

Do you need some ideas for sermons on giving? Here are three sermon starters:

Sermon Starters 1

Giving: A Contagious Attitude

"Give away your life, you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Generosity begets generosity." [Luke 6:38, The Message]

*Before beginning your sermon, invite the members of the congregation to greet one of their neighbors with a warm smile and a kind word of welcome. As they finish, ask, "How did your neighbors respond?" Invite them to imagine what would have happened had you asked them to greet a neighbor with a sullen face and an angry word. Even this small scale example shows us the truth that God is trying to teach. How we treat others is how we will be treated in turn. So, if we want to increase generosity in others, we need to become more generous.

*Read Luke 6:35-36 in The Message: *"I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting return. You'll never - I promise - regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we are at our worst, Our Father is kind; you be kind."*

*Being generous and kind no matter what others do is part of our God-created identity. To deny our generosity is to deny who God created us to be. Even though we know our personal generosity can lead to generosity in others; that should not be our driving goal. The goal is to love others like God loves us, so that through our kindness others might see that the love of God is real.

*Attitudes are contagious. Crowd mentality shows us time and time again on the news that when a group of people gets infected by anger or revenge, even positive protests and gatherings can turn violent. People get infected by the attitudes of people around them and begin to act and react in ways they never would have imagined acting alone.

*The same is true however for attitudes like kindness and generosity. In the face of disasters and massive instances of human sufferings, communities of people who may have been cynical and divided before can come together to offer help and solutions to whatever the needs may be. People see others in their community being generous and helpful to those who are hurting and in need, and they feel compelled to join in to offer any help they can. Many times in the immediate wake of suffering, charity organizations have to ask people not to bring any more items because they simply don't have room to store the overabundances they receive.

*Read Luke 6:27 in The Message - *"To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst."*

*The attitude of generosity can inoculate you from being infected by the bad attitudes you see in the world. The truth Jesus was trying to teach is that our attitude is a choice. We can see the imperfections in the world and in others and be angered or, we can choose to respond with love and kindness and generosity. When we put our focus on being loving and generous, even to those we do not like or to those who hurt us, we allow ourselves to be our best selves and we create an environment where generosity can grow. Only in an environment where people choose to respond with love, kindness, and generosity can true healing and change occur.

*Praying for generosity - Create a prayer station where people can come to pray for God to help them grow more generosity in the world. Gather headshot pictures of people from a variety of ages, races, and backgrounds. Place these on a table or altar rail. Interspersed with the pictures, place several small mirrors. Provide these verbal or written instructions: "As you enter this time of prayer, focus on the faces of God's children. When we act in ways that show kindness and generosity to others, we can help bring out the best in all of us and encourage one another to let God's love and generosity grow through each of us."