitment to His word that it will not return void.

We can live with a confidence in His words concerning His promise of blessing, for God is not a man that He should lie or the Son of Man that He would change his mind. He has said it, He will do it. He has spoken it, He will make it good.



Be blessed and prosper.

Kevin

Team Leader
@ Life Church
& OzReach
Kevin Wilcock

Kevin working on his home made wine

4 CD Packs by Kevin Available & 2 Books

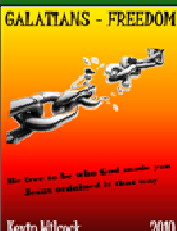


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I LOVE THE CHURCH

Kevin Wilcock



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PHILIPPINES – Peter McGregor

As you may know, I have recently returned from ten days in the Philippines with Pappa Ken.

I had been previously briefed by Ken and Maisie on their connection in the Philippines and have had two sponsor children who have been involved in the educational program there. They both explained and showed me photographs of the area but it was not until we arrived that I could see the situation and assess for myself the fruits of their 20 year encounter and their plans for the future.

Just walking down the street children and mothers would call out and say, "Hi Pappa Ken, where is Maisie?" There were occasions when again we were just walking down the streets and we were requested to come into a home and pray for healing from people who Ken had previously had contact with. This really astonished me but showed me what an impact they have made on so many lives in these villages and the community.

Everything we take for granted exists in the Philippines and even more so in the villages where they have established these centres. Most of these families have no jobs, poor hygiene, limited clothing, limited education opportunities and poor housing.

But Ken and Maisie along with Lolit, their loyal administrator in the areas, saw a need and implemented a program to assist these children. Their vision for the advancement of these underprivileged children through education and a connection with Jesus is really so beneficial but it is only when you are in their environment that you can assess the

commitment of Ken, Maisie and Lolit for such a long period of time. There are now some six schools in the area catering for over 250 children and their education needs. Whilst we were there Ken negotiated to acquire another building that will accommodate a further 30 odd children. So their vision continues.

The main centre where we stayed was Graceville in the province of Bulakan and we visited centres at Patulo, Tupda, Pabahay, Bagong Silang, Decca. All these centres reach out to the needs of the children and their families. Along with the educational needs, there was also a strong emphasis on the word of our Lord. Many attended church and are rewarded in this way. You could see them being strengthened in many ways.



My sponsor child

One of the highlights for me was meeting my sponsored child. I had given Lolit some money to buy him some gifts. On meeting him, I presented him with a back pack, shirt, shorts and socks. His little face really lit up. I don't think the back pack will leave that little back of his for some time!

If anyone has sponsored a child, or is considering sponsoring a child from Child's Faith Foundation Academy, the photograph that Maisie gives you of the child, does not reflect the day to day condition of the child in respect to clothing, cleanliness etc. The families are really poor and it is only through our



A Squatters House

sponsorship that they are given a chance for an early education and benefit so much in their lives.

We also had the chance to meet and talk with other Pastors and Missionaries and discuss the problems that they encounter in trying

to establish their outreaches. The main obstacle is corruption; the authorities require additional payments before and during the operation of many centres. But all these people are strong and committed and manage to fulfil their vision.

This trip has changed my outlook on many aspects of life. It has reinforced that anything is possible with God's help and that God can make marvellous changes in people's lives. Also that everyone needs an opportunity in life and it is their right to have this.

If you have a chance to sow into this mission, I urge you to give; it is so beneficial to those who are fortunate enough to be involved. This mission sows in 100% of the funds they receive into the program not to mention the enormous personal contribution that Ken and Maisie continue to inject.

If you ever get the opportunity to visit with Ken or Maisie, I have to say you should GO

Peter McGregor
Kairos Prison Ministry
Seafarers Mission
Soul Café

PHILIPPINES – Alvin Bautista with Carlie & Brendan Lowe



Our Visit To The Philippines

Wow, what a great country! What beautiful people! After reflecting on our recent trip to the Philippines we realise just how much we took

away from our experience. We didn't quite know what to expect flying in there. We were greeted with some nice warm weather after the miserable start to the summer here in Newcastle! We met Ken, Peter and the foundation's Philippino partner, Lolit at the airport and were taken straight to one of the schools for a visit. From there we went to the church we would be staying at until the youth camp started. We were very warmly welcomed and treated with such great hospitality!

Having studied and worked in overseas development we were extremely impressed with the 20 year partnership between Lolit and the Gibson's. This length of partnership in this type of work is a very rare thing indeed and it's so evidently the work of God. What also struck us so powerfully was the great position this church has in the community. You know that it would be missed if it wasn't there. It is not only a spiritual home for many but it also provides jobs and training for numerous teachers who do incredible

work with the young people. A day later we left the church for the youth camp. When we arrived at the camp we were really impressed with the set up. Alvin, the church's youth leader, had obviously put in a lot of effort to get it up and running. There were about 60 youth in attendance including about 10 from a local orphanage. The theme for the camp was "The Movers: All things are possible with God." Over the weekend the youth were encouraged to express themselves creatively with activities like dance, drama and music. Some of the skits they performed brought tears to our eyes. Although we couldn't understand the Tagalog language it was clear what they were trying to express through their drama. Most acted out powerful scenes of Jesus rescuing them from a disjointed and fragmented reality, sometimes including depression, drugs, alcohol and peer pressure.

The way they worship God is truly beautiful, it is completely without inhibition, there is no worry about how they sound or what they look like, they sing with their whole hearts and you can feel the Holy Spirit moving when they do. We learnt a lot about worship just being there. Singing so freely like that is something that has been lost in our culture. Too many of us are worried about how we look or what we sound like, or if the person next to us can hear us. (Heaven forbid!). In our culture we have gotten use to going to watch someone else sing, rather than sing along with them.

One day at the camp, we had a really interesting conversation with Lolit about the gospel. She said that

she heard people say that Australia would be the last to hear the gospel because we have everything... We thought more so, we think we have everything. It was a real eye opener to how blind we become at home, and how much we lose sight of God in our every day lives. The more we fill our lives with stuff we think is making us happy, the more we separate ourselves from God's loving presence which is the source of all true life and happiness. We believe that all of us have a lot to learn from these cultures and mission projects. When we go, we don't just go to give or serve, we go to Learn also.

We both had opportunities to speak to the youth at the evening services. Before we left we spent a lot of time in prayer and really felt God lead us to speak about his unconditional love for them. This was received really well from the youth, most who didn't know their value to God. Many made decisions to give their life to Christ and we pray that they are establishing good connections in the church.

All in all we were really touched by these young people. We were pleasantly surprised and impressed with their levels of English and it was easy to converse with some of them. We can see how it was easy for Ken and Maisie to fall in love with these people. It was so sad to leave, though we are hoping to be a part of the camp again next year.

God's Blessings
Carlie & Brendan Lowe
Alvin Bautista
acbautista_24@yahoo.com



OzReach Conference— 20th, 22nd in 2011

@ Life Church 15 Denison St Newcastle West



Billy Kennedy leads the New Community network leadership team. He has been in Southampton since 1982. He was born in Liverpool, went to primary school in Scotland, secondary school in Northern Ireland and started his working life back in Glasgow.

Billy is involved with most areas of church life offering support and advice to those who have the responsibility to run those areas.

Beyond Southampton Billy serves as a friend and advisor to a variety of churches and Christian organisations. He is a member of the International Council of the 24-7prayer movement and leads the Pioneer network.

SOUL CLINIC - Dr Milton Sales

We now have 7 doctors working weekly at the Soul Clinic

It operates 1 lunch time per week either Tuesday or Wednesday from about 11.30am to 2.30pm.

We have seen an average of 5 people per clinic. Mostly they have had problems that we would see in general practice, like infections, colds etc. The difference is that these people have extra troubles that make them less able to access normal general practice care.

Mental health, drug and alcohol problems, homelessness and poverty

prevail.

The fact that an experienced empathic general practitioner is available to help sort out their worry, and that GP Access has supplied the clinic with full courses of treatments to give out, including antibiotics, creams and eye drops etc, has made the clinic highly effective.

We have had the input of clerical and nursing staff to help as well. All staff are voluntary. GP Access has provided supplies free of charge.

The clinic has been a success and is providing a valuable niche service to a group with special needs.

We are planning to continue this clinic next year, with increased support from the medical, clerical and nursing groups.

Thanks to Life Church and Soul Café for allowing the clinic to prosper.



Dr Milton Sales
Brunker Road, Medical Practice

VIEW FROM THE KITCHEN - Tony Broughton

Volunteers, participants, work for the dole, Kev's special projects or just someone taking it day by day from Alcoholics Anonymous, (AA), are all people that work with me in our Soul café and kitchen as well as others.

These people are a diverse group. We have school children, retirees and community service workers. In fact, over the last three years, (yes folks it has been that long), I would have worked with over 200 'volunteers'.

It has been my belief that harmony in the kitchen will spread through to the dining room so I have always placed an emphasis on team work and making the day interesting. Seeing the basic changes in people occur such as: respect, co-operation, energy levels and general willingness is always rewarding. But there are days when even I cannot keep the smile off my face.

Watching Jane, a young 16 year old with zero energy levels work with Sue a 68 year old successful business lady; their job, (Sue's idea),

was to clean all the chairs and tables. "Oh well, whatever" was Jane's reluctant reply when asked to do this job but after 10 minutes she was feeling good about herself and confided that Sue wasn't too bad for her age and I shouldn't get 'old' people to work that hard.

Jane went on to find work and managed to leave her toxic drug ravaged house and move on and freely admitted that 'this old lady' (Sue), gave her confidence.

Ted (AA Leader), has several times asked me to 'look after' various people. Fred was very early in his sobriety and obvious in his discomfort. When candidly I asked "What's with the shakes and the sweats mate - you an alcoholic?" "Yes", was the honest answer. This impromptu discussion and many more over the next few weeks were a revelation to all. Fred is still sober.

Depression is a condition effecting all parts of society. I have seen many broken people bravely put themselves back together no more so than

Mike.

Mike, a quiet man but incredibly messy guy whose eyes very rarely left the ground. Fortunately the large group gave him space and time and as usual we got his story over the next six weeks. Mike's confidence grew. He now looks me in the eye and politely laughs at my lame jokes, brilliant!

The justice system has sent us many workers. John, a family guy, had a substantial number of hours, which he fulfilled with diligence and good cheer. One day when I went to sign him off, I noticed he had finished his hours. "See you mate" I said. "Are you trying to sack me - can't I just come here and help anyway?" was John's reply. We still see John every now and then.

Not everybody gets their 'lives shaped' but everybody goes home with a 'feel good glow', a sense of achievement and personal satisfaction.



KEVIN'S TRAVEL

- November 27th—29th
- December 5th-10th
- December 10th-14th
- January 2nd & 8th
- January 9th
- February 9th - 15th

- Tasmania
- Mackay
- Perth
- Thailand
- Wollongong
- Philippines

