

## Sermon Notes

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 1.19.2025

## GRACE-DRIVEN GENEROSITY - PART 2

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written,

“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor;

his righteousness endures forever.”

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

### II. PRINCIPLES OF BOUNTIFUL GENEROSITY

#### 1. GIVE GENEROUSLY

- v6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully
- Though he is using an agricultural metaphor, we don't have to be farmers to understand this.
- Paul's point: Don't be stingy in your giving. Give generously!
  
- But Paul is not preaching a health/wealth gospel. He is giving us a biblical principle of God's economy of sowing and reaping.
- God will cause our own reaping to be bountiful, but he is not saying, give so that you can get more bountifully in return.
- When you give generously, joyfully, sacrificially, God takes that into account and he causes us to reap bountifully.

- Part of the picture of the farmer's sowing is about trust. The truth has a spiritual component. Generous giving reflects our trust in God's provision.
- Paul holds up the Macedonian churches as examples of generosity because in the natural, they would be the least likely candidates to give joyfully, generously, and sacrificially, above and beyond their means.
- The grace of God does something to us; we see God's immense generosity, we see his open hands towards us, we see him as our provider, and it enables us to live open-handed.
- The principle of sowing and reaping is all throughout Scripture.
- Proverbs 11:24-25 One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. 25 Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.
- Luke 6:38 Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

## CURRENT TRENDS IN GIVING TO CHURCHES

- According to a recent report by Tithely, a giving platform for churches and nonprofits:
  - The average church attendee gives less than 2.5% of their income to the church.
  - In terms of churchgoers who practice tithing, only 5% regularly tithe to their local church.
  - Over the past four decades, charitable giving to religious organizations has decreased from 63% to 24%.
  - Another report tracking giving by regular churchgoers noted that 37% of those who regularly attend a service do not give at all to their church.
  - While there are a number of factors driving these giving trends in religious organizations, the fact of the matter is that giving overall is in decline.
- Ask yourself: What holds me back from being a generous giver?

## 2. GIVE INTENTIONALLY

7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

### a. Am I supposed to tithe?

- There are various views regarding the continuation of the tithe for NT believers.
- The tithe is part of the law that was abrogated, or done away with, by Christ's coming.
- Christians must tithe. It has not been abolished in the NT.
- Grace-giving is what the NT teaches.
- Tithe means a "tenth."
- In the OT the tithe was used to support the temple and the priesthood, for the provision of the feasts, and to help orphans, widows, and the poor.
- The actual giving under the Mosaic law was closer to 25%.
- Leviticus 27:30 "Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord.
- Proverbs 3:9 Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
- God's people were commanded to give to the Lord first, not last.
- In the NT, Jesus validates old covenant tithing in his interaction with the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23:23).
- But there are no commands after the gospels in the Apostolic writing concerning the tithe for NT believers.

- The tithe is not commanded, nor has it been explicitly rescinded. And that's why so many are divided over this issue.
- What we do know is that every NT example or teaching of giving goes beyond and exceeds the mandatory tithe.
- Early church fathers like Origen, Jerome, and Augustine taught the tithe was the minimum that a Christian should give.
- Randy Alcorn, author and founder of Eternal Perspectives Ministry, calls tithing, *"The training wheels of giving."*
- The NT apostolic writers seem to be teaching grace-giving.
- Grace-driven generosity gives us permission to give less, but it also motivates and empowers us to give more.
- We should never argue, *"Well, I'm under grace, not the law, so I don't have to give."*
- We don't earn salvation through our giving.
- Grace is about the overwhelming generosity of God toward hellbent sinners.
- Grace does give us the power to become generous people like our Lord.
- Grace frees us from our selfishness and tendencies to hoard up treasures here on earth.
- That's why Paul points us to the example of Christ and his work on our behalf.

b. How much should I give?

- How does Paul answer the question of how much am I supposed to give?
- Notice, he doesn't give a number.
- First, he writes, "each one must give...", every believer is expected to contribute, that's the norm.
- 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.
- What should they give? *"...as he has decided in his heart."*
- It's a matter of Christian conviction.
- After evaluating what God has blessed you with, the resources you have at your disposal, after you consider and reflect on what sacrificial giving looks like to you, give what you have decided.
- God does not expect us all to give the same amount.
- We're expected to give in proportion to how God has blessed us.
- 2 Corinthians 8:11-12 So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. 12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.
- You give in proportion to what God has blessed you with.
- You also give according to the needs presented. 2 Corinthians 8:14 "Your abundance at the present time should supply their need, that they may be fairness."
- Acts 4:34-35 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold 35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.
- Additionally Paul writes that one must not give "...reluctantly or under compulsion..."
- We shouldn't give begrudgingly. We are recipients of lavish grace.
- Reluctant givers always hold back. They're not thinking about how much they can give but rather how much they can keep.
- We also should not give under compulsion, being coerced and manipulated to give.

- We should give willingly, voluntarily.
  - Spurgeon commented on this verse, that the Christian, should “*be like the honeycomb, dripping spontaneously with fresh honey.*”
  - Our giving should be intentional, purposeful, willing.
- Ask yourself: When was the last time I spent time in prayer seeking the Lord as to how much I should give?

### 3. Give Joyfully

- “...for God loves a cheerful giver.”
  - The Macedonian churches gave out of an abundance of joy.
  - We should give from a heart that overflows with joy and gratitude.
  - The question isn’t “how much should I give?” But rather, the attitude with which we should give.
  - Giving must be from the heart.
  - God loves a cheerful giver. It delights God when his children give from willing, joyful hearts, motivated by his grace.
  - A cheerful giver approaches their giving with a worshipful heart.
  - A heart that gives the right gift with the right motive.
  - A cheerful giver gives with wholehearted devotion, always desiring to give more than they do.
- Ask yourself: Do these attitudes characterize my giving? How can I better cultivate them in my life?

## III. GOD'S PROVISION AND GRACE IN OUR GENEROSITY

- V8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.
  - We should give expectantly because of what God gives us so that we can give generously, intentionally, and joyfully.
  - This is what God promises to give as we obey in this act of grace-driven generosity.
  - Nothing is left out! God is able to supply what we need; spiritually, materially, and physically.
  - Why? So that we can “abound in every good work.”
- Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
  - In the natural, we would see that the person who gives is the person who loses something.
  - But that doesn’t seem to be the case with the grace-driven giver.
  - He will give us all necessary grace, he will provide us with the means and resources and the opportunities to abound in every good work of generosity.
- V9 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.
  - Even before we give, God is giving to us!
  - God will supply and multiply our seed, not to keep, but for sowing, for continual giving.
  - He provides the resources and opportunities for expressions of grace-driven generosity.
  - The person who gives generously will never lack seed for sowing.
  - If you want to give more, it starts with giving more. A

- And the more you give, the more you will be able to give as God supplies more seed for sowing.
- Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."
- God blesses people in proportion to how they have blessed others.
- Proverbs 19:17 Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.
- Proverbs 22:9 Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.
- There is a blessing in giving!
- V10 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way..."
- When God blesses us we should not see that as an opportunity to increase our standard of living but to increase our standard of giving.
- What do we reap for sowing generously, bountifully, joyfully, cheerfully, driven by the grace of God?
- We reap a harvest of righteousness.
- We are not in charge of what form the harvest will take. We just sow the seed and God does what he will through it.
- God will increase the harvest of your righteousness.
- Sometimes God will bless us materially and financially.
- God will bless you with what you need. He will give you more grace.
- In God's divine wisdom, the harvest will always be what we need, not what we think it should be.

## IV. THE IMPACT OF OUR GENEROSITY

### 1. Greater thanksgiving and glory to God.

- The generous, joyful, sacrificial generosity of God's people produces thanksgiving to God (11).
- It overflows in many thanksgiving to God (12)
- God is glorified by those who are the recipients of our generosity (13).
- God is praised and glorified when God's people give generously from our own obedience that comes from our confession of the gospel.
- That should motivate our generous giving, that God will be praised and honored and glorified through our joyful, sacrificial giving.

### 2. People's needs are met.

- V12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.
- When you give to Sent Church, people's needs are met through the ministry of this church.
- When you help a brother or sister in need directly, they are helped. God is supplying their needs through you which results in them glorifying God.
- You become an instrument of grace helping them in their time of need. They will see the grace of God upon you.

## CONCLUSION

- Give generously, joyfully, sacrificially. Only you know what that looks like for you.
- Cultivate the habit of consistent giving.
- Bless people anonymously.
- Give to God first.
- Some need to go from static to sporadic. From no giving, to more frequent giving.

- Some need to go from sporadic to systematic. From infrequent giving to consistent giving (set up recurring donations.)
- Some need to go from systematic to sacrificial. From consistent giving to asking God how they can give above and beyond their means.
- Paul closes in v15, with a beautiful doxology.
- V15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!
- Our giving is always to be in response to the greatest gift of all—God’s gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.
- Let’s examine our hearts, let’s reflect on our attitudes towards giving.
- Let’s be a people who sow bountifully, give cheerfully, always trusting in God’s gracious provisions, and recognizing the impact of our generosity.
- May God’s indescribable gift motivate us to respond with hearts full of gratitude and generosity, that overflows into many thanksgivings to God.

## **APPLICATION AND REFLECTION**

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?