

“The world of the generous gets larger and larger.”

Proverbs 11:24 (The Message)

It is not possessions that Jesus criticizes but possessiveness. What we keep to ourselves is often necessary for our well-being. But as C.S. Lewis put it, we cannot receive a gift when our hands are full—and giving a gift is hard when we can't let go of things. Are our hands too full? Are we too possessive?

There is no simple solution to this concern. But how we handle it determines whether our world is large or small. As any parent knows, the time comes when letting go is essential if a child is to move successfully into the larger world of adulthood. As any partner knows, possessiveness can stifle the growth of a good relationship. As any friend knows, mutual understanding requires more than clinging to one's own point of view. And as any of us knows when facing an uncertain future, some things are going to have to be left behind.

As with letting go, the real question of giving is not what we can do but how much we don't want to lose. If there's a risk in letting go or giving too freely, there's a greater risk in holding onto too much. Jesus said, “If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it.” Possessiveness kills.

“Touch us, O God, with your peace that we may become less fearful and more open to a larger life when we live, and give, more freely in the spirit of Christ.”

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God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
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