

REVIVALIST MINISTRIES

GRACE IN ACTION

A call to generosity,
service, and mercy.

ANDY BYLER



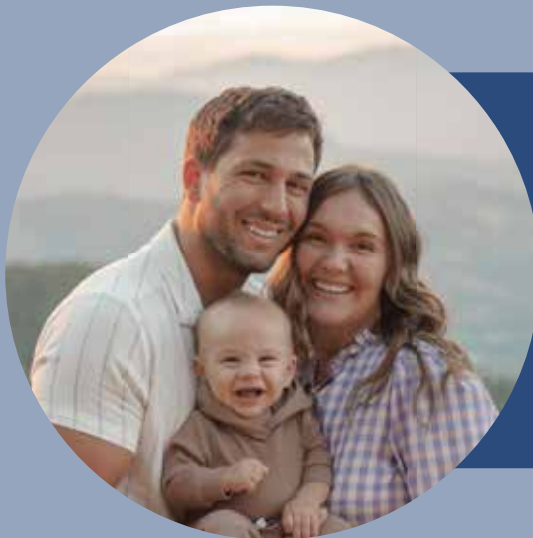
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A Bible study series designed
to cultivate revival
and to grow stronger, together.



Andy Byler and his wife Angie are discovering what it means to walk as disciples of Jesus, who make disciples. They are passionate about seeing God's Kingdom come to earth in tangible ways and living in community with others who share the same vision. That discipleship journey has taken them to west Tennessee where they live with their son Noah.





WEEK 1

THE HEART OF GENEROSITY

For they gave according to their means and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:3–4

Can you imagine being there that day? You're sitting on a mountainside overlooking the Sea of Galilee with thousands of others who have all come for the same purpose: to hear this Jesus of Nazareth speak and watch Him perform miracles. You've been so locked in to His teaching that the sun is already sinking low in the west before you realize something. You haven't eaten all day. Thankfully, you've got your five small loaves and two fish packed in your lunch basket. You're about to satisfy your gnawing stomach when you're approached by one of Jesus' disciples asking if you'd be willing to share the only lunch you have. Now you're faced with a choice. Do you silence your rumbling stomach and keep what you have for yourself, or do you generously share what you have to eat with Jesus?

In our culture, we often think of generosity as something only the wealthy can practice. The rich, those with seemingly endless resources, can be generous because they have so much to give. But does this mean that generosity is only for them? Is it truly about the size of the gift, or is there something deeper—a spiritual essence—that gives our giving its worth? Scripture invites us to reconsider: generosity is not measured by the amount given, but by the heart that holds the gift.

There's generally nothing too significant about five loaves and two fish in the hand of a Galilean teen. This wasn't some big donation from a 501c3 that made the headlines. Yet his faithfulness in generosity and Jesus' power combined that afternoon to feed 5,000 hungry mouths. The message was clear: Jesus can take what little we have to offer and turn it into something significant.

In Luke 21, we read about a poor widow who gave everything she had. Jesus observes her actions and commends her, saying that her two small coins were worth more than the large donations of the wealthy. While others gave out of their abundance, she gave out of her poverty. Her gift was not large in terms of monetary value, but it was a gift of great sacrifice.

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This story challenges us to rethink what generosity really is. The widow's generosity wasn't defined by the size of her gift but by the spirit of sacrifice behind it. In the values of God's Kingdom, generosity isn't about the amount; it's about the heart posture. Jesus saw this woman's gift as notable because she took out of her own provisions and gave them up for another. Jesus didn't measure the widow's gift by the standard of the world. From His higher perspective, her gift was incredibly valuable because it came from a place of surrender and trust.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians 8, gives a compelling description of generosity. He speaks of the Macedonian church, who, in their extreme poverty, overflowed with generosity. Despite their own struggles, they gave generously to support others. Paul writes: "For they gave according to their means and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints" (2 Corinthians 8:3–4).

What's striking about this passage is that Paul is not commending them because they had wealth to give. They didn't. Rather, he's commending them because they gave beyond their means. They had little to offer, but they gave sacrificially. Paul calls this an act of grace. Their generosity wasn't a mere financial transaction; it was a manifestation of God's grace working in them and through them. In their giving, they were mirroring the heart of God for the needy, and reflecting the same generosity that they had experienced through Jesus.

Paul goes on to encourage the Corinthians to “excel in this grace of generosity,” (2 Corinthians 8:7). Generosity is a grace—a gift from God—and when we give, we reflect the very nature of God. It’s not about what we give but how we give.

Generosity flows from a heart that recognizes that everything we have comes from God. When we understand that, we are freed to give freely, without holding back. Generosity, therefore, is not just a kind gesture; it is an outpouring of God’s grace that transforms both the giver and the receiver.

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The ultimate model of generosity is, of course, Jesus. Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 8:9: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich.” Jesus had everything—He was the Creator of the universe, the King of Kings—but He chose to become poor, to humble Himself, and to give everything for our sake. He didn’t just give from His abundance; He gave His very life. Through His sacrifice, we are spiritually enriched.

Jesus didn’t hold anything back. He gave Himself fully, offering His life as a ransom for many. His generosity wasn’t just in His material gifts; it was in the way He gave His very essence—His time, His energy, His love, and ultimately, His life. He never held anything back from us, because His heart is love. His sacrifice cost Him everything, yet He was willing to give without reserve because He reflected the Father’s generous heart.

In speaking of the generosity of the Father’s heart towards us, Paul tells us in Romans 8:32: “He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?” Jesus, who gave everything for us, promises that He will provide for us. When we are called to follow Him in his generosity, we will find He doesn’t

hold back. His generosity is the ultimate display of grace, and because of that, we are called to live out generosity in our own lives.

Generosity is not about the amount we give; it's about the heart from which we give. It's about faithfulness with our loaves and fishes. The widow with her two small coins demonstrated that true generosity is rooted in surrender, sacrifice, and trust. The Macedonians gave out of their poverty, and their generosity was a powerful reflection of God's grace. And ultimately, Jesus is the perfect example of generosity—He gave His all so that we might become rich in Him.

As you reflect on the gift of generosity, remember that it's not about how much you have but how much you are willing to let go of for the sake of others. It's about living out the grace that God has given to you and allowing that grace to overflow into the lives of those around you.

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THIS WEEK'S QUESTIONS

In what areas of your life are you holding back from practicing generosity? How can you begin to let go and give freely?:_____

Is there any way that you have despised small beginnings, and undervalued generosity even at a small scale?_____

What are your five loaves and two fish? Can you offer them to Jesus, trusting that He is trustworthy with your investment?_____

A close-up photograph of a single, ripe orange hanging from a tree branch. The orange is bright orange and has a textured, bumpy skin. It is surrounded by dark green, glossy leaves. The background is blurred, showing more foliage and a hint of a sky. In the top right corner, there is a dark blue rectangular box containing the text "WEEK 2" in white, uppercase letters.

WEEK 2

THE FEET OF SERVICE

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served,
but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

MARK 10:45

When my wife and I moved to western Tennessee in the summer of 2022, we bought an old house that was in desperate need of some renovation. After what felt like a long 4 1/2 months of late nights and weekends full of blood, sweat, and how-to YouTube videos, we finally had a place to call our own. Our 1970s house was no mansion, but it was ours, and our work was done. Anyone who's tackled a major home improvement project can tell you nothing makes an open weekend feel better than having had the previous twenty all booked doing the same exhausting thing. I remember the distinct feeling of relief and gratitude we experienced waking up to our own space and a to-do list that looked more like furniture shopping than shuffling around in a dirty crawl space.

You can imagine the overwhelming feeling when, after a few weeks, our water pressure suddenly tanked. I knew nothing about how a well works, and once again I was planted squarely in the middle of a problem I had no idea how to handle. Enter Jesse. I was only calling my friend for advice on where to start the diagnostic process, but 20 minutes later Jesse was at my doorstep with tools and plumbing parts in hand, ready to serve in any way he could. Though he had his own responsibilities and projects, for the next few hours on that Saturday afternoon Jesse dug around in the mud, discovered the issue, replaced faulty pipe fittings, and got running water back to my house. He had dropped his own weekend project, and didn't receive anything for himself that day, yet Jesse succeeded in his mission. He had served me as if my needs were his greatest priority. From the outside it may have looked just like a friend helping out a friend with a faulty well, but for me that day I saw a deeper reality. I saw kindness. I saw sacrifice. I saw humility. I saw the grace of God through a member of His body operating in the gift of service the way it was intended to be exercised.

But is it really the grace of God when one is acting in service towards his fellow man? Many times service feels much more trivial and mundane than that. Weed whacking the next door neighbor's side of the ditch, cooking up breakfast for the hundredth time for kids that kept you up half the night, or emptying the trash that no one else seems to notice doesn't seem as glamorous as many manifestations of the grace of God. Sometimes it feels as though our acts of service are rather insignificant or inconsequential.

Our modern culture is no help in seeing the significance of serving either. We idolize those in the spotlight, those who hustle hard and elbow their way up the corporate ladder even when it costs others. We notice the flashy, the accomplished, the smart and good looking. We love big names, connections with people in high places, accolades and promotions. To the self-seeking heart, behind-the-scenes service gives no personal gain and has little appeal. But as followers of a servant King, we are called to embrace the value system of His upside down kingdom, not that of our self-glorifying culture. If our goal is to be like Jesus, it follows that we too must make service to the glory of God our priority.

That cold Saturday afternoon, I saw the grace of God through the gift of service because Jesse was living from values defined by that upside down Kingdom. His actions reflected those of the Son of Man, who "came not be served but to serve." (Mark 10:45 ESV) As believers, we have the same Spirit in us that Jesus has, and that Spirit is looking to invest His power in us so that we can spend it on those who are in need.

The Apostle Peter puts it this way: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks the oracles of God; whoever serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen."

Peter roots the gift of service in the reality that we are all recipients of the overarching gift of grace. While that grace has varied manifestations in the body of Christ, it all comes from the same source. Through the Spirit of God, we find both the muscle and the motive to live out lives of service. The muscle is that God is the one who supplies the strength; the motive, God is glorified through Jesus in everything we do—every seemingly insignificant act of service.

What if, rather than selfishly pursuing our own glory, we, strengthened by the same Spirit that Jesus has, lived out the Kingdom of God in our service to each other. If the Spirit of God is motivating our actions, people around us will recognize something different, something holy. Though they may not be able to define it, there is a glory that they are seeing—the glory of the Spirit of God being made manifest through His people.

Recently I read the incredible story of ultra-marathoner Tara Dower's record attempt for the fastest known time to hike the Appalachian Trail. Averaging around 54 miles a day, she managed to hike all 2,198 miles in just 40 days, 18 hours, and 5 min, beating the previous record by around thirteen hours. Ridiculous! What struck me in the story though was her awareness that such an attempt would have never been possible without the service of her crew. Her take was, "This isn't my [record] at all. I keep saying that. I'm just the runner." And she was right. From Maine to Georgia, her crew had hiked in her camping gear, taken turns running along with her, changed her shoes, taped and washed her feet, and even hand fed her at times. For 2,198 miles, her crew had made Tara's success their highest priority.

Reading this story, I had to think: What if we took that approach to the race we're all called to run? What if we served our neighbor in a way that would keep them rested, fed, and encouraged along the way. What if we carried their burdens? What if we, empowered by the Spirit of God would see the success of our fellow man's race as our highest priority? What

if we washed their feet?

This was the way of our Master while He was here on the earth, and it's the same way we are called to serve each other. His Spirit lives in us, and we are called to show His glory. Whether that's fixing water pressure issues or serving a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus, it's not wasted. Our God is a God that sees in secret, and He's a God that will reward openly.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTIONS

What are some areas in your life that you have received the grace of God?_____

Who is a member of your community or friends group that you see has a heavy load?_____

How can you, out of the grace you've been given, come along side them, help carry their load, and make their success your mission?_____





WEEK 3

THE HANDS OF MERCY

Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

LUKE 6:36

Rural Kenya in the mid-1950s is by no means an easy place to grow up. Poverty was already the norm. Add to that the challenge of an abusive, alcoholic father and a mother who left because of that abuse; any hope for a child's future seems dim. These are precisely the circumstances that Charles Mully found himself in during his early years. As a young boy, Mully had no choice but to beg on the streets for food, trying to survive the harshness of life. The streets of Kenya were a place where many like him were forgotten, where their stories were overlooked, and where hope seemed unattainable.

But Charles Mully's story didn't end there. Against all odds, at just seventeen years old, he managed to escape his dire situation and find work in Nairobi. It was there that he met his wife, Esther, and together they would go on to have eight children. Mully's early life had been one of extreme hardship, but through hard work and determination, he began to build a life that was nothing short of extraordinary. He started a transportation company called Mullyways Agencies, which later expanded into multiple business ventures, including real estate and oil. From a boy who once begged on the streets, Mully rose to become a successful businessman, positioning himself in a place where poverty would never touch him again.

But in a profound twist, Mully's story didn't end with wealth and success. Instead, it led him to a deeper calling—one that would cost him everything he had built. In the midst of his prosperity, Mully felt a call from God to give up his business empire and dedicate his life to rescuing orphaned and abandoned children. To answer the call, he'd have to come face to face again with his childhood nemesis—poverty. And Mully did. Out of mercy, he

stepped back into the mess that he had grown up in to rescue the hopeless from where he had once been. Today, through his organization, Mully Children's Family, he has provided care, shelter, and love to over 20,000 children, offering them a future they never thought possible.

Charles Mully's story is not just one of success; it is a living example of mercy in action—a mercy that saw beyond his own struggles to the suffering of others and responded with a life-altering choice to give to those who needed it most. In our world, mercy can often feel conditional. We extend kindness to those who are “good” or “deserving”—those who have shown some measure of effort, those who have lived “good” lives or are in a situation of their own making. But what about those who have nothing to offer? What about those who have made mistakes, lived recklessly, or been dealt a harsh hand in life through no fault of their own?

The tension we often feel in extending mercy is real. Do they deserve it? Do I owe it to

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them? What if they take advantage of it? It's easy to ask these questions when faced with someone who seems “unworthy” of kindness, whether that's a homeless person on the streets, someone who's hurt us, or someone who seems to have nothing to offer in return. But is mercy about worthiness, or is it about compassion?

The truth of Scripture answers this question. The Bible tells us in Luke 6:36, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” Mercy, in the biblical sense, is not about earning it; it's about giving it freely, as we have received it from God. The very nature of God is mercy—He extends compassion to those who are unworthy, to those who are lost and broken, and to those who don't deserve it.

In the case of Charles Mully, God's mercy didn't just reach out to him when he was a boy begging in the streets. God's mercy was extended to him as he became a successful businessman, and it continued to extend to him in the form of a deep calling to give up everything to care for orphaned children. Though he had worked hard, he realized that everything he had accomplished had been by the mercy of God. And then, just as God had shown him mercy, Mully was called to show that same mercy to others.

This is the essence of the spiritual gift of mercy: it's not about evaluating someone's worthiness or making sure they "earn" our compassion—it's about showing the same mercy that God has shown to us. As believers, we are called to live out this divine gift of mercy, not as a response to people's actions, but as an extension of God's love for all of humanity.

In Romans 12:8, Paul encourages us, "If it is to show mercy, let him do it cheerfully." Mercy is a gift that flows through us as we reflect the heart of God, and it is a gift that is given freely, without expectation of return. This is not a begrudging duty, but an invitation to walk in a joyful overflow of having received mercy when we deserved judgment.

The question we must all wrestle with is: How can we extend this same mercy to others? How do we show mercy to those who seem unworthy, to those who may have wronged us, or to those who can offer us nothing in return? The truth is, mercy begins with understanding that we, too, have received mercy. None of us are deserving of God's grace, yet He has poured it out on us abundantly. Our response, then, is to be merciful as He is merciful—without hesitation, without judgment, and without the expectation of anything in return.

Think about someone in your life right now who may be in need of mercy. It could be someone who has hurt you, someone who is struggling financially, or even someone who simply needs your forgiveness. Ask God to soften your heart and to help you see them the

way He sees them—with eyes of compassion and love. Extend mercy to them not because they deserve it, but because you have been shown mercy yourself.

Later in his life, Charles Mully once again found himself in a position to show mercy. This time it wasn't towards poor street kids, but towards someone else who was suffering from his own poor life choices—Mully's father. What does mercy do when facing someone who has so wronged you, who failed you so badly. In this case, it didn't pretend that no abuse had ever happened. It didn't give him ease and luxury. This time, mercy gave him a job of hauling firewood. It gave Mully's father an opportunity to restore dignity to his drunken past. It gave him another chance.

An act of mercy towards the undeserving doesn't always look like ignoring the wrongs done to it. Instead, sometimes it looks like giving them another chance to make things right—another chance to restore dignity.

Mercy is not about the recipient's worthiness; it's about our willingness to reflect God's heart. Just as Charles Mully received mercy and was transformed, we, too, can extend mercy to others, allowing God's love to flow through us. Mercy is not a transaction—it is a gift that we give freely, as God has given freely to us.

Let us be a people who extend mercy to all, just as we have been shown mercy by our Heavenly Father.

*Mercy is not a transaction—it is a gift
that we give freely, as God has given freely to us.*

THIS WEEK'S QUESTIONS

Who is someone in your life that you find difficult to show mercy to, and how can you overcome this challenge?_____

How has God shown mercy to you in your life, and how can you reflect that mercy to others?_____

In what practical ways can you extend mercy to someone this week, whether through forgiveness, compassion, or helping in their time of need?_____



WEEK 4

THE DNA OF LOVE

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4

In the world of business, there's a concept known as, "brand cohesion." It's the idea that every product, service, or communication from a company should consistently reflect the company's core values and identity. Think of it like the distinct logo, color scheme, or messaging that consistently shows up across all of a brand's touch points. If a company's products are sleek and modern, but their customer service and website are outdated and hard to navigate, it communicates a disingenuous message.

But when every part of the company—from the products to the people—reflects the same identity, there's a harmony that is unmistakable. It's as if the DNA of the company is the same across the board. This cohesion builds trust, recognition, and ultimately, a lasting relationship with customers. What if, as followers of Christ, we were to consider the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a similar way? What if each of us—no matter how different our gifts—were meant to ultimately reflect the DNA of God, that is, love.

If we're honest, we can sometimes struggle with the idea that all the gifts of the Spirit are equally important. We might think some gifts are more "visible" or "powerful" than others—like preaching or healing—and overlook the quieter, behind-the-scenes gifts like mercy, service, and generosity. It's tempting to think that the "flashier" gifts are the ones that make a real impact, but are they really more important? Are they more valuable in God's eyes?

Just as a company's products and services all reflect the same brand, the gifts given by the Holy Spirit reflect the same heart of God. Mercy, service, generosity, wisdom, knowledge,

healing—each of these gifts are valuable, not because of their outward display, but because they are all expressions of God’s love. The same God who extends mercy to us empowers us to show mercy to others. The same God who serves us through His Son empowers us to serve others. The same God who gives generously to us invites us to do the same. The grace that flows to us is the same grace that flows through us.

The apostle Paul speaks to this idea in 1 Corinthians 12, where he writes about the diversity of gifts within the body of Christ. He makes it clear that there is no “hierarchy” of spiritual gifts. All are important because all come from the same Spirit, and all are necessary for the well-being of the body. He says, “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them,” (1 Corinthians 12:4). Just as a company’s brand is unified, no matter what product or service is being offered, the gifts of the Spirit reflect the unity of God’s character and love.

In the same way, we need to understand that each gift, whether it is mercy, service, generosity, or something else, is a reflection of God’s character. These gifts aren’t about drawing attention to ourselves, but about pointing to Him. So, how does this understanding affect us? How do we live out the truth that all gifts are equally valuable in the eyes of God? It begins with shifting our mindset. Instead of valuing some gifts over others, we are called to see all gifts—whether big or small—as an opportunity to reflect the love of God.

If you have the gift of mercy, extend compassion to those around you. If you have the gift of service, look for ways to bless others in practical ways. If you have the gift of generosity, use your resources to support God’s work and to love others. These gifts may not always receive applause or recognition, but they are no less important than any other gift because they all are built from the same DNA of the Kingdom of God.

When my son Noah was born, I wasn’t prepared for what I would feel. I had heard plenty

of stories of guys saying they never understood the love of the Father until they had their own son. For me that January night, looking with awe through that glass nursery window, I couldn't help but feel that everything in my life that I had experienced, every mistake I had made, every lesson I had learned, was to do everything I could to give that precious boy the best start in life I could, by the grace of God. Previously, I had spent my fair share of time thinking about what I could accomplish in life, but in this moment, I knew his success was more important than my own. As his parent, I recognized the gifts I had been given were not to overshadow his potential but to help him grow into the man God had created him to be.

Sometimes we tend to look at our spiritual gifts like boy scout badges. We like the idea of having patches that show our prowess in spiritual matters. But gifts were never meant to be self serving. Jesus had every spiritual gift. They were often on display for the world to see. Yet He knew that every use of them was only to be for the benefit of those around Him. God calls us to exercise our gifts in humility. We are not to use them for our own glory but to point others to His glory. The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 4:10-11, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Our gifts are meant to serve others and bring glory to God, not to build our own brand.

The glory of God is seen in the world when His character is put on display through our actions, attitudes, and gifts. As image bearers of God, we are meant to reflect His heart and character, not to take the glory for ourselves. And this is the beauty of living out the gifts of the Spirit: when we use them to serve others, we show the world what God's love looks like in action.

Love, as we know, is costly. Walking in your gifting is costly. But it is also worth it. Love is the greatest gift of all, and when we express it through our unique gifts—whether through

mercy, service, generosity, or any other way—we reflect the very heart of Jesus. After all, love is not only costly for us. It was costly for the Son of God, whose DNA we now have through the Holy Spirit.

May we live with brand cohesion in mind—whether we have the gift of mercy, service, generosity or anything else—recognizing that all gifts are equal in value when they come from the same Spirit, reflecting the same love. May we live lives of expectancy that God loves to give His grace to us, so that it can flow through us. And may we use those gifts to build up others, point to the glory of God, and live lives worthy of the calling we have received.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTIONS

Do I believe in the core of my being that God wants to use me to show the DNA of His Kingdom to those around me?_____

Have I been undervaluing the gifts of mercy, service, or generosity, hoping for a “flashier” gift that gets more recognition?_____

Am I resting in the generous provision of the grace of God towards me so that in my costly love, I am still overflowing with that grace?_____



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