

# Gratitude as the Basis for Living Open-Handed

## 2025 Habit Series: Open-Handedness (Session 1 of 2)

Central Peninsula Church



*Open-handedness is the habit of stewarding our time, talents, and treasures as channels through which God's abundance flows to others.*

### Opening Exercise: Scarcity vs. Abundance

Discuss the following question together: When you think about your life right now, where do you most often feel a sense of scarcity (not enough)—and where do you most often notice abundance (more than enough)?

#### Quick Debrief:

- What do you think most influences whether we see life through a lens of scarcity or abundance (i.e. our circumstances, past experiences, perspective of God, etc.)?

### Study and Discussion

#### Opening Prayer

Read Psalm 24:1-4 and spend a few moments in silence, prayerfully reflecting on the verses. Pray over your time together, inviting the Holy Spirit to help you grasp the reality of God's abundant provision and care.

#### Discussion Questions

As you move into the study portion of this discussion, take ample time to read and even re-read the passages below, slowly and aloud. You may even spend a few minutes, after reading the text aloud, individually re-reading the passage and taking note of words or phrases that stand out to you before sharing and discussing. As you read, ask yourselves three key questions: Why this? Why here? Why now? These questions will help you to discern the context of the passages and Jesus' words.

→ **Read Luke 18:18-30 and Luke 19:10 as a group. As you read through Jesus' interactions with the rich young ruler and with Zacchaeus, compare and contrast their responses to Jesus and what they reveal about their relationship with money.**

- ◆ Both the rich young ruler and Zacchaeus were wealthy. The rich young ruler walked away sad, while Zacchaeus took action and changed his life. What do you think made the difference in their responses?
- ◆ The rich young ruler defined himself by his accomplishments (keeping the law) and how much he accumulated (how much he owned). Do you notice yourself measuring your worth by what you do or own? How does holding on too tightly to success or to the things we own keep us from experiencing the freedom Jesus offers?
- ◆ What do these passages teach you about how the things we treasure can affect our hearts and choices? How do they challenge the way you think about your relationship with money and the things you own?

#### Additional Discussion Questions:

- ◇ Are there ways that you see yourself like the rich young ruler (hesitant to let go)? On the other hand, are there ways you see yourself like Zacchaeus (ready to respond generously)?
- ◇ If you thought of everything you have—your time, talents, and treasures—as gifts from God, how would that change your day-to-day choices? How can our community group support you, in practical ways, to live more open-handed?

### Key Teaching Points:

1. **A scarcity mindset produces fear (“I’m not enough” or “I don’t have enough”) and leads us to falsely believe that we are in control of our lives.**
2. **An abundance mindset fosters gratitude and contentment. When we remember that God is enough, and that everything we have comes from him, we can release our grip and experience freedom from accomplishment and accumulation. As we do, we grow in trust in God’s provision and care.**
3. **All of life is a gift from God for us to steward. We gratefully respond by living open-handed with our time, talents, and treasures.**

### Take-Home Practice: Fostering Gratitude

In this series, we have been reminded that gratitude and contentment are the antidote to the cycle of accomplishment and accumulation. The goal of this exercise is to foster gratitude and cultivate a greater contentment in God and all that he has graciously provided.

1. Commit to reading and praying through Psalm 23 daily. Spend some time meditating on verse 1. *“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”* Recount the various ways you see God’s abundant provision and care throughout this psalm.
2. Take inventory of the time, talents (giftings, abilities, passions, work), and treasures that God has given you. Challenge yourself to write down specific things that God has blessed you with.
3. Offer each of these back to God, inviting him to guide you on how to steward them wisely and faithfully.

Time	Talents	Treasures