

The Hidden Gem Amidst the Turmoil of COVID-19

COVID-19 has led to significant unemployment and has put millions of people in a financial crisis. We have to go back to the Great Depression to see this type of unemployment escalation and financial loss. This pandemic has adversely affected most people in many ways, including their pocketbooks. As a Christian community, we must meet this tragic situation face to face with prayer, encouragement and generosity.

I have had the privilege of serving as director of Modern Day Missions for the past nine years. For those of you who are unaware, Modern Day Missions is a missions partnering organization that provides services that enable missionaries to raise financial support. During my time as director, I have been deeply moved by the generosity and sacrifice of those supporting missionaries and the Great Commission. It is true that to fulfill the Great Commission, we must have those who go and those who send. Those who send and support are just as valuable and just as strategic.

It has been a common narrative in my world that whenever our economy would come into crisis, our giving would be the first thing to stop. I don't know where that narrative started or came from, but I have heard it from many fellow believers in various circles, basically saying, "When money gets tight, our giving will be the first thing to stop." Sadly, I had bought into that narrative until COVID-19. I was mistaken and joyfully found out that the true narrative is just the opposite.

I have found generosity and giving are not connected to people's pocketbooks but rather their hearts. Generosity is not founded on a salary or a dividend; it's founded in the

truth of God's Word and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. In other words, true generosity is selfless. It's not tied to our current circumstances but to the ethos of who we are as believers.

Giving and generosity is at the core of the gospel: "For God so loved the world that He gave" (John 3:16a, author's emphasis). Generosity is at the core of who God is. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:6-7), someone who, even in the midst of tough times, remains committed to his convictions. Now, I certainly understand that sometimes the money dries up, and we are left with no option. That is a very real thing, and something people all over the world are experiencing right now. My heart and prayers go out to them because I know there are extremely generous people who have had to stop giving due to job loss and other such situations. However, their current income does not determine their generosity—it merely postpones it until generous giving can once again resume.

At Modern Day Missions, we provide financial and administrative services for over 570 missionaries, and we have actually seen an increase in giving during COVID-19. In the midst of these uncertain times, people are still extravagantly giving to missionaries and staying committed to their financial pledges. Praise God! Generosity is winning; there is nothing that can keep down the heart of a giver.

Thank you to all who tithe to your local churches and give to missionaries and Christian organizations all over the world. Your role and significance are every bit as important as the missionaries in the nations, and we celebrate your generosity.

For more on how generosity has impacted Modern Day Missions, be sure to tune into the *Missions in the Modern Day* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eoa}