

THANK YOU FOR
bringing hope
TO THE HOMELESS IN ISRAEL!

Asaf, a 33-year-old drug addict had no interest in Jesus when he met Igal Vender during a street outreach. He accepted the invitation to a pop-up café for a free meal, but no sooner had he finished eating than he was ready to leave. “Wait, can I pray for you?” Igal asked. “You can do whatever you want,” Asaf shrugged, as he made his way back out to the street.

Igal kept an eye out for Asaf and gradually built a relationship with him. Asaf’s story was heartbreaking. He had immigrated to Israel with his father, leaving one of the poorest countries in Eastern Europe, hoping for a better life.

Those hopes were dashed when Asaf could not find a job that would cover rent and other basic needs. Getting high with some guys on the street seemed like the only way to escape the harshness of his new reality. Eventually, Asaf became a heroin addict. Petty theft to pay for his habit landed him a two-year prison sentence. He was back on the streets and using when Igal met him.

Asaf refused Igal’s many invitations to his congregation’s ministry rehab house, but gradually began to welcome offers of prayer. Slowly but surely, Asaf’s heart began to soften.

He finally came to the rehab house—where it became obvious that God was doing something remarkable!

continued on page 4



Igal (right) serves with our Israel team in collaboration with Christian Witness for Israel

Don't miss

David Brickner’s encouraging and very shareable Thanksgiving thoughts – page 2

The double impact your partnership makes as we serve the homeless in Tel Aviv – page 4

Thanksgiving:

so much more than a food fest!

BY DAVID BRICKNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This November, I'm especially thankful for the incredible generosity of the early church—and I'm excited for what it means to us today.

The early church community cared generously for its members—which was enormously important to the success of the Christian mission. It was also in stark contrast to the norms of the surrounding culture.

Roman Emperor Julian wrote, “The impious Galileans support not only their own poor but ours as well.” Maybe the emperor resented the church’s generosity because he recognized a power in it that he could not control.

And I believe that power, that generosity was (and continues to be) fed by thankful, grateful people.

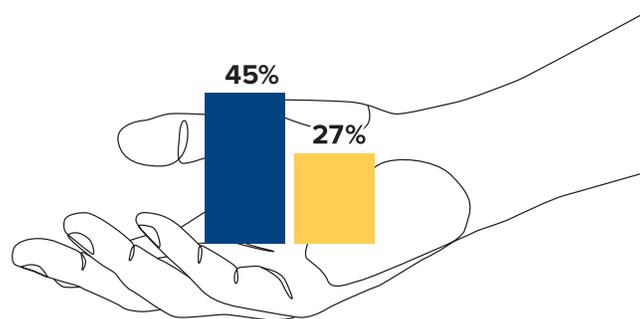
Grateful people are usually generous. They give freely of their time, their attention, their encouraging words—and when needed, their finances.

Today we see some striking examples of generosity in our popular culture—striking because *they are not the norm*. Consumerism is the norm, and it’s not just about food or merchandise. Most people consume far more information and entertainment than we need—because it’s so easily accessible, especially through our smartphones.

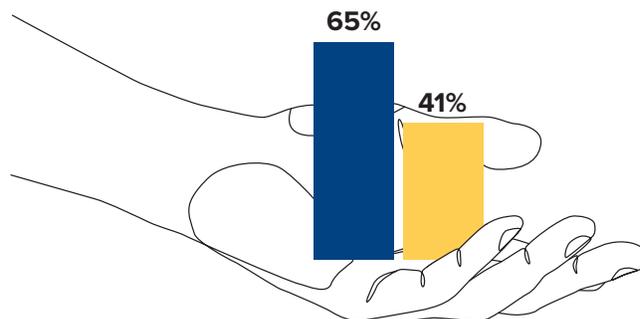
Consumerism doesn’t encourage gratitude; it’s designed to shape our desires and convince us that we always need more. The church was built on a different kind of consumerism that was and is countercultural. As we consume God’s Word—learn it, pray it, believe and trust it—we are satisfied. What we consume makes us grateful and eager to give back.

According to a new Barna study, **generosity is still alive and well in the Christian community**. In fact,

almost nine in ten practicing Christians say that generosity is either “extremely” or “very” important to them.



Percent of participants who had volunteered time within seven days of taking the generosity survey



Percent of participants who had given money, time, or goods to the poor within seven days of taking the generosity survey

- Practicing Christians
- All Americans

Did you know that 58% of homeless shelters are run by Christian organizations? Local congregations

JEWS FOR JESUS. WE RELENTLESSLY PURSUE GOD’S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

Jews for Jesus operates in twelve countries, with international headquarters at 60 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-5895; phone: (415) 864-2600; email: jfj@jewsforjesus.org; web: jewsforjesus.org; editor: Ruth Rosen; art director: Paige Saunders; design and illustration: Laura Pineda; Text and photos © Jews for Jesus unless otherwise indicated. ISSN 0740-5901, Volume 02:5780, November 2019.





Prayer Prompts

When you pray, God works in a big way!

Please help by praying for:

- next month's stepped-up online chat outreach: Dec. 9–30
- grace and strength for new Jewish believer Asaf in Israel, and that he remain drug free
- God's continued blessing as we serve homeless people and invite others to join us
- the many individuals who were curious about our beliefs when they attended the recent event in Tel Aviv about serving the homeless
- new ministry partners to pray for and financially support our missionaries around the world
- our holiday outreaches around the world as many people look forward to Hanukkah and Christmas

provide 130,000 alcohol recovery programs. They run 120,000 programs for the unemployed and 26,000 programs to help those with HIV/AIDS. The bulk of volunteers mentoring prisoners—while incarcerated and after release—are Christians.

What is the root of such generosity?

First is the understanding that everything belongs to God.

Everything belongs to God, and all things were created by his power. (Hebrews 2:10, Contemporary English Version)

If God owns it all, He has infinite resources to bless us so we, in turn, can bless others. We don't have to cling fearfully to all we've got. We don't need the distractions of materialism to block out life's painful realities because He promises to help us through them. We're free to be proactive about honoring God with the money He has given us.

Second, **generosity flows out of gratitude for what Jesus did for us.**

And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. (Philemon 1:6, New Living Translation)

Many Christians see compassion as the best motivation for generosity, but I respectfully disagree—although not with the importance of compassion (as you see by the front cover of this newsletter). It's just that too often people link compassion with guilt as a motivation to give. God wants joyful givers, not guilty givers! But there's something else to consider. When our generosity is motivated by compassion, it's easy to focus on what we can do. When it is motivated by gratitude, it's always about what God has done.

Generosity is contagious

The early church was full of grateful, generous people who inspired others to be the same. People like Barnabas (see Acts 4 and Acts 11).

Who in your church community exemplifies and inspires your generosity? Who might want to be generous because of your example? It's great to identify those who inspire us within the church . . . but there is One whose generous example is matchless.

Jesus gave all He had in ways that we can only begin to imagine . . . and God gave it all back to Him, and more. So Happy Thanksgiving—we are so grateful for your generosity to Jews for Jesus! Together, may we ever be grateful and generous because of all that we have in Him.



Receive our monthly news electronically, along with bonus stories, prayer requests & Bible resources!

Write to jfj@jewsforjesus.org and ask to hear from Jews for Jesus via email, or go to jewsforjesus.org/subscribe and make sure to give your email address.

For your convenience

The enclosed envelope is not a request, but a convenience for those who want to give. For those who want to give online, this URL makes it easy and secure: j4j.co/nl1911

You are making a double impact in Tel Aviv AS YOU HELP US SERVE THE HOMELESS

We are Messianic Jews who want to love and serve the homeless as Jesus taught us.

Danielle Stavi, one of our Tel Aviv team leaders, was very clear as she addressed more than 70 Israelis who had packed out the Moishe Rosen Center.

Danielle and her team planned the event to raise local Israelis' awareness of people who live on the streets and how to care for them.

After making it clear who and what we stand for (Jesus!), Danielle gave an open invitation. "No matter what your belief or background, we are looking for people who want to help restore the lost hope of those living on the streets." There was silence in the room.

Danielle then introduced two expert guest speakers, neither of whom know Jesus yet. Danielle and her team have had conversations with both experts about our faith, and they in turn have shared information about homelessness, addiction, why

people live on the street, how best to treat them, etc.

Several who attended the event asked about the beliefs of our staff and volunteers. For example, two girls came up to Hadass, one of our volunteers, and asked what it means to be a Messianic Jew. They listened with interest as she explained her faith. One asked, "Why did you choose to tell us that you are Messianic? Are you speaking to us as 'missionaries'?"

Hadass replied, "We want to be clear on who we are and where we are from. It is important for us to share that Jesus is the source of our motivation." The girls thanked Hadass for her honesty, and at the end of the evening made a point to say how much they appreciated the event.

Please know that as you partner with Jews for Jesus, you are making it possible for us to do so many things, including helping the homeless, inspiring others to care for them . . . and showing people what it means to follow Jesus in the process!



Danielle speaking at our event to raise awareness in support of the homeless in Tel Aviv



Thank you for bringing hope to the homeless in Israel!

bringing hope Continued from page 1

Asaf had clearly come to the end of himself. He accepted a copy of the Scriptures from Igal, and they read and discussed John's gospel. He also sat in on the daily study groups at the house, and eventually, he was able to smile.

About three months after Igal began meeting with Asaf, he reported, "Today, we studied Matthew 8:23–27, where Yeshua (Jesus) calmed the storms. Asaf told me that from the moment he entered the rehab house, he felt someone calming

his raging spiritual storm. He told me that he wanted to ask God to forgive his sin. He wanted Yeshua in his life. I had the joy of leading him in a prayer of faith in Yeshua as his Messiah and Lord."

Please pray for Asaf as he takes his first steps in faith, that he will grow and mature and remain drug free. Igal asks for prayer as he continues to study the Bible with Asaf and as he prepares him for baptism.

Names are changed to protect privacy.