

# Generosity Conversation In A Worship Setting

A Framework by Dave Travis

*Frameworks help us think about issues so we can have meaningful conversations with our teams about future directions. Use this tool to have a conversation with your team about the types of water hoses you use to grow your congregation in generosity. We'll explain about the use of hoses in a few moments.*

## **Client Question: “How much should I speak of Generosity Issues in a worship setting?”**

This question has two extreme answers. One is “never” and the other is “all the time.” Neither is correct in our opinion.

Often, the above former answer is expressed by a pastor who communicated a big vision and made an ask during Vision Sunday and saw little increase in generosity of the church community in the days or weeks afterward.

The latter answer is expressed by some core impact givers who fear that overemphasis on generosity issues hurts the total generosity of the community.

## **Reframing the question, and our recommendation to you.**

Let's think of this issue as related by Jim Sheppard, one of the principals of Generis.

We need three different water hoses to properly address Scripture's teaching on this issue. Each hose—fire hoses, garden hoses, and soaker hoses—have a different purpose and a different result.

### **Fire Hoses**

**Idea:** Fire hoses connect to hydrants and multi-inch water lines to spray large volumes at one time. They have some nozzles that disperse the spray somewhat. You apply that water to a fire in the hopes of extinguishing it quickly. Much of the water drains off and is lost, but some does the job.

**Principle:** We use the fire hose on an issue that we need to address that day or season. We want to apply it with force and with emphasis. We want as many people to know the issues and needs right then. We are calling for decisions and actions.

**Examples:** This is the vision weekend or big-day push where we have built programming and collateral around the announcement and want to give exclusive emphasis to what God has called our congregation toward in the next season. We will focus all our energy and spray toward that end.

### **Garden Hose**

**Idea:** Garden hoses are used to water a specific area, as needed. We apply water directly to the shrub, tree, or area of the yard to get it started well in growing, or provide enough water in a drought to keep it alive. We still lose some of the water, but less than when using the fire hose method because we are delivering it where it is needed right now.

**Principle:** We use garden-hose thinking when we are speaking about issues to specific groups like staff, key volunteers, and high-impact givers. The garden hose principle says we need to remind these groups on a regular basis to help nurture them in their growth.

We can also apply this hose to targeted groups that may not be giving to the church. We can give them invitations to join with us on special projects.

**Examples:** These are the dessert fellowships, small team vision meetings for appreciation, or special events for select groups such as a “Journey of Generosity” retreat. These could also include other small group curriculums done with subsets of the church community as they request. They can also include special classes on handling finances in a godly way. We also use these for new participant orientation to ask them to make a commitment to building God’s Church with their generosity.

## Soaker Hose

**Idea:** These are the drip hoses that are used to apply small amounts of water continuously to a plant or area to cause things to flourish. They use much less water, but applied over time, in small amounts, yield great results. The ideology is: “A little, all the time.”

**Principle:** We use soaker hoses to continually remind and reinforce God’s provision for all of us and our need to be generous. These are the regular applications of little reminders weekly that God cares for us, and we can care for others in our giving.

**Example:** The best example is the two-sentence offering moment statement. “Thanks to your generosity we helped 25 families last month in our benevolence ministry,” or “Thank you for being generous. Our campus missionary at State U told us this week of five recent decisions for Christ. You help support that in your giving.” Another example could be the statement in a print piece or email that cites specific recent examples that remind people of how their giving is used to advance the mission.

Churches need all three of these hoses to build ongoing, healthy generosity approaches.

## Questions for your team:

- Which hoses are we using right now and how?
- Are we strong in some areas and weak in others?
- What do the examples trigger for our creative thinking?
- How can we apply this thinking to other areas of our work?
- Is it time to do a Generosity Audit with Generis to check our progress?

Many of these ideas are covered by our Generis Generosity Strategists in their work with churches in our various processes, including our generosity coaching program.

Talk to your Generis Consultant for dozens of other ideas and tactics to make this happen in your church.

## Get Started TODAY

To explore these ideas further, get connected to a Generis Generosity Strategist: The first call is free to explore with us.

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