



## 2026 Focus: Rooted, Ready, Resilient Jeremiah 17:7-8

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### The Practice of Extravagant Generosity

**Jeremiah 17:7-8, Acts 20:35**

Mt. Zion Baptist Church is blessed to do extraordinary ministry. We feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and assist families with rent, utilities, funeral expenses, and other basic necessities. We provide quality early childhood education through S.E.E.D.S. Preschool, support seniors through the Legacy Senior Housing Development and the Ecumenical Senior Center, partner with Gospel Mission Ministries, and work alongside numerous community organizations to strengthen our city. We support a staff of 35 full-time and part-time employees, as well as various contractors who help advance the ministry's mission. Give Scholarships to High school seniors and fund an endowment that has reached over \$1,000,000. Continue to be cutting-edge in technology and innovation. In the midst of a \$200,000 lower-level upgrade for our children. Feed over 300 people every Sunday morning.

Our church serves as a gathering place for the community. We host funerals and repasts, graduations, open houses, community meetings, forums, and events that bring people together. By every measure, Mt. Zion is a five-star ministry making a five-star impact.

We do all this while being supported financially by **only 43% of our membership**.

The reality is sobering. **5%** of our members give less than minimum wage annually to support the ministry. Even more concerning, **52%** of our members give absolutely nothing. These are not guests, visitors, or occasional attendees. These are members who have committed to being part of this church family.

Imagine what God could do through Mt. Zion if every member accepted both the privilege and responsibility of stewardship. Imagine how many more families could be helped, how many more children could be educated, how many more seniors could be served, and how many more souls could be reached for Christ.

The question is not whether Mt. Zion is doing ministry. The evidence is all around us. **The question is whether every member is doing their part to support the ministry God has entrusted to us.**

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**Vision:** A Vibrant Community Living by Faith

**Mission:** Empowering People to Transform Themselves and the Community

Membership carries both benefits and responsibilities. As believers, we are called to pray, serve, worship, and give. Giving is not merely about meeting a budget. It is about participating in God's work and ensuring that the ministry we cherish today remains strong for generations to come.

**This lesson on the practice of Extravagant generosity is for everyone to give in a way that pleases God and to encourage the 52% to become part of what God is doing through this ministry.**

The practice of generosity describes the Christian's unselfish willingness to give in order to make a positive difference for the purposes of Christ. Extravagant generosity describes sharing and giving that exceeds expectations and extends beyond convenience. It reflects lavish generosity, joyful sacrifice, and faithful stewardship in service to God and neighbor.

Robert Schnase teaches that extravagant generosity is one of the essential practices of fruitful discipleship. It is not merely about financial contributions but about developing a lifestyle that trusts God completely and responds faithfully to His leading.

A believer who participates in **Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, and Risk-Taking Mission and Service** will naturally grow into the Practice of **Extravagant Generosity**.

Extravagant generosity is not an occasional act but the fruit of a life deeply rooted in God. As believers grow in trust and stewardship, they become **Rooted in faith, Ready to respond to God's opportunities, and Resilient during seasons of challenge and uncertainty**.

One measurable outcome of this lesson is that every member of Mt. Zion participates regularly in giving in ways that honor God and advance God's Kingdom. Each of us must answer the question, Is God pleased with my Giving. **1Chronicles 29:16-17**

## **The Mt. Zion Approach**

At Mt. Zion Baptist Church, we teach that the tithe is the biblical foundation of stewardship, and extravagant generosity is the spiritual growth that follows.

The tithe teaches faithfulness. Generosity develops trust. The tithe acknowledges God's ownership. **Generosity demonstrates confidence in God's provision.**

Just as a tree develops roots before it bears fruit, believers develop the discipline of tithing before growing into the lifestyle of extravagant generosity. **Malachi 3:8** says **"Tithes and offerings."** The required tithe that belongs to God, and the offering that reflects a heart of gratitude and worship.

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## Practical way of explaining it:

- **Tithe** = The first 10% given as an act of obedience and acknowledgment that God owns everything.
- **Offering** = Anything given beyond the tithe; it is an act of worship, gratitude, generosity, and Love.

## I. Generosity Enlarges the Soul: **Matthew 6:21; Proverbs 11:25 NLT; 2 Corinthians 9:8**

### Rooted in Trust "Blessed is the man that **trusts** in the Lord..." (**Jeremiah 17:7**)

Robert Schnase teaches "that generosity changes the giver as much as it blesses the receiver." Generosity enlarges the soul because it teaches believers to trust God more than possessions, income, or personal security. The more deeply rooted we become in God's provision, the more freely we release resources for God's purposes. **Ephesians 4:16** Spiritual maturity is measured by how much we give, not what we reap.

Generosity is not simply about money. **Generosity is about trust.**

### Generosity as Fruit

Just as Jeremiah describes a fruitful tree, generosity is evidence of spiritual fruitfulness. **Galatians 5:22-23** teaches that the Fruit of the Spirit includes love, kindness, goodness, and self-control. Genuine generosity flows from these Spirit-produced qualities. Generosity is not merely a financial practice. It is a spiritual fruit produced by a life surrendered to God.

### A generous spirit reflects:

- Love for God
- Compassion for people
- Trust in God's provision
- Obedience to God's leading

### Individual Tangible Actions

- Begin or strengthen the practice of tithing.
- Seek God's direction for financial decisions (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).
- Practice one intentional act of generosity each week.
- Support a ministry or mission effort beyond regular giving.

### Individual Tangible Results

- Increased trust in God.
- Greater freedom from materialism.
- Increased joy and contentment.
- Spiritual growth and maturity.

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## II. The Scriptural Roots of Generosity: Acts 20:35

### Ready for Kingdom Opportunities

**Generosity is rooted in the very nature of God. Throughout Scripture, we see God's generosity displayed repeatedly:**

- God provided for Adam and Eve.
- God sustained Israel in the wilderness.
- God gave His only begotten Son.
- God continues to provide for His people today.

**Believers who are rooted in Scripture become ready to participate in God's mission whenever opportunities arise. When roots are deep, readiness follows naturally.**

### Individual Tangible Actions

- Study biblical examples of generosity.
- Include generosity in family financial planning.
- Teach stewardship principles to children and youth.
- Prepare a budget that includes giving as a priority.

### Individual Tangible Results

- Greater biblical understanding.
- Stronger stewardship habits.
- Increased readiness to meet needs.
- A family culture of generosity.

## III. Exceeding Expectations:

### Resilient Through Every Season

**"Neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Jeremiah 17:8**

Robert Schnase defines extravagant generosity as ***"the practice of giving in a way that exceeds expectations and is characterized by abundance and sacrifice."***

Extravagant generosity goes beyond what is expected. It exceeds minimum requirements. It reflects a heart transformed by grace. The generous believer understands that God has been extravagantly generous toward us, and therefore we respond with gratitude and faith.

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Many believers have discovered that when they trusted God through generous giving, God responded in unexpected ways. Sometimes through provision. Sometimes through peace. Sometimes through relationships and opportunities. God's faithfulness became unmistakable.

### **Why Resilience Matters**

Jeremiah teaches that the rooted tree does not fear when heat comes and does not stop bearing fruit during drought.

Extravagantly generous people are resilient because their confidence is not rooted in economic conditions, markets, politics, or circumstances. Their confidence is rooted in God.

#### **Even during seasons of:**

- Economic uncertainty
- Inflation
- Job transitions
- Financial pressure

**They continue bearing fruit because their source is greater than their situation.**

#### **Individual Tangible Actions**

- Give beyond convenience when God leads.
- Support ministries and missions during difficult seasons.
- Look for opportunities to bless others anonymously.
- Respond immediately when God prompts generosity.

#### **Individual Tangible Results**

- Greater faith in God's provision.
- Increased resilience during difficult seasons.
- Stronger testimony of God's faithfulness.
- Expanded Kingdom impact.

### **IV. A Better Approach: [Matthew 25:14-30](#); [1 Corinthians 4:2](#)**

The wrong question is: *"How much do I have to give?"*

**The better question is:** *"How much has God entrusted to me to steward for His glory?"*

The goal is not simply reaching a percentage. **The goal is to develop a generous heart that reflects God's character.**

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## **At Mt. Zion, we believe:**

- Tithing is the Foundation.
- Generosity is the Growth.
- Extravagant Generosity is the Fruit.

**A Rooted believer becomes Ready. A Ready believer becomes Resilient. A Resilient believer continues bearing fruit regardless of the season.**

## **Individual Tangible Actions**

- Commit to faithful tithing.
- Create personal generosity goals.
- Serve as generously as you give.
- Evaluate all resources as tools for Kingdom impact.

## **Individual Tangible Results**

- Freedom from the fear of scarcity.
- Greater participation in God's mission.
- Increased spiritual maturity.
- A lasting legacy of faithfulness and generosity.

## **Conclusion**

Jeremiah teaches that deeply rooted trees continue producing fruit regardless of external conditions. The same is true for believers.

## **When we are:**

**Rooted in God's Provision** – We trust Him.

**Ready for God's Opportunities** – We serve Him.

**Resilient in Every Season** – We continue bearing fruit.

Extravagant generosity is not merely something we do. It is evidence of who we are becoming in Christ.

As we grow from faithful tithing into extravagant generosity, we become living examples of **Jeremiah 17:7-8**—believers who remain fruitful, faithful, and generous in every season.

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