

Generosity God — Delivery Transcript

2 Corinthians 9:6–11 (CSB) • Wes Terry • Sunday, November 9, 2025 • Close the Gap

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Thanks to the team for leading us in worship. If you have your Bible, you can open it to the book of 2nd Corinthians. If you don't have a Bible, there should be one on the chair in the seat in front of you, unless you're on the front row. In that case. You had a look. Now you can go find one somewhere else. They should be around here somewhere. We're in a series because of a campaign we're doing as a church, and so if you're visiting today, you might think you picked the wrong Sunday to join us for worship and that's okay.

I felt the same way when I first came to Broadview. They were doing the same thing. But I promise what we're looking at today in the scripture is applicable no matter where you may find yourself, whether it's about money and fundraising or whether it's about something totally divorced from that, it's relevant to your life because it's in the Word of God. And I was thinking about that this last yesterday when I was doing a funeral for one of our former members, a guy named Don McConaughy. I was in Hawley, Texas at Clear Fork Baptist Church doing the service and it was a really, really beautiful service because his grandkids participated in the service at every step along the way.

And one of the grandkids read the obituary and the very end of the obituary there was this sentence that really caught my attention trying to summarize his life and his virtues said that he was a man of service, a man of faith, but he also said he was a man of generosity and a man of laughter. And I thought those last two words, generosity and laughter, really captured this guy, this guy named John Don McConaughy. Many of you may not have known him. He was a member of our church, he's a member of our church, but he attended the first service, attended the faith class, and so a lot of you guys might not have ever rubbed shoulders with him, but he was just what I would call a generous person.

And I think if you know that when I say generous, it means beyond more than generous with money. If you're a generous person, you can be generous with your time, you can be generous with your spirit, you can be like generous in giving people patience, you can be generous in giving people kindness etcetera. And I would say most of us know deep down we like generous people. We like being around generous people because generous people are life-giving they're fun to be around. They make us feel good.

They make us feel like they gave us something when we were in their presence instead of taking something from us. And all of us would probably say, I hope I can be a generous person. I hope. If I you know pastor West ever does my funeral and he gets up there and he gives a eulogy or they read

the obituary that it would say something about me being a generous person. And I think we all know deep down that's something we would aspire towards and it's a good thing. And the Bible would say the same thing.

Being generous is a positive thing, but it would give go beyond the kind of blanket assumption we would all kind of agree to. And say that generosity is unique of all the virtues because generosity actually secures a blessing from God. That when you practice generosity or you become a generous person, it invites or even more than invites, it secures a blessing from the God who created everything that is, because God is generous and he likes to bless people who embody his righteousness or his character and that's what we're going to see in our text today.

And again as we look at it's going to be applied to the context of money because Paul was trying to raise money for a need in Jerusalem. But if you're not a member of our church, or if you're kind of, you know, not so you fond of preachers talking about money, then you can apply it to other realms, but the principle is true nonetheless. If you're new to the book of 2 Corinthians, or if you're new to Bible study in general, let me kind of situate you for where we're about to be going.

It was written by a guy named Paul of Tarsus. He used to be a guy named Saul of Tarsus, and he hated Christians. He persecuted Christians everywhere he found them, and the Lord miraculously saved this gentleman through an encounter on the road to Emmaus. And Paul goes from being the church the chief persecutor of the church to being this chief church planter. And he literally chur plants churches all over the known world at that time. I've got a map I want to show you. This is actually Paul's third missionary journey.

On his first missionary journey, he evangelized this area right here. But on his second and third missionary journey, he literally travels the entire known world at that time. And this is a map of his third missionary journey because he's going back and visiting the churches that he planted on the second missionary journey. And one of those churches was a church called Corinth. It's right down here in lower Greece. And he's writing the letter of 2 Corinthians from up here in Macedonia. It's in the upper left-hand corner if you're not looking at the TV.

We don't know exactly what town he's in, but he's up there writing to Christians down here. And he's writing about Christians way over here in Jerusalem, which is in the lower left hand of the lower right hand corner of your screen if you're facing the if you're facing the screen. And there was a huge famine that struck Judea and Jerusalem in 47 A.D. and everybody was starving to death. And especially Christian Jews were starving to death. Christians who converted from Judaism to Christianity were persona non grata in the temple. They were disowned by their family.

And the only way they were going to survive was on the generosity of other Christians not Jewish in these wealthier parts of the world. Giving money to supply their needs down here in Jerusalem. So one of the reasons Paul was going to all these churches was not just to encourage them and check up on them. But for them to give generously towards this need in Jerusalem. Very similar to what we're doing right now as a church trying to raise money for a youth wing. That's why we're looking at these

two chapters.

Nevertheless, Paul writes to the Corinthians and he uses the example of these Macedonian Christians to inspire them towards generosity. Because these Macedonians were themselves suffering great affliction. They were characterized by extreme poverty, is what the passage says in chapter 8. Nevertheless, because of the motivation and zeal of the Corinthians, these Macedonians were inspired to be generous. So Paul challenges them with that fact, and then he challenges them with their own promise to be generous. And then he says these words in chapter 9, verse 6, summarizing everything he had said up until that point.

He says, the point is this. That's a preacher's way of saying, look up here. I'm about to put it on the lower shelf. Here's the principle. It's called the law of the harvest, is what some people refer to it as. And the law of the harvest goes like this. The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. And the person who sows generously will also reap generously. Each person should do as he has decided in his or her heart, not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver, and God is able.

To make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work. As it is written, and he's going to quote the Old Testament Psalms. Chapter 112, verse 11, He distributed freely, He gave to the poor, His righteousness endures forever. Now Paul applies that in verse 10. Now, the one who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will also provide and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us.

Now again, this is one of those famous passages of scripture. You've probably heard it preached on TV somewhere along the way. And the unfortunate thing about this passage, because it has this principle or this law of the harvest A lot of people will use this passage to communicate something about money that the Bible never actually says. You see, health, wealth, prosperity preachers use and abuse this text. And so in trying to explain to us what it means, I also think I have to kind of unwind what others have mischaracterized it to mean.

But you can't get away from the fact that the basic idea of the text is God loves blessing generous givers. God wants to bless people who are generous givers. What we need to try to answer is number one, what does it mean to be a generous giver? What is generosity? How do I become a generous giver? And then number two. What is the precise nature of the blessing that God gives? What is the precise nature of the blessing that God gives? And so to help us get an answer on those two questions, we've got to define what this word actually means.

When Paul says if you sow generously, you reap generously, what does he mean by generosity? And one of the reasons I started with the example of the funeral this morning is because the word translated generosity is the Greek word *eulogia*. It's where we get the English word *eulogy*. You know what a eulogy is in a funeral? The eulogy is where someone gets up there, typically a family member or someone close to the deceased, and they speak good words about the deceased. The Greek word you

is the word good. The Greek word logos is the word word.

So it's literally good words about the deceased. It's a eulogy. I'll never forget when I was doing a funeral for a family one time. I didn't know the family. They Elmwood just asked me to do the funeral. And so I was getting to know these people. And I was getting to know the deceased. And I kind of felt an elephant in the room, if you will. And some people were talking about the deceased one way, and some people were crossing their arms suggesting body language that what was being said was not true.

And this lady, older lady, who had by this point in her life lost her filter, came up to me and said, You better not let him get up there and start lying. I won't have it. I won't have him get up there and start lying. And what she what she meant by that is he was going to get up there and tell lies about how good and noble and wonderful this deceased person was. When that wasn't the case. And I actually can't remember what I said to that little old lady, but he ended up speaking and she ended up being upset.

And that's just the nature of the beast sometimes when it comes to a eulogy. You don't maybe necessarily lie, but you conceal things that maybe you don't want share it, and you amplify things. That you want to focus on. And I think that's a good thing to do at a funeral. You want to remember somebody for their good things, their contributions that they made. As Paul said, hold fast to the good, excellent, praiseworthy, focus on those things. Forgive and forget the bad. But that's what a eulogy is. If I had to define a eulogia, as the Greek word is, I would say it is ex Eating expectations.

It is surpassing the norm. In the case of a eulogy at a funeral, some people who know the deceased would say I kind of know what's going to be said, and then they get that eulogy and they go, wow, you really focused on you ex surpassed the expectations of what I thought you were going to say positively. And that's what the word means. But Paul is applying this word to money. And if you apply this word to the context of money, it's giving beyond the expectation. It's giving in such a way that people look at your giving and go, wow, that's really something.

I didn't expect to see that. And you notice what Paul says in verses 6 and 7 is that generosity is a universal expectation. If you look again in verse seven, he says, each person should give as he has decided in their heart. It at least means two things. Number one, generosity is a universal expectation, each person. And again, it's not just money. It's this broader spirit that Christian people who are reflecting a generous God ought to themselves be generous in their spirit. It's an expectation for every Christian, but he also makes clear.

It is measured by the condition of their heart. And so if you're taking notes, I would say if you want to be a generous giver. For God to consider your giving generous, your giving must come from a sincere heart. Your giving's got to come from a sincere heart. And you know this is what Paul's talking about, even though he doesn't use the word sincere, because of the words that he does use and the words that he uses negatively. In other words, he defines what generosity is not by positively describing generosity, but also by negatively describing the opposite of generosity.

And this is really helpful if you're trying to define your terms. If you want to know what a thing is, sometimes it's helpful to say what a thing is not. And Paul does that. He has three positive descriptions of generosity. He says the person that's a generous giver sows generously. He gives as he has decided in his heart, in other words, it's voluntary, and then he gives with a happy heart at the very end. And so he's he's like excited, he's he's he's he's optimistic about his generosity. Those are the three positive words, but if you think about the three negative words, they're just as shocking or descriptive.

He says that a non-generous giver gives sparingly. They give reluctantly, number two, and then they give under compulsion. And I want us to think about those three words, because I think those three words really flesh out what Paul means by sincere giving. And I think if you think about sincerity in any other context, you would agree sincerity is marked by these three things, or marked by the absence of these three things. First, giving is not Sparing. That's the translation that the CSB uses. The word literally means ungenerous. And if you look up A word in our English dictionary for ungenerous, the word that best fits is the word stingy.

So giving from a sincere heart cannot be stingy. And the person I think of the most when I think about a stingy person is Uncle Scrooge from DuckTales. I know I'm dating myself by showing my favorite cartoons. I so encourage that my own children like DuckTales. They kind of remake of DuckTales and so I'm getting to relive my favorites my favorite episodes. But Scrooge is one of those guys, he's got all the money in the world, right? I don't know if it's in his basement or his magic cave. I can't remember where it's at, but there's just like tons of gold and coins and remember those little nephews get in there and they're like woo-hoo.

So much money and then Scrooge finds out they're messing with his money and he loses it, right? He's the you can't be doing this is my money and he gets super tight with it. And that's the definition of being of being stingy. Now I know a lot of people who take pride in being stingy. But they don't say they're stingy, they say I'm careful. I'm not stingy, I'm careful. And maybe in some cases that might be true, but there are some cases where being careful is not wise. For example, if you are sowing seed in a field, it is unwise to be careful.

You want to be generous, you want to be liberal, you want to throw lots and lots and lots of seed out on the ground. Has anybody ever tried to plant grass before? It's impossible to plant grass in West Texas. You've got to get the dirt just so, but you can't just kind of barely sprinkle, you know, a little bit of seed out there if you want to have any chance of getting grass on those bare spots. You got to really throw it out there. You got to be generous. Can't be stingy.

A sincere heart cannot be a stingy heart. Okay, you got to avoid the Uncle Scrooge effect. The other thing is a sincere heart cannot be a sad heart. Now, the reason I use the word sad is because the Greek word translated reluctantly means sad. It means to give out of sorrow, to give out of grief. The reason the CSB says reluctantly is because most of us, when we hear the word sad, we think of someone hurt my feelings. Someone made me sad. But that's not the only way to think about sad.

Again, think about Eeyore. Nobody hurt Eeyore's feelings to make him sad. He's just a sad sack, right? He's a sad sack. He's always sad no matter how hard Tigger tries to you know cheer him up, it's okay, or it's going to be great, it's going to be fun oh good. He's just never happy. It's not sadness from a hurt feelings or a personal grievance. It's a sadness because of a hardship in your life. Just life is always so hard. Life is always so difficult. My brother used to have a little phrase he'd sing, Nobody likes me, everybody hates me, I might as well go home.

That's what he would sing. Drive my mother crazy. Nobody likes me. Everybody hates me. I might as well go home. I won't tell you what brother it was, but you could probably, well, I won't say anything beyond that. You know people like that. They're they're Eeyore, and that's not sincere because if you give from that kind of heart, it's just not generous. It's just not. What God is looking for. It can be stingy and it can be sad. And then finally, he says it can't be from a place of coercion.

He actually uses a prepositional phrase. That conveys causation. In other words, to be caused by coercion. And the word translated coercion literally means to be forced to act because of negative outside pressure. And I think the best analogy of that is a puppet you think about Pinocchio before he became a real boy. He had strings on him, right? Who was Pinocchio's puppet master? Say say it loud, I can't hear. Cheppetto, there it is. Yeah, Cheppetto had strings on him for a while. And if you're got a puppet master pulling your strings, it may look like you're doing what you're doing out of your own will, but it's not.

Someone is acting upon you externally, in often cases negatively. This word would sometimes be used to convey the idea of torture. Or you know just negative painful pressure on another person. And Paul is saying if you want to be a sincere giver, you can't be giving with strings attached. That's the language I would use. There can't be any strings on your giving. And you may say, well how do you give with strings attached? Really? I mean it's obvious so many people give with strings attached. They give in order to prevent people from thinking a certain way about them.

They may you may think, well, I don't want them to think I'm X, Y, or Z person, or I'm kind of I don't want them to think I don't like them or I don't care about you know starving dogs, and so I'm going to give money. But what you're giving but your motivation for giving is negative coercion because of the fear of man. It's the fear of what they would think. It's pulling your string so that you give. And I think God would say, that's not what I'm looking for. With generosity.

I don't want you trying to give in order to control what people think about you. Even if it's positive, even if it's like positive manipulation. I want them to really like me. I want them to think well of me. And so I'm going to be super generous and I'm going to give them all these gifts and toys and well, yeah, that's the money part's there. Maybe it's very expensive. Maybe you've invested a lot of money, but it's not a heart of generosity because you're giving with these strings attached. And that's not a sincere heart.

So you can't if you want to be a generous giver, it is somewhat about the money amount. But it's more than that, right? God would say generosity must be void of any kind of sh sadness, any kind of

stinginess or strings. And I again I think if you apply this word in any other context, it's obvious. Like an apology, for example. Forgiveness. Forgiveness is kind of like giving. If you're going to give an apology, your apology cannot be kind of Tainted with stinginess. In other words, if you're going to give an apology, you better catch all the known grievances that you're aware of when you say I'm sorry, because if you say I'm sorry for 50% When you both well know there's another 50% to be owned up to, that apology is not going to go anywhere, right?

Because you've been stingy with your apology. Or if it's sad, right? If you have got children, you ever make your children apologize to each other and how you know you better say you're sorry and they say, I'm sorry. You know, that does not work, right? The person they don't mean it. Or you know they don't mean it and you say, say it like you mean it, which never works by the way. I mean they pretend to mean it, but they don't really mean it's not sincere because they don't they come from a place of sadness.

Or if you're kind of like coercing them, twisting their arms, say you're sorry. That's not really doesn't mean anything. Okay, you said you're sorry, but it's got sh it's got strings attached, you don't want to get in trouble. So if it's true in the area of giving apology and forgiveness, how would that also be true in the realm of money and giving generously without stinginess, without sadness, or having strings attached. And that's what God would say marks real generosity it's every person giving from that kind of disposition. And yes, it will be financial in terms of the amount.

It will be generous and that it's exceeding the expectation. But you're not just exceeding the expectation in the amount. You're exceeding the expectation in the motivation. And the spirit with which you give the gift. And that's what God says, I want that. I want a cheerful giver. Now I raise the question, why does God care? It doesn't matter to the person who receives the gift, right? If someone if you needed someone to give you a hundred dollars. And if you didn't have that hundred dollars, you weren't going to be able to do what you really needed to do.

In some ways, what do you care if they were sad or strings attached? I got the hundred dollars, it in some ways it doesn't matter, I got what I needed. And so I would think God doesn't require that of the giver because the person receiving the money needs it. He requires that of the giver because the person giving the money needs it. In other words, God wants to bless you. God desires to bless generous givers, but he would say the only way I can bless you as I desire to bless you is if you're giving from this place and not a different kind of place.

In other words. When it comes to generosity, it's not so much that I want something from you, which is what a lot of people assume when they hear a preacher talk about giving. It's not God wanting something from you. It's God wanting something for you because he desires to bless you but in order for him to be for you and to bless you the dis the heart has to have a certain kind of disposition. You've got to give from a certain kind of place. It's got to be divorced from any kind of strings or sadness or stinginess.

And if you give in that way, God will bless you. He will that's the promise. He will bless that kind of giving. Well, how does he bless it? Well if you look at verse 8, it's really interesting how God blesses it. He blesses it in one way by actually giving you what you need. God is able, verse 8, to make every grace overflow to you. You might underline that word overflow. God is able to make every grace overflow to you so that, here's the result clause, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work.

This phrase, every grace overflow to you and then this phrase excel in every good work, that's the same Greek word. It's just translated two different ways. Early, it's translated and it's applied to God, that God gives you grace. So that you overflow with what you need. But the reason or the purpose of why God does that is so that you can overflow in every good work. It's translated excel, but it's the same word. In other words, Paul is saying God is able to give you lots and lots and lots and lots and lots of grace.

So that you can give lots and lots, or you can do lots and lots and lots and lots and lots of good. He gives you lots of grace so you can do a lot of good. That's why Paul, or that's how God blesses the generous giver. Now you also notice these repetition of these words every always every work it's not all right there because I don't have the whole verse but he's he's really pouring it on thick for a reason and he's trying to I think convey two really specific points.

The overarching point is that God supplies sufficient grace. And if you're going to be able to give with a sincere heart, you must be persuaded that God's supply will be sufficient. That's the only way you'll give in that way. The only way you'll be generous and not stingy is if you really believe God will give me what I need. God will supply sufficient grace. But he's saying more than that. He's saying the manner in which God supplies sufficient grace. Is super personal, not generic. That's why he says he'll give you every grace so that in every way always having what you need, you'll abound in every good work.

He's trying to establish this idea that God's grace is not bland or generic. Or universal, but that his grace is uniquely designed to fit your situation because he is God and as God he has an unlimited supply of grace. And as God, He has an unlimited supply of wisdom so as to structure the grace that He gives to you. So that it is perfectly suitable and fit for the situation at hand. And so in your notes, I would say God's grace is suited to your specific situation and it's also strategic in its application.

Let's look at both of those. It's suited I love that word suited. You guys I shouldn't recommend rated R movies. Never mind. But you know this, you know the show Kingsman they're all about the suit. It's a terrible terribly violent movie, but they're all about the suits. And if your suit is well fitting, then that means it's suited for the occasion that you're about to enter into. If you're going to go to the prom, you don't want a loose-fitting suit. You want a suit that's just so, just right for you.

Tailor made to your you know, gorilla arms and your long torso or short torso or whatever you are. It needs to be tailor-made. That's the idea behind this phrase every grace. The other time this language is used is in Hebrews chapter 4, one of the verses I memorized early in my own Christian life. It talks

about how we have a great high priest in Jesus who's able to sympathize with us in our weakness because he's been tempted in every way that we are. And the conclusion is you should draw near.

Because Jesus is your high priest, you should draw near to God's throne of grace with confidence. Why do you have such confidence? He says you should draw near to the throne of grace with confidence because God is able to give mercy and grace suitable or appropriate for your need. Or translations say it all differently. Some translations say as fits the occasion, some say according to your need. If you do a little word study on all of them, the idea is that God's grace isn't generic, it's specific. It's not universal, it's personal.

He knows exactly what you need so that in your specific situation, you have specifically what you need. To achieve the specific outcome that you're trying to secure. And that's such an empowering idea. If you think about being generous. Because a lot of the reasons why some of us are not generous is we think to ourselves, well, I've seen God come through for other people, but I don't know if He can come through for me. You know, I'm facing a different kind of situation than what they were facing. My situation is uniquely challenging in ways that other people's situation is not challenging.

And I think the idea Paul's trying to establish is God is omnipotent. There's not literally nothing he can't do. He's like a what do you call those people that make weapons? The forge, his forge can literally produce any kind of tool for any kind of need and it will perfectly suit the problem at hand. It's also strategically applied and what I mean by that have you ever had a problem where you thought to yourself, even if I had literally everything I needed, I still couldn't do what I got to do because it's so complicated.

That the stuff I'm working with, the people I'm working with are so complicated I could have a million dollars and still not fix the problem because it's too hard. And Paul is saying, no, not for God, it's not too hard. He gives you every grace, but he also applies it in every way. Not only will you have everything you need, but you'll actually excel in every work. So it's suited to your situation, but it's also strategic and it's application. And I've seen this as a pastor over and over and over again, especially as it relates to generosity.

Even in this giving campaign, we've had people seeking the Lord on what they should do and how they should give. And then God gives them a number and the number is bigger than what they were comfortable with and they were thinking, God, you're going to have to do something. I mean, I don't know how the math's going to work. I think this is what you want to do, but I don't know how it's going to work. And then within weeks, months of kind of drilling down and sitting and stepping out in faith and saying, okay, here's my pledge, God miraculously supplied provision, but not generic provision.

In one case the provision was to the scent, exactly, what needed to happen in order to make good on the pledge that they made. In another situation, it was a random piece of mail that lowered a bill that they were paying every month. To the exact amount that they needed to make good on the pledge that they had given to the Lord. Like eerie, crazy, weird levels of specificity strategically applied in ways

that they could have not done. You just got to remember God is not only omnipotent, He's omniscient. He's the only wise God.

He is able to open doors that no one else could open. He's able to take brick walls that don't have any doors in them and open and create doors within brick walls that don't He's able to bring on new people into the equation that you didn't see coming, and now all of a sudden the algebra problem's different. And so what used to be an irres irreconcilable problem is now a problem that can be overcome because God has sufficient grace. God's supply is sufficient. And if you want to be a generous giver, you'll only be a generous giver.

You'll only give with a sincere heart if you are persuaded that God's supply is sufficient. But if you believe his supply is sufficient, you will give cheerfully. You will give generously. You will give with a happy heart because you believe God has sufficient grace. But then he takes it up another level. And this is really where the prosperity preachers stop, and we're going to keep going. Paul establishes the principle. He establishes the blessing of God to supply what you need to be generous. But then in verse 9, he quotes this Old Testament psalm.

Psalm 112. He distributed freely, he gave to the poor, his righteousness endures forever. This is a quotation of Psalm 112 verses 9 and 10, which says he distributed, or he distributes freely to the poor, his righteousness endures forever, his horn will be exalted in honor. But if you keep reading, he brings up a contrast. The wicked one will see it and be angry. He will gnash his teeth in despair. The desire of the wicked leads to ruin. The reason that this Old Testament quotation is so important is because it establishes the specific nature of God's blessing.

It's not just that God supplies what you need to be generous. And it's not just that God multiplies and increases your gifts so that you can be rich. It's all assuming a certain kind of disposition on why you're giving in the first place. In other words, you're giving not to get rich, but you're giving to be righteous. You're not giving to get money, you're giving because God has gotten You and you, because God has gotten your heart, you're wrapped up in being like God, and because God is generous, I want to be generous that's what a righteous person does.

And when a righteous person gives from that place of righteousness, God says, I'm going to pour some gasoline on that fire. If you want to give as a righteous man, if you want to be generous as a righteous man, then I will increase your righteousness. I will make it such that your righteousness endures forever. And that's totally different than giving to get rich. The giving to God so God will make me rich is almost assuming that your generosity is for you. In other words, I'm going to be generous towards God so it God will do for me.

And God won't bless that kind of generosity because your giving is not about you. It's not supposed to be about you anyway if it's going to be righteous generous. Righteous generosity is giving that begins and ends in God. And Paul, I think, clearly makes that point if you read the very next verse, which is him applying this Old Testament quotation. Now the one who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your what? Increase the

harvest of your righteousness.

So, yes, prosperity preacher, the seeds you sow, God will scale. He will multiply it. Just like that farmer had to have seed to sow so that he could have bread for food. God supplied that farmer with both things. He gave him the seed and he gave him the bread to eat. And when it comes to your generosity, God will give you both. He will give you the seed you need to be generous and sow into the kingdom, and he'll give you the food you need to take care of your family and to never starve.

But the reason why he multiplies, the reason why he scales it and enriches you is not fundamentally for you, but for him. It's not fundamentally for your personal enrichment to spend on yourself, but to increase your righteousness so you can more fully display who he is. And that's a totally different framework. Then I give to get rich. It's it goes right back to the first week of this series when we talked about how the Greeks had a definition of grace. That the Christians hijacked and revolutionized. In the Greek culture, you would give grace as and ultimately it just meant to do a favor for somebody.

But if you did a favor for someone, the implication clearly was that they would do back for you someday. You give in order to get back in return. I've got your lunch this week, you get my lunch next week. You got no money to build your building, I'll give you the money you need, but you put my name on your building. Alright? Give to get. It doesn't always have to be money for money, but it's value for value. The point is the circle starts with you and ends with you. Okay.

Christian generosity or Christian grace was different. And Paul takes this idea of generosity, says, no, it's like a grace from God. And in God's grace, the circle begins and ends with him. In other words, God is the source of all grace. God is the source of all goodness. And he as a good God, he very well may bless you with grace. He may give you something that enables you to be enriched and achieve these things that you want to achieve. And the purpose of God's grace in your life is so that you can give grace to others.

In other words, He blesses you to be a blessing. But the big difference is as you bless people with God's grace. And that grace has a positive impact on them, the circle is not supposed to come back to you. The circle's supposed to come above you and go back to God. So that the circle starts in God and ends in God. You are in the circle, like you're participating in the grace, but it doesn't begin and end in you. It goes through you so it can come back to God. And Paul is saying that right here.

God will scale your seed. He will multiply it. He will take what he does to you and do it through you such that it blows up. So that the supply it had in your life was more than sufficient, but then he's going to take that same supply and multiply it and bam, it's going to we had a guy in our church for this giving campaign. God enabled him to have a certain property and then something happened to the house on that property so that it burned down, sad. But then the insurance was so great that it more than supplied the money that was needed to pay off the note and to and do some other incredible things with it.

And in other words, the money that they invested in the property just went poom boom boom boom boom boom boom. And then that supplied everything that they needed to do something else later on down the road. And then they're saying, what God has taken and multiplied in my life, we're going to give so that God can do the same thing for the for other people and related to this campaign. And it's just a perfect example of how God took a seed and then multiplied it for his righteousness. For his glory because it was about him from the very beginning to the very end.

Have another pastor friend. There's a guy in his church that says he always gives him he calls him hundred dollar bill handshakes. He goes to shake his hand, hundred dollar bill. That's a hand I want to find every Sunday, right? Hey, what's up, brother. And he's this guy's just super, super generous. Well one day, instead of giving him \$100, he filled up a McDonald's happy Meal with dollar bills. And I think it was like a hundred one dollar bills and it was just f flowing out of the happy mill. And he thought it was a joke, right?

He's like, ha ha, funny, funny. And so that pastor went to Pie Pies Chicken after church. Because who doesn't love some Pie Pies Chicken? And at Pie Pye's Chicken, he just so happened to see a lady who was at their church but had not been there for a very long time. And they get to talking and it turns out her dad had died and because she had to do the funeral and all the stuff associated with it, she was way behind financially and had to work all these extra hours and hadn't been in church for months.

And the pastor just immediately felt c convicted by the Lord to take that happy mill and give it to her. He normally never carries cash, but on that day he just so happened to have a ton of cash. And so he said, I'm so sorry. He had actually just lost his daddy. He ministered to her and God really used that encounter and he said, listen, I just want to tip you a random Hat thing happened to me today. I got this happy mill full of cash. Can I just bless you with this?

And tears rolled down her eyes. She goes, you know, you have no idea how much this means to me. This is just incredible. And God used it. And then that pastor a couple weeks later goes to Pie Pies, orders his food, and gives this gift card that and it somehow the gift card alerted people to who he was. I guess it was a special kind of card, loyalty card, and they said, oh, you're that pastor. Are you her pastor? Are you the pastor of the so-and-so lady? And he goes, oh yeah, yeah, that's me.

And they said, oh your food is free today, pastor. Don't worry about it. And then two weeks later he comes back, same thing. No, don't worry, pastor, your food's free today. Then he goes to another Pipeye's nine or ten miles down the road. Aren't you that pastor that so-and-so? Yeah, yeah, that's me. Your food is free today. He said he got three to four hundred dollars worth of free food off of that one stinking loyalty card because of God multiplying the gift. But the gift, the point is, it wasn't so he could be enriched, it's so that God could be seen as glorious and righteous and good, and because he gave it from that place, God amplified it in that way so that his glory could be scaled and seen.

And that is what the law of the harvest is about. You don't give to get for you give to enlarge the glory that God has in the universe in the eyes of people. In other words, you're enriched so God might shine. Look at how Paul explains it in verse 11. You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which

produces thanksgiving to God through us. You're enriched, so God might shine. And I'm telling you. When you figure this out, when you become a person who is generous for this reason.

Yes, yes. You have no idea what God might do through your life. I have seen so many stories of people who get this idea. And God has materially blessed them beyond measure. I think about Rick Warren, whatever you think of his theology. He wrote the purpose-driven life, became a bestseller, million, millions and millions and millions of dollars. He gave back everything the church ever paid him, and then he lived on a reverse tithe so that he lived on 10% of his income instead of 90%. And he did it not to enrich himself, but for people to hear that story and say, man, isn't God awesome?

If God can do that, He can do anything. And I'm telling you, if you can learn, it doesn't matter how much money you have, if you can develop this spirit. In your giving, God will bless you. He will bless you. But his blessing will be an increase of righteousness. He will make you more generous because in your generosity he gets to shine. But if in your generosity it's not for God to shine, then he can't bless it the way he otherwise would. And so the question really is, whose glory do you seek in your generosity?

Because how you give will determine whose glory you're seeking. And as we think about Close the Gap and the pledges that people are turning in, I've been so overwhelmed by the generosity that people have displayed, I think around 50 or so pledges have been turned in and we're more than halfway to our goal. And there's 400 or so giving units in our church. So if we have 100% participation, we'll more than easily meet the goal. But I am pleading with you as your pastor as you think about the number God would have you to give, that you would give from a sincere heart.

That you would give because you believe God is able to supply what I need to give. And that you wouldn't let your pledge be dictated by fear. Or anxiety or greed, but that you would choose a number that invites God to supply you with sufficient grace and that you would through it all give in such a way that it's about his righteousness and not your enrichment. And just think about it logically for just a second. If it's true that God exists, which I think he does. And if it's true that that God is the greatest, maximally great being, then the logical highest good for that God to do would be for other people to see him, know him, love him, and give themselves to him.

That is the point of everything if God exists. The whole point of the universe is that we might know him and love him and enjoy him. And so if that is the highest good and God is committed to that good, then anytime you participate in advancing that goal, you are putting yourself in a position for God to bless you richly. And it's not for you, it's for him, it's about him, but it is through you. And as you think about Close the Gap, whatever you give, whatever the number is, it can't be coerced.

It can't shouldn't be stingy. But if it'll come from that place, God will do amazing things with it. And here's the coolest part. It's not just about your money. It's about your marriage. If you're struggling in your marriage because she hasn't been nice to me for 10 weeks, and you expect me to be nice to her? Yes. You should be generous with your kindness. Not so she'll be kind back to you or he'll be kind back to you, but because God is kind to sinners. And you want to reflect God because that's the

biggest, coolest thing in the world to do and be.

And when you do that, God will strengthen you, God will bless you, God will resource you with more grace. More kindness, more patience, not so he'll be back or she'll be back or you'll be what? No, because he gets glory. And it's true of your parenting and it's literally true of everything in your life. It's the law of the harvest. And so as we enter into a time of invitation, would you just put that before the Lord and say, Lord, would you examine my heart to see if there's any stinginess in me, is there any any begrudging sadness?

Am I like Scrooge or Eeyore? Or Pinocchio, and if so, Lord, would you help me to reorient my heart and my soul so that I seek your kingdom first? Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. God forgive me for being selfish. Forgive me for seeking my own needs above yours. Thank you for the new life you've given me in Jesus, a better life. And would you help me to live and give? So that that might be increased. Father, we enter into this time of invitation.

I know that this message lands differently for all of us. But Holy Spirit, just like God is able to give specific grace, you're able to give specific conviction. You're able to show exactly what an obedient response looks like for every single person in this room. And so as we enter into this time of invitation, we entrust it to you for however long it takes, for whatever decisions that are made, we pray that they would be of such a nature that they increase our joy and increase our happiness in you. But that they also increase our commitment to shining your light to the nations, to every generation, as we say in our campaign.

So that every generation can know and love Jesus. And they would experience the new life that only He can give. So we give you this time, we pray that you would use it in Jesus' name. Amen.