

Open Hands Open Heart

By Ifor Williams

Review by Dennis Fancett

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This book contains an amazingly comprehensive review of what the Bible tells us about God's heart for generosity, going well beyond the normal favourite "go to" passages. It starts by contrasting God's nature of being a comprehensive and overwhelming giver with that of the human propensity to be takers. Subsequent sections deal with what the Old Testament, Jesus and Paul say about giving, and a final section looks at putting it all in to practice.

Although theologically thorough, the book is written in a light, easy to read style (though difficult to avoid being deeply challenged) and is interwoven with Ifor's personal story as Baptist pastor in South Wales. Behind the scenes therefore, we gain glimpses of a Church that grew rapidly as Ifor investigated generosity and embedded his findings both in his own life and that of the Church community.

For UK readers, it's encouraging to find a book from a British rather than American cultural perspective, and also one that includes a firm renunciation of so called "prosperity gospel" teaching, whilst nevertheless imploring us to open our hearts and minds to see God's faithfulness, and to give freely, willingly and generously. In short, this book is a "must-read" for anyone who seriously wants to explore the Bible's teachings on generosity and let God nudge them to take some bold, further steps in their own personal journey.

This book is also available to loan from the [North East Religious Resource Centre](#)