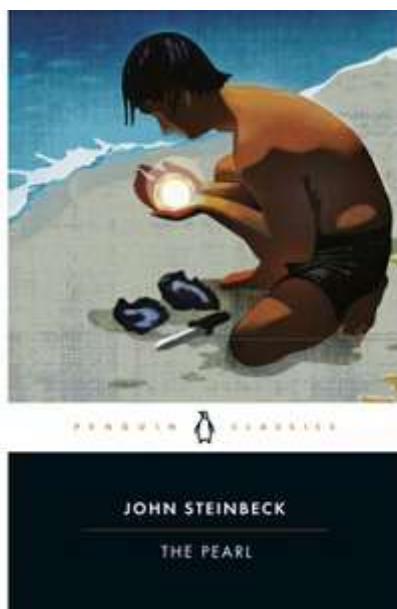


Selfish Generosity
7 Woes Pt. 4
Pastor Trevor Lovell

Discussion Questions:

1. When you were a kid (or even as an adult), what's something you wanted really badly — maybe a toy, gadget, or experience — that ended up being a disappointment once you got it?
2. John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* illustrates how greed can destroy what we value most. How do you see jealousy or comparison showing up in our culture today — or even in your own heart — in subtle ways?
3. In Matthew, 23:23-24, Jesus tells the Pharisees they “neglect the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy, and faithfulness.” What do you think it means to “strain out a gnat but swallow a camel”? Can you think of modern examples where people (or even churches) major on the minors like that?
4. Micah 6:8 makes it clear that Justice, mercy, and faithfulness are at the heart of God's character. Which of those three do you find easiest to live out — and which one challenges you the most?
5. The message said that giving is meant to help us “revere God” and “embrace dependence on Him.” How have you seen generosity — your own or someone else's — strengthen trust in God or deepen faith?
6. Jesus warned that it's possible to give for the wrong reasons — to check boxes or look spiritual. What's the difference between giving “from rules” and giving “from relationship”? How might our motivations for generosity reveal what we really believe about God?



Exodus 20:17 *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."*

Woe to those whose generosity is only about themselves.

Matthew 23:23-24 *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."*

Genesis 14:18-20 *Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20 And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*

Numbers 18:21 *"I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting."*

Numbers 18:25 *The LORD said to Moses, 26 "Speak to the Levites and say to them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the LORD's offering. 27 Your offering will be reckoned to you as grain from the threshing floor or juice from the winepress. 28 In this way you also will present an offering to the LORD from all the tithes you receive from the Israelites. From these tithes you must give the LORD's portion to Aaron the priest.'*

Deuteronomy 14:23 *Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and olive oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always."*

Matthew 23:23-24 *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."*

Justice - To do what is right.

Proverbs 21:3 *"To do what is right and just, is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice."*

Mercy - to have compassion for others in their suffering.

Hosea 6:6 *"For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings."*

Faithfulness - to embrace your dependence on God.

Micah 6:8 *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Jesus seems to employ the same*

Justice - To do what is right. Proverbs 21:3

Mercy - To have compassion for others in their suffering. Hosea 6:6

Faithfulness - To embrace your dependence on God. Micah 6:8

GIVING is perhaps the most significant way that we embrace dependence on God and invest in a more just and merciful world.

Giving is about **RELATIONSHIPS**, not **RULES**.

Bottom Line: Happy are those whose generosity is fueled, not by rules, but by LOVE.