

In response to God's love, to the gift of life and new life, we are called to Worship. This is the first task of the church.

The second characteristic of the church we learned as to Pray and pray together - to ask God for our daily bread, our needs. As well brought up people we know the next response it to give thanks. At Harvest time this should be clear.

Another characteristic we are called to show, as individuals and as the church. (Begins with G)

### Generosity

It is the nature of God. We see it in God giving creation to us. Even if there was a good chance we might mess it.

Giving himself, as Jesus, even when we have messed it up and been disobedient. This is the calling of the church: to be like Jesus. To be extravagant with his love and mercy, to share it.

I sowed about 30 beans this year, I only wanted 12 at the most. I got at least 25 plants. I was able to give away lots.

Each of my plants produced probably at least 30 bean cases, some containing 5 and some with 10 beans inside. So say, 200 per plant so 2,400 beans. Very little skill from me, but blessed fortune and a gracious design of our creator God. Alleluia.

God wants us to be generous. In lot of ways, in every way. I could spend my life counting my beans, or I could do what? Mould and other pests.

I could spend my life counting my money or I could do what?

Gathering things and holding on to money leads to problems...

What?

Sharing money and things leads to what?

According to much research it is poorest places that are often most generous. Many travellers in rural Africa will vouch for this.

God will change our attitudes, help us to see he has given us enough to be generous. Living in faith in Jesus, really letting his love fill us and change us will lead to us being like him.

The Old Testament teaches about giving God the *first share* of your harvest, not of what is left over. It is called the *first fruits*...

Jesus did not hold back or tell us to hold back.

Try Matthew chapter 5 verses **42, 43. 44-48**

Looking forward, future generations and those around us depend on us to have a change of heart and to be Christ-like.

We pray for a harvest of hearts drawn closer to God and each other, yours and mine included.

*Ben Phillips*