

ORDER OF SERVICE

January 22, 2023

Worship in Fellowship
Worship in Music
Worship in the Lord's Table
Worship in Message
Worship in Giving

Jeremy Mikeska
Wayne Braudrick

Flourishing as Opportunity Providers

Proverbs 28

Flourishing for Good Series

Life Change: We provide opportunities

Celine Armstrong and Little Island...

Discerning righteousness should be used to bless 2, 12, 15, 28

“What is meant by ‘The Common Good’?”

The common good is received grace overflowing to others. More than doing no harm, common good decidedly pursues blessing for all. It is not in opposition to private good, nor determined merely by numerical benefit, nor based on fear. It is expressed in various means through and beyond law. – WB

Integrity fosters lasting opportunities

6

Humble self-awareness brings prosperity

13, 11, 26

There is no substitute for patient, hard work

19-20

Greed destroys self and others

22, 24-25

Ecclesiastes 5:10 still holds true: “Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.”

Man’s sinful tendency is toward greed and love of the wealth God provides for him to manage. Greed turns the purposes of the wealth inward instead of outward, resulting in misallocation of resources. The love of wealth and its pursuit pulls man away from his Creator and wastes his given days in pursuit of futility. It results in a pointless, unfulfilling, selfish existence. – Dan Cox

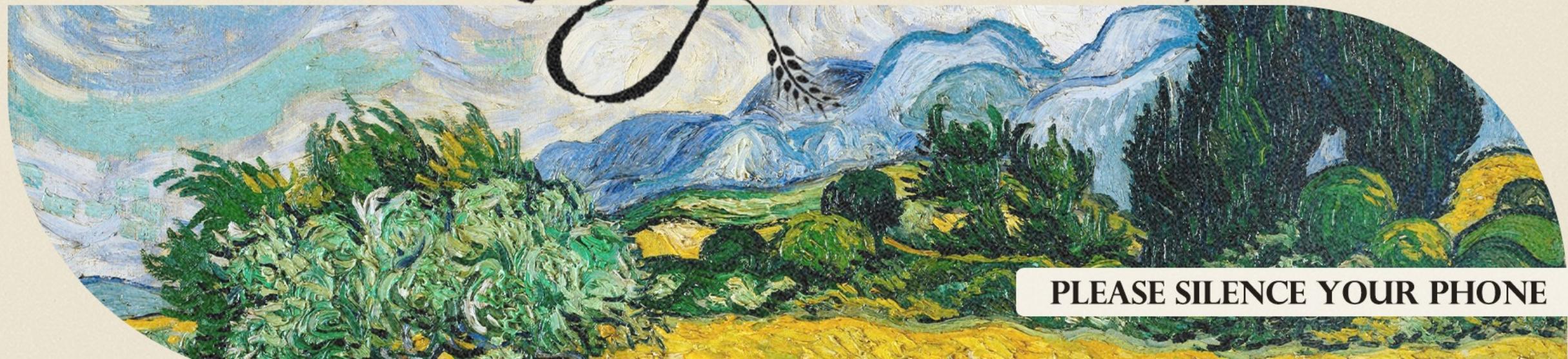
Generosity provides opportunity

27, 8

Whoever you are, let flourishing begin with you. Wherever you live, let opportunity creation start with you. Whatever you have, use it for the common good.



Flourishing For Good



PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE



courtesy 6sqft

A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark pants, is sitting on wooden bleachers. She is looking to her right with a slight smile. The bleachers are made of light-colored wood and have numbers printed on them. In the background, there are trees and a structure with stage lights. The sky is overcast.

**Celine Armstrong
at Little Island Park
amphitheater**

I know God cares about the 9 million people who live here. I want to improve their experience with the gifts and opportunities I have been given. On our Missouri farm, I was raised to be an opportunity provider. Daddy made sure we were all good stewards.

– Celine Armstrong in

Christina Stanton,

“She Built an Island of

Green in a Concrete Desert”





courtesy St. James Spanish Chapel, London

Proverbs 28

**² When a land is in rebellion, it has many rulers,
but with a discerning and knowledgeable person, it endures.**
CSB

Proverbs 28

**² When a land is in rebellion, it has many rulers,
but with a discerning and knowledgeable person, it endures.**

**¹² When the righteous triumph,
there is great rejoicing,
but when the wicked come to power,
people hide.**

**¹⁵ A wicked ruler over a helpless people
is like a roaring lion or a charging bear.**

**²⁸ When the wicked come to power,
people hide,
but when they are destroyed,
the righteous flourish. ^{CSB}**

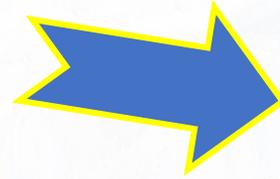


courtesy Columbia/Playtone; See the movie and watch Otto's development in this regard.

Building the common good

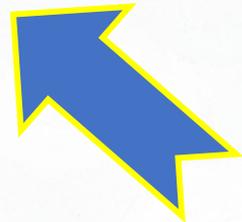
FLOURISHING

²⁸ When the wicked come to power, people hide, but when they are destroyed, the righteous flourish. ^{CSB}



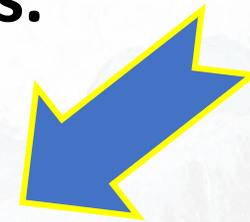
UNITY

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JOY

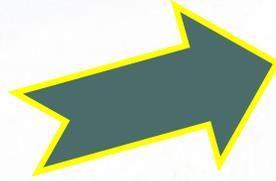
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Destroying the common good

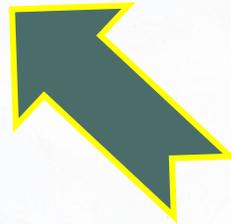
DESPOTISM

¹⁵ A wicked ruler over a helpless people is like a roaring lion or a charging bear.



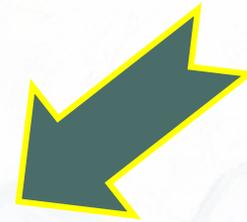
DIVISION

² When a land is in rebellion, it has many rulers, but with a discerning and knowledgeable person, it endures.



FLIGHT

¹² When the righteous triumph, there is great rejoicing, but when the wicked come to power, people hide.



**Whadaya mean
by “The Common
Good?”**

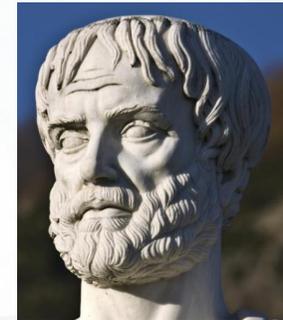


What is the Common Good?



Most ancient thinkers: a debt owed to the civitas. They were consumed with the whole, and their focus was the need of each citizen to do his or her best for the state.

Aristotle: whatever does the most good for the greatest number of citizens.



Thomas Aquinas: the best different means that achieve good for the greatest numbers.

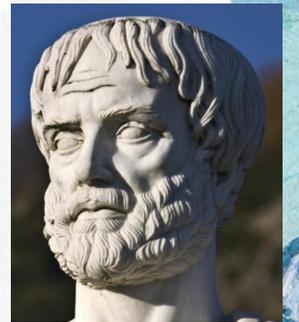
[See Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good. By Mary M. Keys.]

What is the Common Good?

Most ancient thinkers: a debt owed to the civitas; consumed with the whole.



Aristotle: whatever does most good for the greatest number of citizens; consumed with individuals.

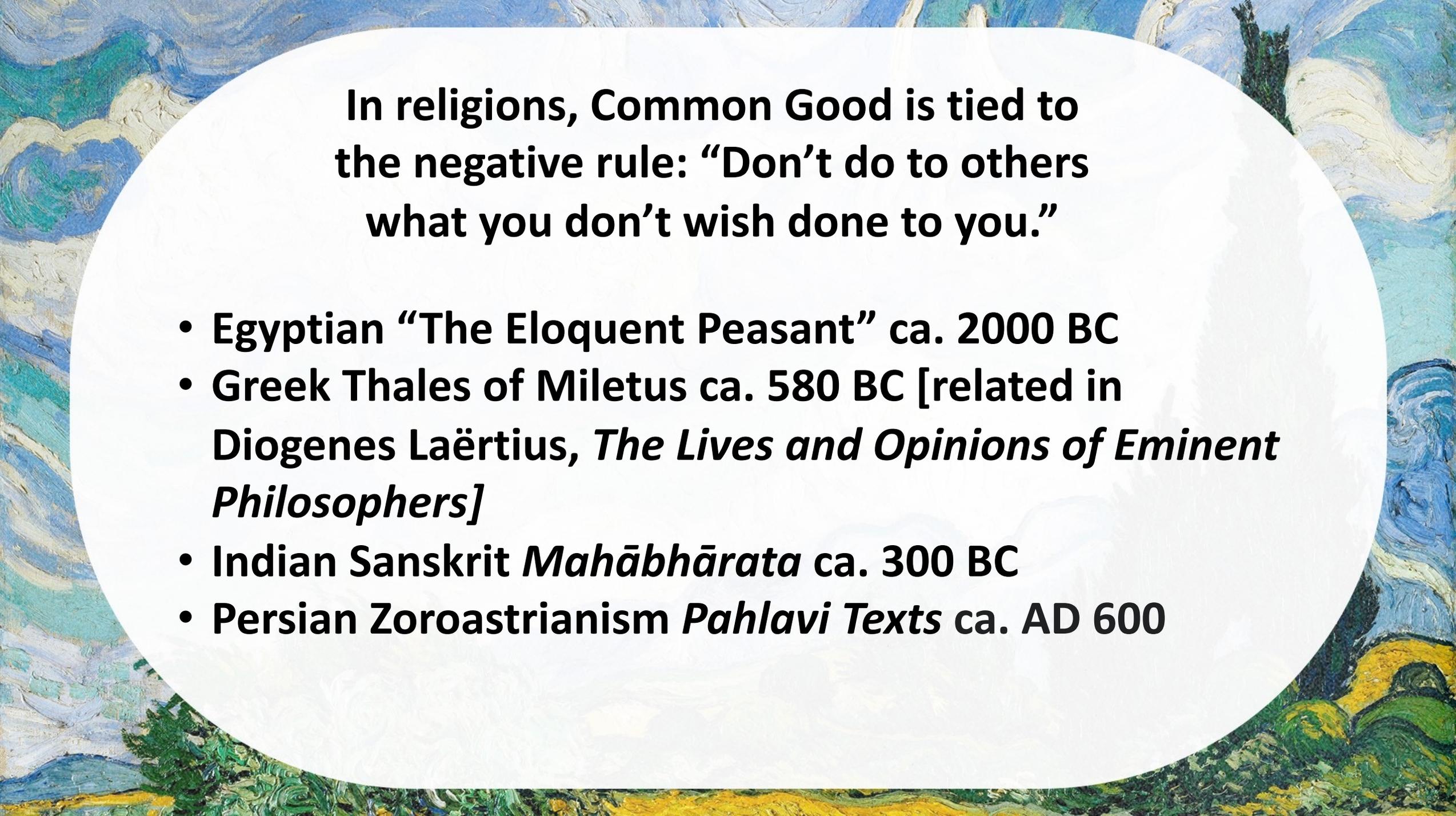


Thomas Aquinas: best different means that achieve good for greatest numbers; consumed with decisions



Modern secularists like Waheed Hussain: moving target; consumed with a supposedly inherent conflict between personal and public good.





In religions, Common Good is tied to the negative rule: “Don’t do to others what you don’t wish done to you.”

- **Egyptian “The Eloquent Peasant” ca. 2000 BC**
- **Greek Thales of Miletus ca. 580 BC [related in Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*]**
- **Indian Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* ca. 300 BC**
- **Persian Zoroastrianism *Pahlavi Texts* ca. AD 600**

In the Bible, common good is viewed as flowing from God's gifts. It's most fully seen in the NT, where providing for the common good flows from the new life in Christ. Christians are consumed with Jesus' grace.





**Luke 6:31 Just as you want others
to do for you,
do the same for them. ^{CSB}**

**Matthew 10:8 Freely you received,
freely give. ^{CSB}**

Christianity: the common good = giving by grace.

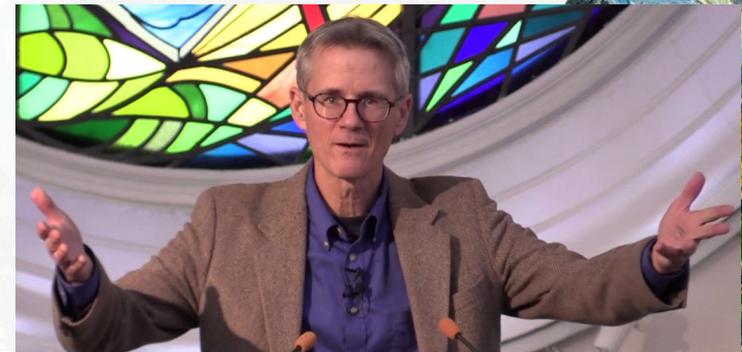
- **not as a conflict**
- **not a legal obligation.**
- **not consumed with measured outcomes.**
- **positive rule of Jesus, not negative legalism of religions**



Galatians 5

4 You who are trying to be justified by the law are alienated from Christ; you have fallen from grace. ^{CSB}

Grace here has its common good meaning...The Galatians who were seeking to be justified by works had fallen *from the presence of God's favor* [into] His displeasure, not His pleasure. – Bob Wilkin, *The 10 Most Misunderstood Words in the Bible*



What is the Common Good?

- **Ancient & most Roman Catholic thinkers see common good as the best different means that achieve good for the greatest numbers.**
- **Modern secularists see common good as a likely barrier to private flourishing.**
- **Religions see common good hinging on the negative legal rule of “do no harm.”**
- **NT Christians see common good as compounding received grace.**



**In deeply divided societies,
there is a need to construct a
shared notion of the
“common good.” – Maximilian
Jaede, “The Concept of the
Common Good” [a University
of Edinburgh project]**

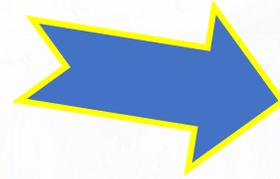
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Building the common good

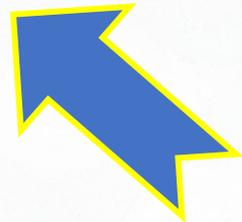
FLOURISHING

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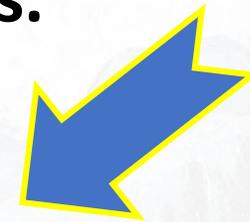
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JOY

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Proverbs 28

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One of the more impressive qualities Armstrong brought to the table was her ability to move the project forward at the head of a large and opinionated team. Armstrong oversaw a world-renowned group of design architects, landscape architects, engineers, and multiple client stakeholders...She was able to command a room while oftentimes being the youngest one in it.

– Christina Stanton, “She Built an Island of Green in a Concrete Desert”





Proverbs 28

**⁶ Better the poor person who
lives with integrity
than the rich one who distorts
right and wrong. ^{CSB}**

Kindergarten friends



Whitfield – retired one-star admiral in US Coast Guard. Father & mother were enlisted military and somehow kept 5 kids fed. They were integrous.

Mikawa – brain surgeon saving lives. Father was a cook, mom a homemaker. They lived with integrity, albeit rather poor.

Murphy – oncologist. Father drove a truck, mom a homemaker. They lived with integrity, even if poor.

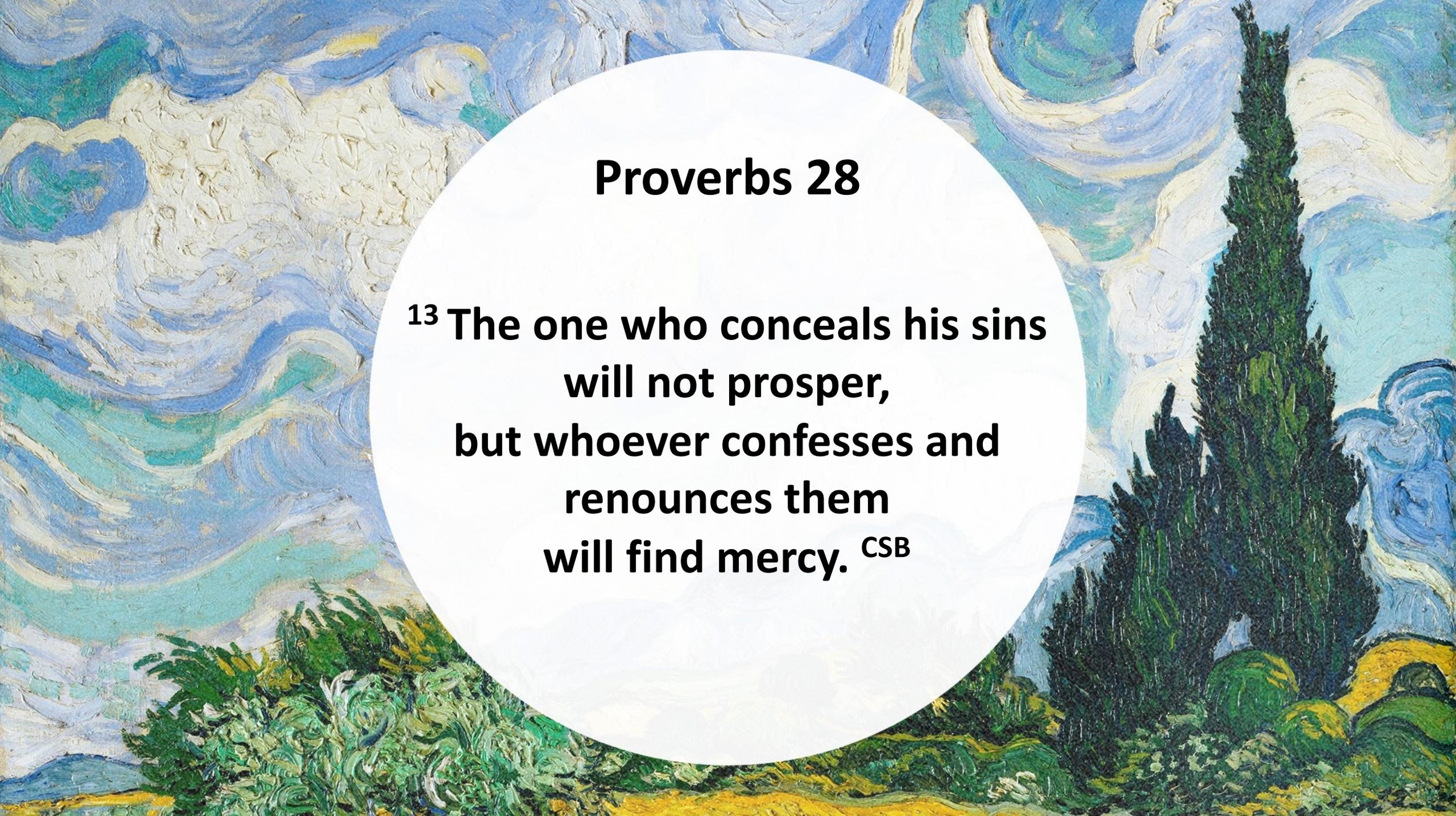
Rodriguez – business owner employing 45 people. Father was a field hand, mother cleaned houses. They were noble people.

Proverbs 28

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“Generativity” is my term for integrity which passes on good. It involves concern of establishing and guiding the next generation, stabilizing ethics and sacrificing self so those [coming] can prosper. – Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society*





Proverbs 28

**¹³ The one who conceals his sins
will not prosper,
but whoever confesses and
renounces them
will find mercy. ^{CSB}**



courtesy Sam MacRae

**Rotting from
the inside-out**



Proverbs 28

**¹³ The one who conceals his sins
will not prosper,
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will find mercy.**

**¹¹ A rich person is wise in his own eyes,
but a poor one who has discernment sees through him.**

**²⁶ The one who trusts in himself is a fool,
but one who walks in wisdom will be safe. ^{CSB}**

**I need your input
because I may be the last
to know if I am off track.**



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Idiots!



Idiots!

Idiots.

Idiots!

Idiots!

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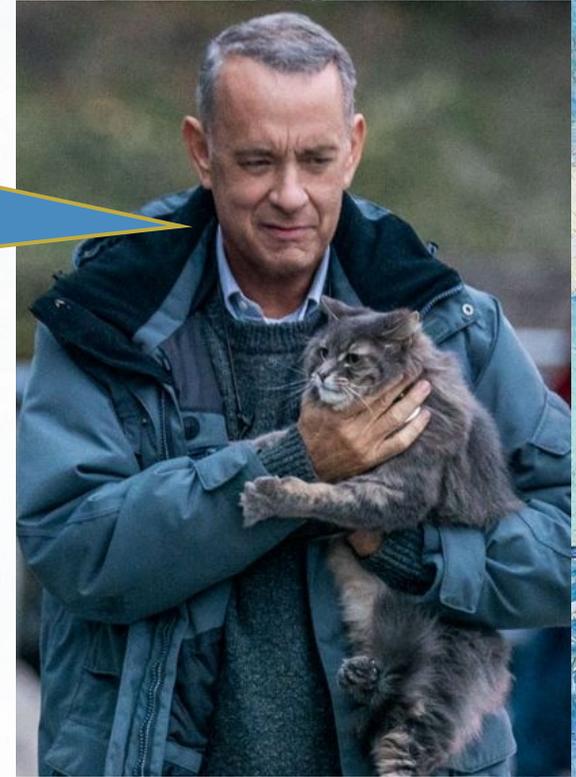
Proverbs 28

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26 The one who trusts in himself is a fool, but one who walks in wisdom will be safe. ^{CSB}

I am the idiot!



Married to a busy pastor and pregnant with my daughter, I struggled to find a work/life balance...I had to re-evaluate and reprioritize instead of [thinking all depended on me.] I had to check my ego at the door. – Celine Armstrong in Christina Stanton, “She Built an Island of Green in a Concrete Desert”

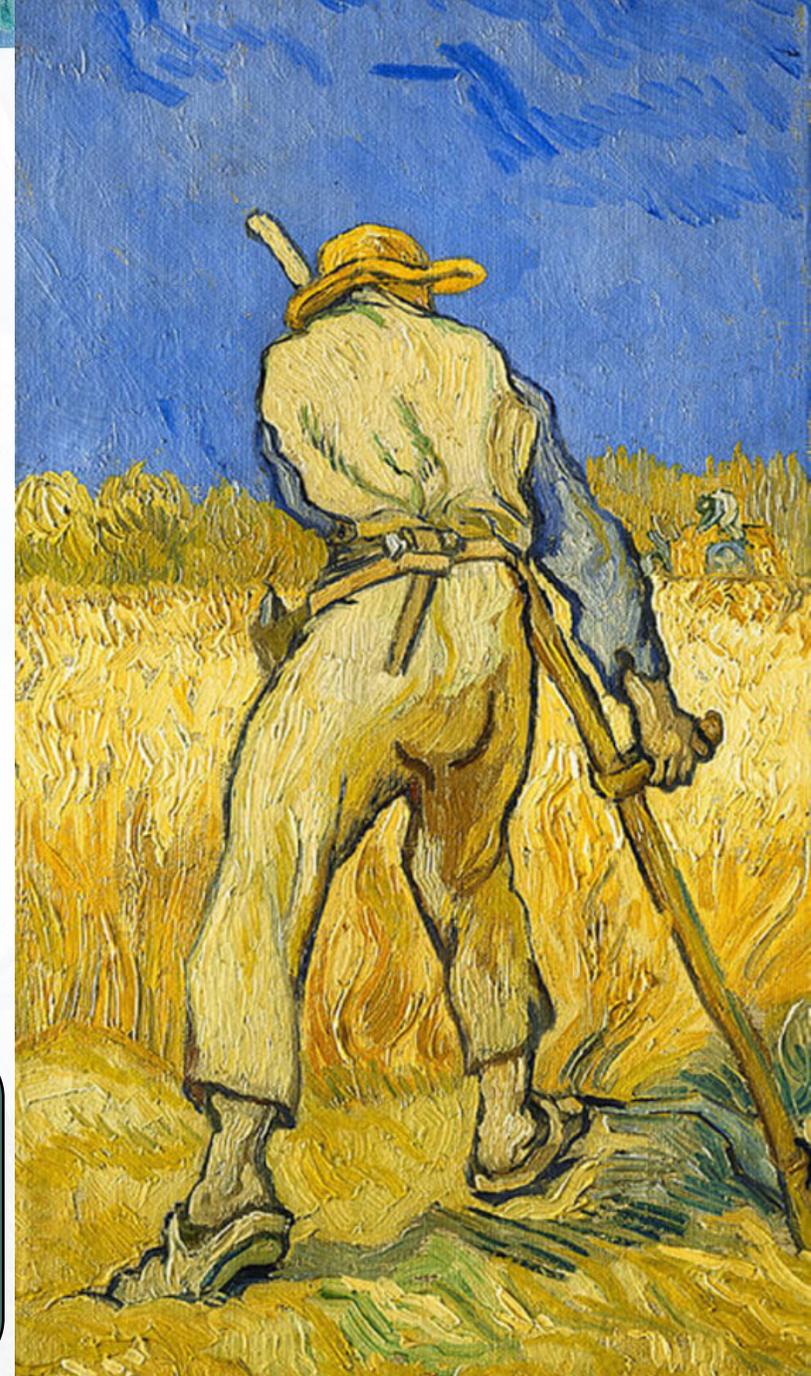


Proverbs 28

19 The one who works his land will have plenty of food, but whoever chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

20 A faithful person will have many blessings, but one in a hurry to get rich will not go unpunished. ^{CSB}

Reaper with a Scythe
Vincent Van Gogh
1889





courtesy Terrible's



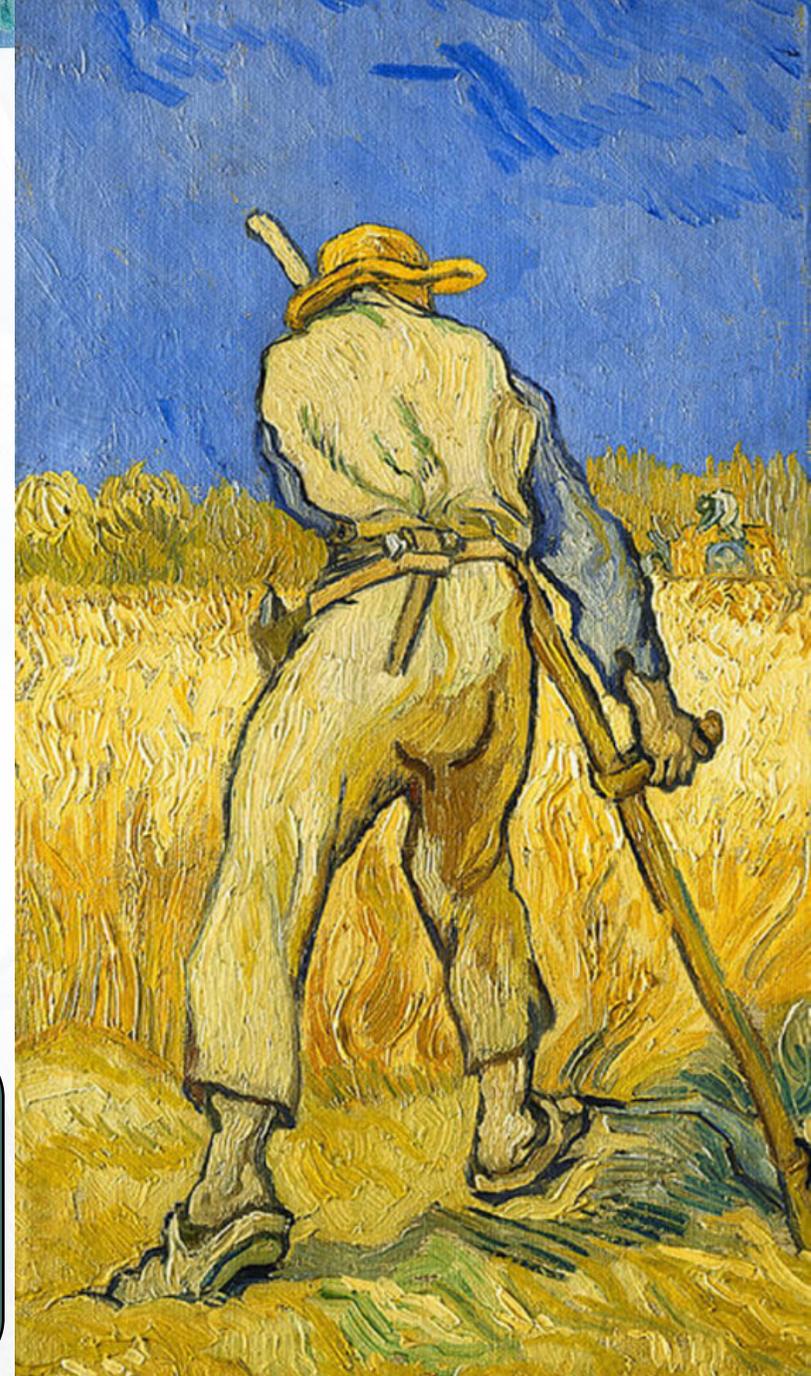
courtesy Arizona Lottery Commission

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Celine Armstrong had just finished her master's degree when she received a job offer from the original company that was contracted to design & build Little Island Park. She told the company owner that she would *love* to work on such a grand, high-profile project, but a colleague of hers was better suited for the job.

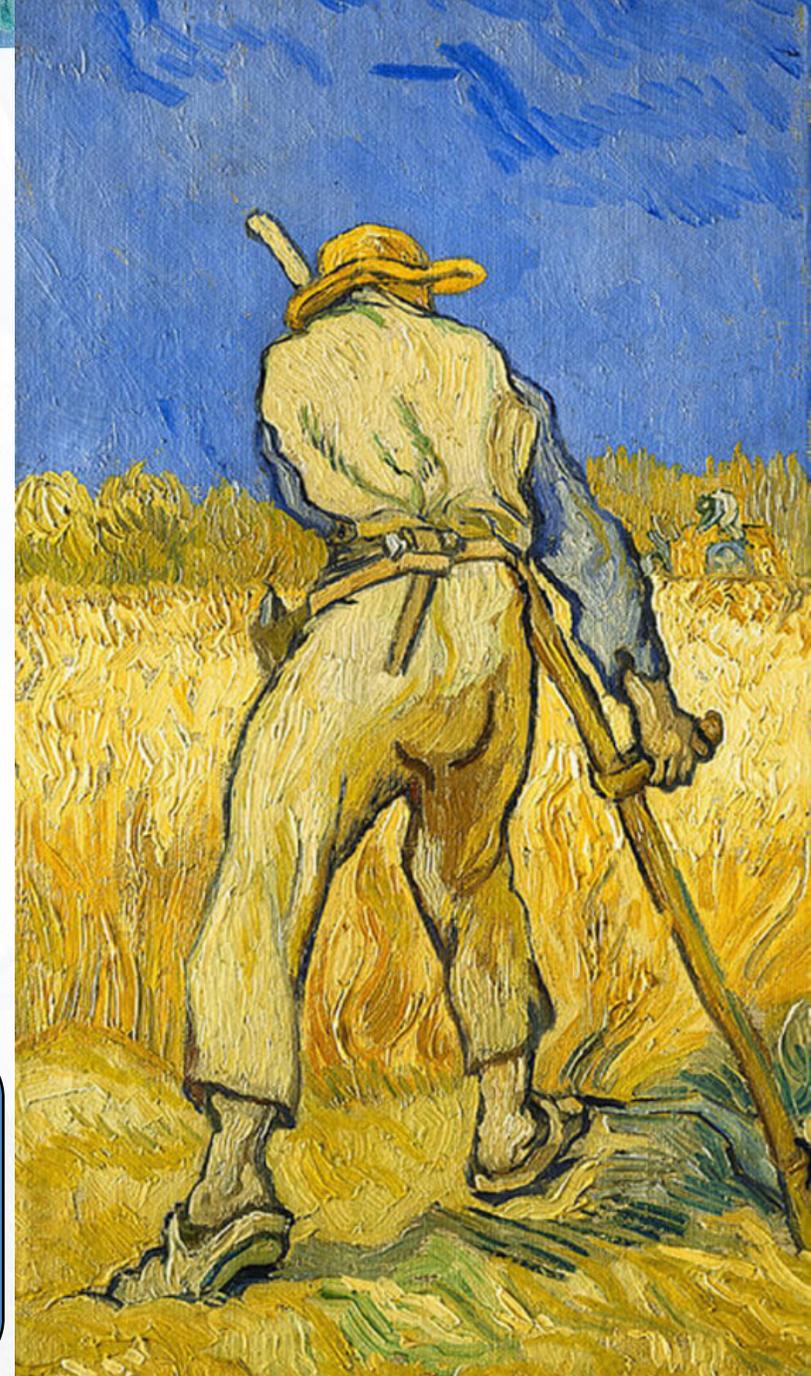


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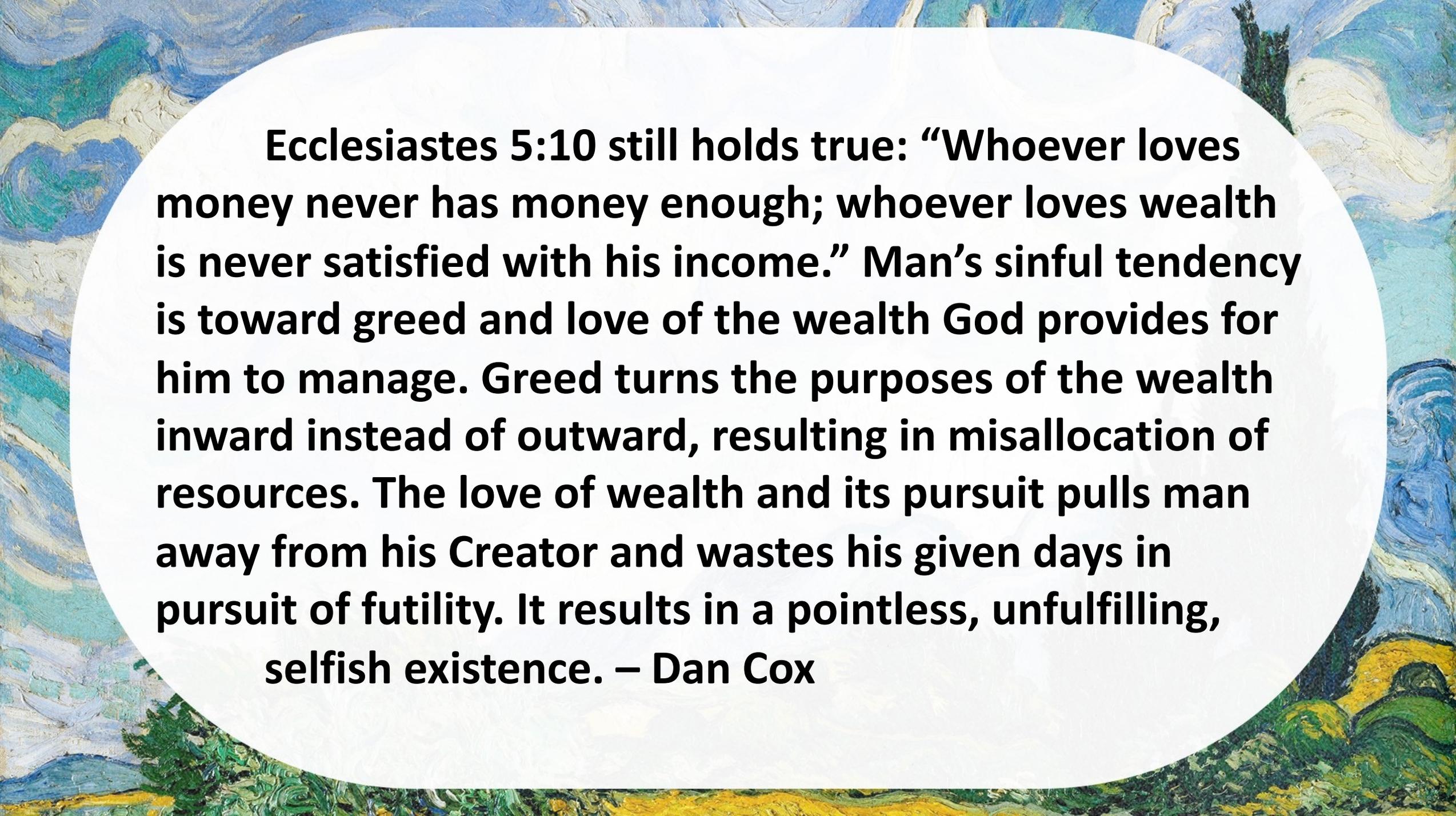


Proverbs 28

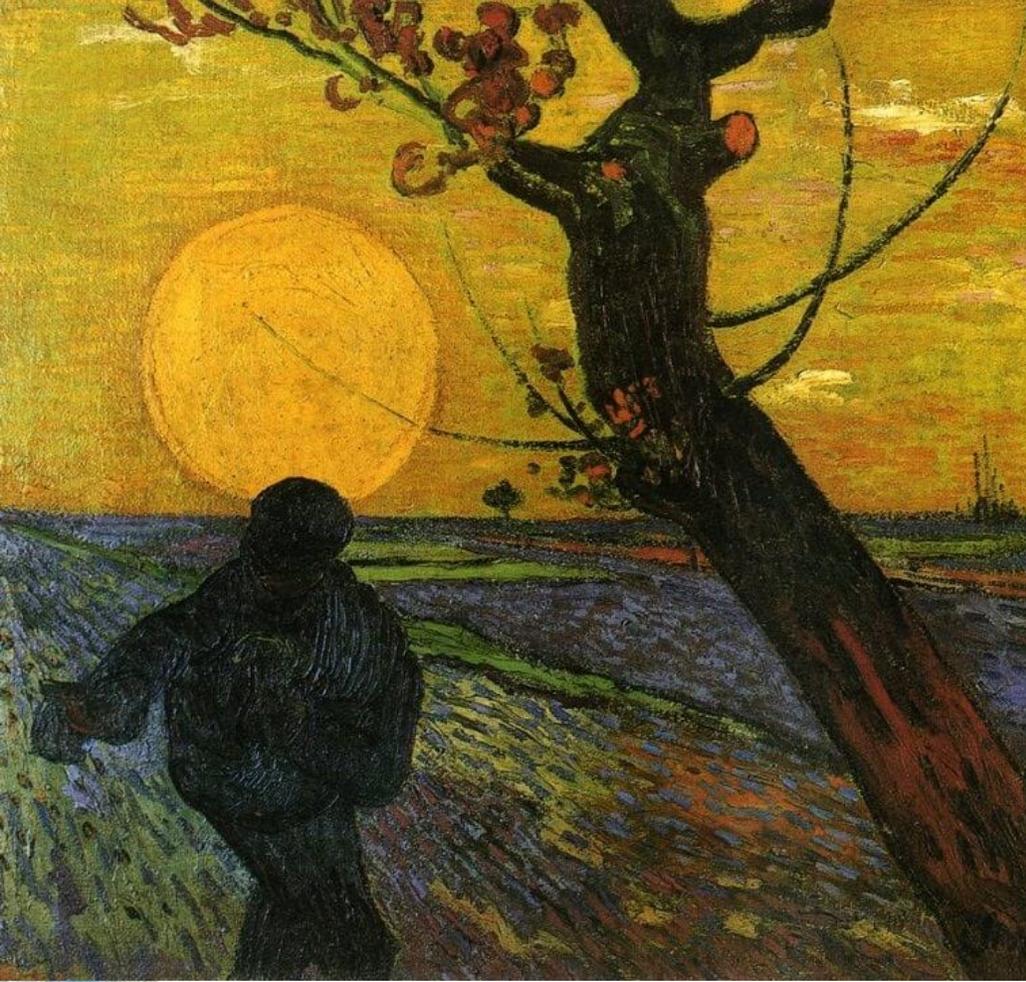
**22 A greedy one is in a hurry for wealth;
he doesn't know that poverty will come to him.**

**24 The one who robs his father or mother
and says, "That's no sin,"
is a companion to a person who destroys.**

**25 A greedy person stirs up conflict,
but whoever trusts in the LORD will prosper. ^{CSB}**



Ecclesiastes 5:10 still holds true: “Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.” Man’s sinful tendency is toward greed and love of the wealth God provides for him to manage. Greed turns the purposes of the wealth inward instead of outward, resulting in misallocation of resources. The love of wealth and its pursuit pulls man away from his Creator and wastes his given days in pursuit of futility. It results in a pointless, unfulfilling, selfish existence. – Dan Cox



The Sower
Vincent Van Gogh
1889

Proverbs 28

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Proverbs 28

**²⁷ The one who gives to the poor
will not be in need,
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Proverbs 11

**²⁵ The generous man will be prosperous,
And he who waters will himself be watered. ^{NASB}**



courtesy Washington Post

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Proverbs 11

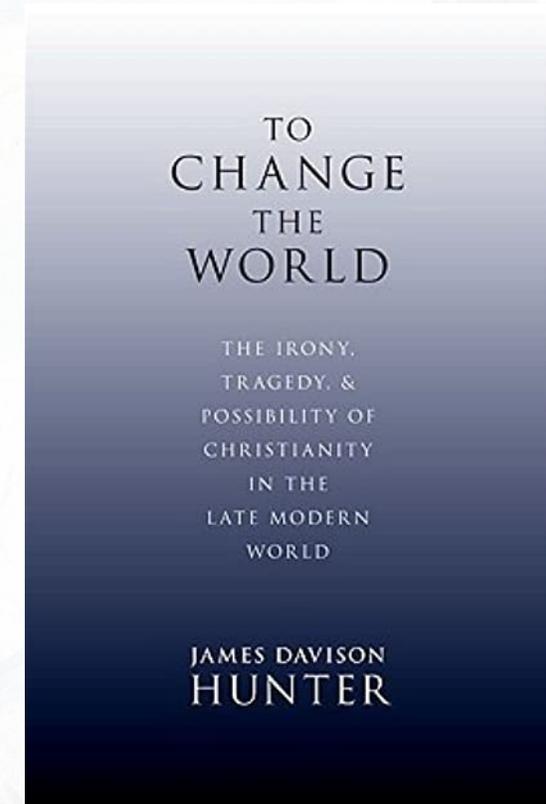
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The principle of providing economic opportunity is foundational to both the fairness and vitality of the social and economic ecosystem. Providing equal economic opportunity – not equal outcomes – for all is the goal that must be vigorously pursued.

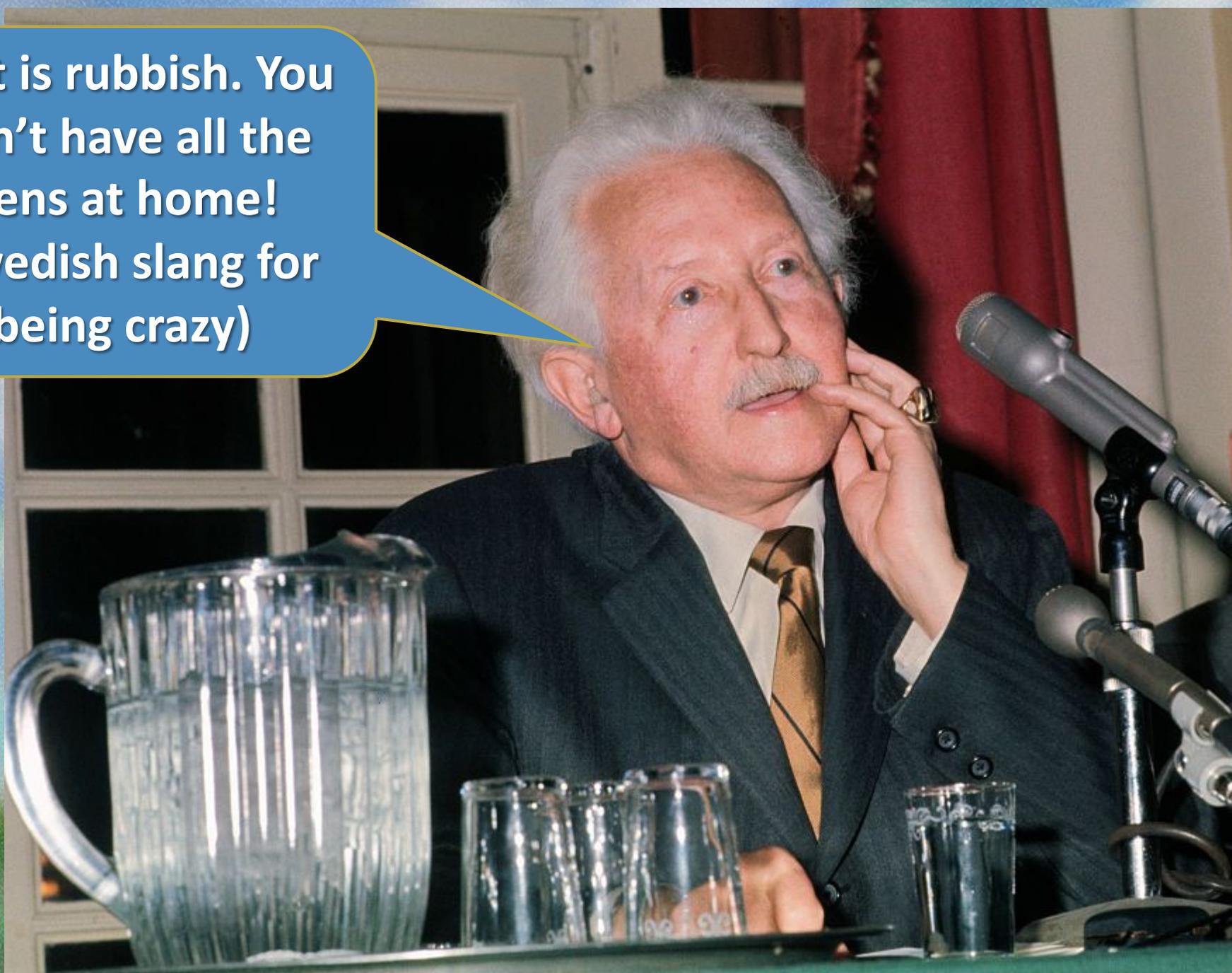


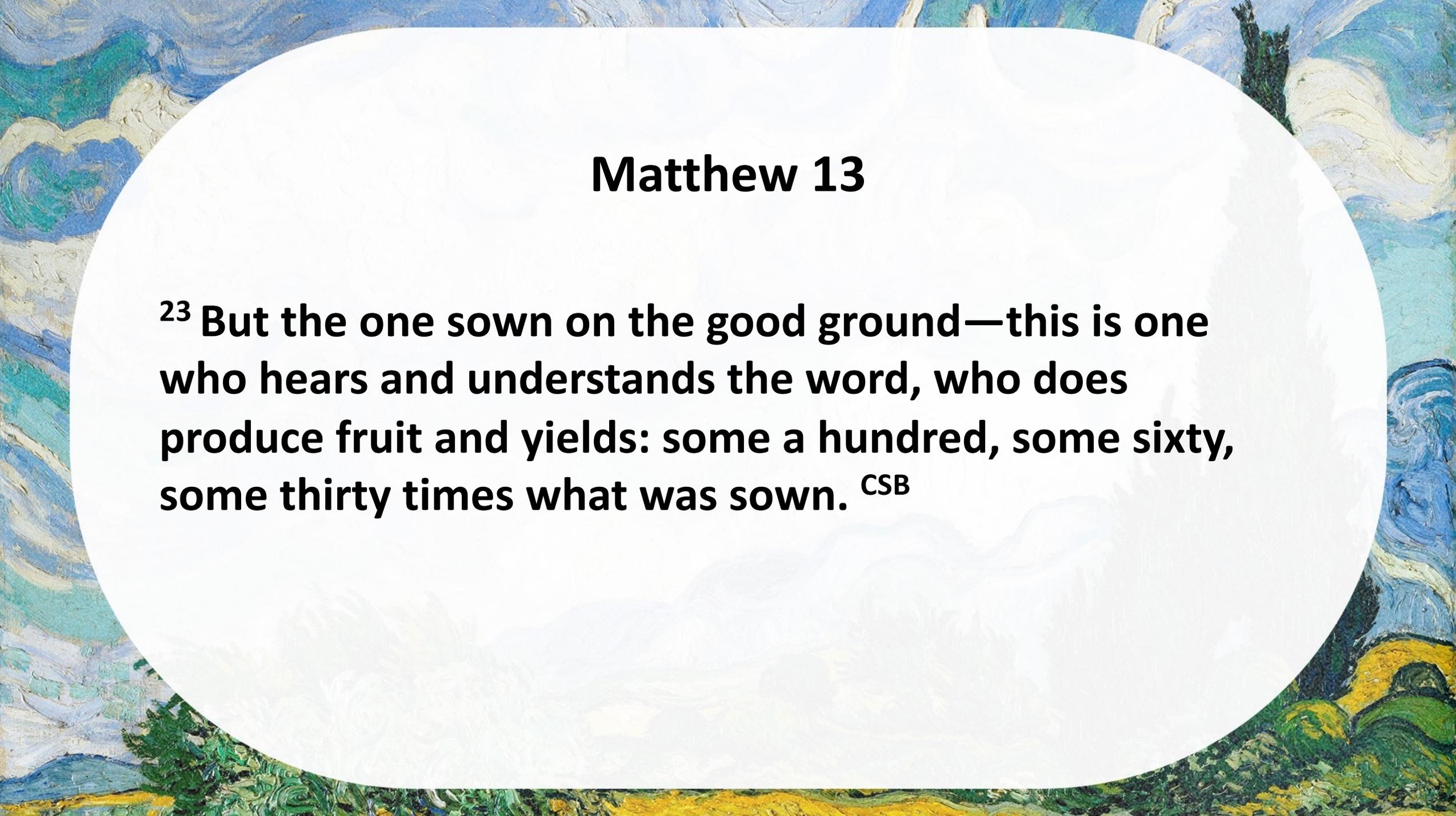
**– Tom Nelson,
*The Economics of Neighborly Love***

The other group which disagrees with generosity providing opportunity are from the political right – people like James Davison Hunter. Dr. Hunter contends that Christian generosity cannot really provide anything useful unless the giver is an elite member of society with access to power.



**That is rubbish. You
don't have all the
hens at home!
(Swedish slang for
being crazy)**





Matthew 13

²³ But the one sown on the good ground—this is one who hears and understands the word, who does produce fruit and yields: some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty times what was sown. ^{CSB}



Wheat Sheaves
Vincent Van Gogh
1890

God will never forget the big or small, well-known or hidden things we do as his faithful servants. Everything is valued, and everything will be rewarded. God tells us that, in the final analysis, we are far from inconsequential.



– Uche Anizor, *Overcoming Apathy*

**Whoever you are, let flourishing begin with you.
Wherever you live, let opportunity creation start
with you. Whatever you have, use it for the
common good.**



Wheat Sheaves
Vincent Van Gogh
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Proverbs 28

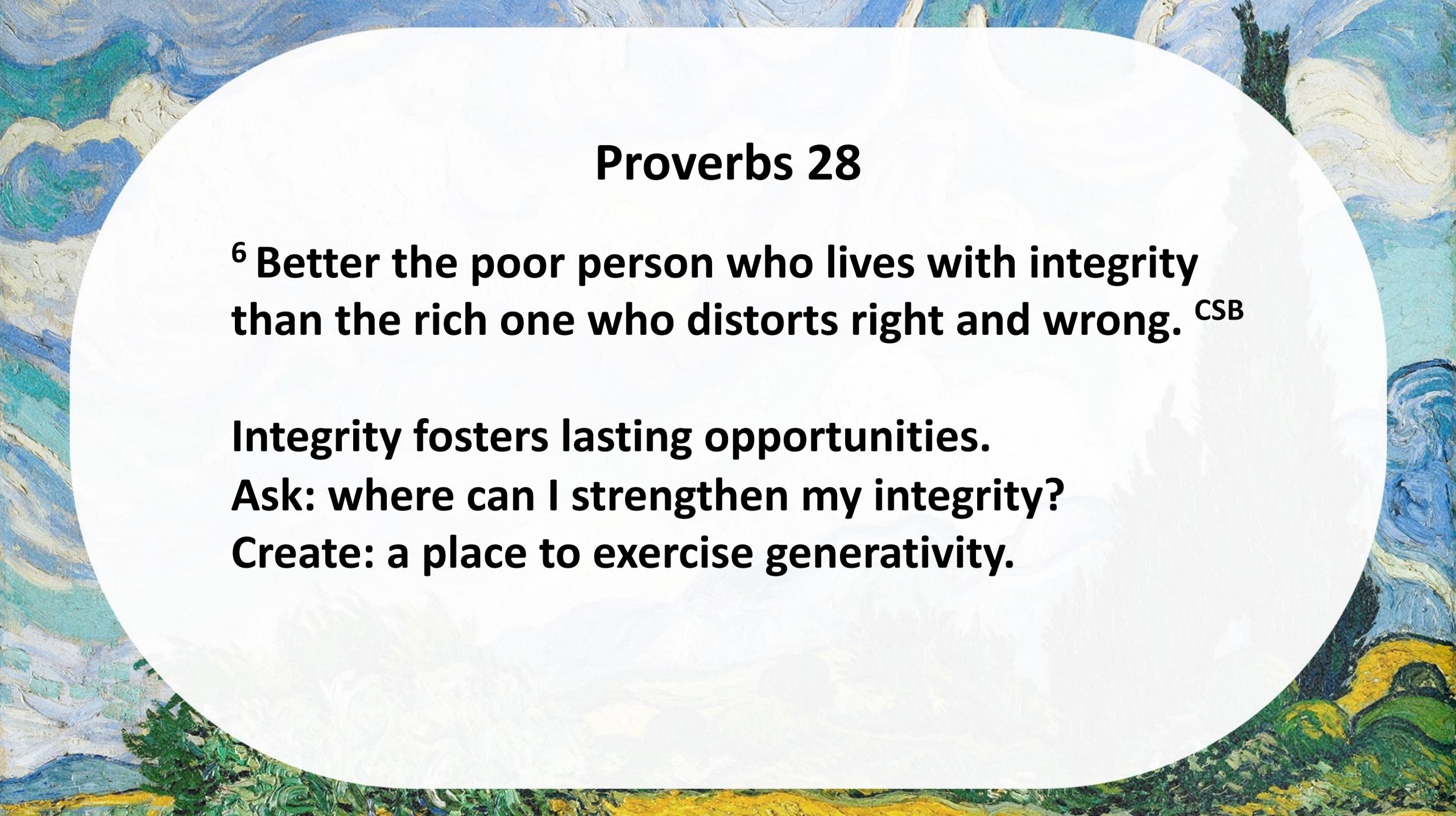
² When a land is in rebellion, it has many rulers, but with a discerning and knowledgeable person, it endures.

Discerning righteousness should be used to bless people.

Ask: is that the way I think?

Create: a way to do good for others.

(Note: church staff can help with this.)



Proverbs 28

⁶ Better the poor person who lives with integrity than the rich one who distorts right and wrong. ^{CSB}

Integrity fosters lasting opportunities.

Ask: where can I strengthen my integrity?

Create: a place to exercise generativity.

Proverbs 28

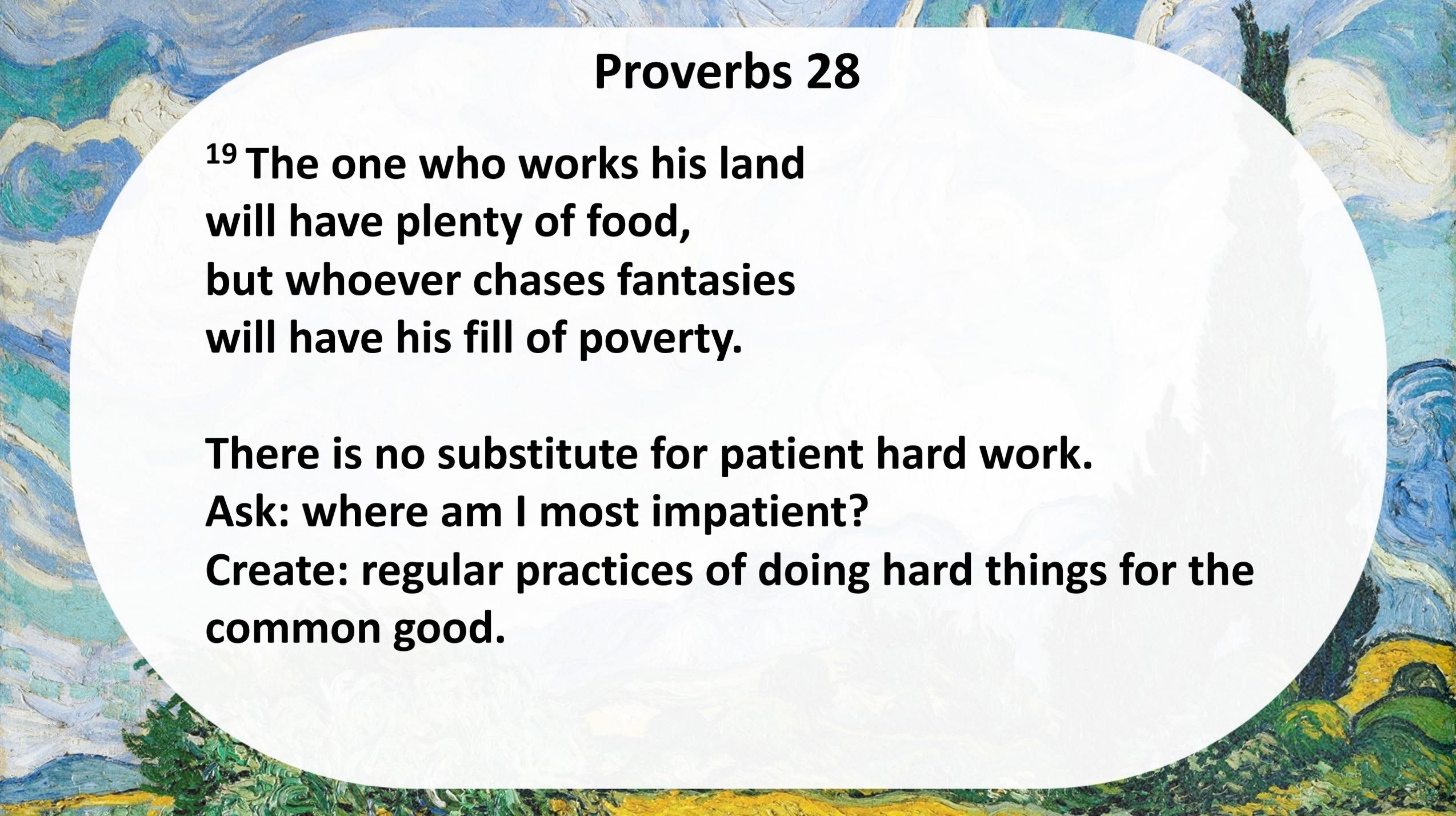
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²⁶ The one who trusts in himself is a fool, but one who walks in wisdom will be safe. ^{CSB}

Humble self-awareness brings prosperity.

Ask someone close to you: what are my prideful spots where repentance is needed?

Create: accountability structures in your life.

The background is a vibrant, textured painting of a landscape, likely by Vincent van Gogh, featuring swirling blue and green hills and a yellow path. A large, white, semi-transparent circle is centered over the image, containing the text.

Proverbs 28

**¹⁹ The one who works his land
will have plenty of food,
but whoever chases fantasies
will have his fill of poverty.**

There is no substitute for patient hard work.

Ask: where am I most impatient?

**Create: regular practices of doing hard things for the
common good.**

Proverbs 28

²⁷ The one who gives to the poor will not be in need, but one who turns his eyes away will receive many curses.

⁸ Whoever increases his wealth through excessive interest collects it for one who is kind to the poor. ^{CSB}

Greed destroys self and others.

Ask: about what am I most greedy?

Create: reminders to trust God in everything.

Proverbs 11

**25 The generous man will be prosperous,
And he who waters will himself be watered. ^{NASB}**

**Generosity provides opportunity.
Ask: where can I be more generous?
Create: opportunities to give.**

The Good Samaritan
Vincent Van Gogh
1890





Flourishing For Good

