

Greed vs Generosity

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Preacher: Pastor Wolski

[0 : 00] Well, before we start this morning, I thought I'd read to you a missionary letter, just a little excerpt from it of Brother Derek Hanson that's in Chile.

I don't know if you remember him, but he was with us about two years ago. He and his boys came through here, and he's a L.A. area native and spent some time, I'm not sure if it's Ontario or Riverside or something like that, where he spent a few years or grew up, I'm not entirely sure. He was a smoke jumper and got out of California, went up to the Northwest, and then he settled down, got saved. He's now serving the Lord in Chile.

And so he writes, he's got some stuff going on there. They had a recent, what do you want to call this, kind of a campaign. It wasn't a full-on big deal, but it was a group from his church in Idaho came down, and they put out door hangers and such.

And so one thing he says here is he asks us, we'll keep in prayer an endeavor that they have looking for a new building to rent. They found a place that's bigger and it's more centrally located downtown in Puerto something.

[1 : 23] It's way down south in Chile, way down there. And the new building, bigger, centrally located, just a block away from a pier where it's a very popular area.

He says, our congregation is growing and the community business leaders have expressed their interest in our growth. I'm not sure what that means, but that's interesting. Community business leaders have expressed their interest in our growth.

We are trusting the Lord to provide for us financially so that we can make this move. And so they held their first Bible conference and had a team from their home church in Idaho come down and a missionary family in Argentina came and visited.

And they held a three-day Bible conference. They, throughout the conference, distributed 8,500 door hangers. They had a lot of preaching and a lot of fellowship. And he describes it didn't go off perfectly because there were some issues.

One of the brothers' car that was kind of relied on for all this getting people back and forth, their car broke down. So he said he had between five and eight people stuffed into his Mazda for most of the week.

[2 : 27] They also had some issues with the import tax, with the customs and just a little bit of shady stuff going on there trying to get their door hangers into the country.

But he goes on to say that during that week we were tested by God with patience and long-suffering. Despite the spiritual battles we faced, two families that we had been in contact with for years came to the meeting.

They enjoyed the conference. There was a good spirit during the meeting. All three pastors preached and our church members made decisions. With time and enduring grace, these men and their families will continue to serve God faithfully.

I believe their faith was strengthened. And hearing from other pastors was very good for them.

Overall, God was good to us for that week. And then he mentioned some prayer requests, some individuals who responded to the gospel.

And he asked prayer for all those door hangers that went out through the area, that there would be fruit from that. So he's pretty charged up. They had a good meeting. And looking forward to the Lord doing something there in Chile.

[3 : 26] All right. If you have your Bible, please open it to Proverbs chapter 21. Proverbs chapter 21 is where we'll begin.

But let's have a word of prayer together before we read anything out of this holy, holy, holy book. Father, we ask your blessing and your presence.

I pray that you'll cover us in the blood of Jesus Christ and cleanse us. And Lord, see us as clean in your sight. And that you'll be pleased to be with us and to meet with us and to speak to us and guide us in this book.

I pray that the topic of this Sunday school lesson would be received and understood. And that it would bear fruit in our lives. Help us to be open to the word of God.

And to allowing it to deal with our hearts and to mold us. And to get out the sin in us. And to clean us up and sanctify us.

[4 : 33] I pray that we'd be a people that would be pure and ready to receive the word of God. And we just pray that you'll use this time to help us to grow and to please yourself. And glorify your son. And it's in his name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Alright, so Proverbs 21. I'd like to start with a verse here. We're going to move to another topic here that we've been studying. Contrasting some things. And in chapter 21 verse 26. I'd like you to take a look at this and think about the contrast. He coveteth greedily all the day long. It's speaking of a slothful man in verse 25.

He coveteth greedily all the day long. But the righteous giveth and spareth not. And so there's a contrast here of the slothful fool.

That coveteth greedily all the day long. It's what's going through his veins. He's just coveting. He's full of greed. And there's a righteous man on the other hand.

[5 : 35] At the end of that verse. That giveth and spareth not. You can see the contrast. It's very plain in the verse. I don't know if you remember about. I guess it was Christmas Day as a matter of fact.

Last year. Or where are we at? 2023? 2022 Christmas. I preached a message that morning. We had one service. And we looked at a passage in the Gospels.

Where a woman, Mary. Had broken and had given. And offered some very costly ointment. Poured it out upon the head of Jesus Christ. And upon his feet. And washed his feet with the hairs of her head.

And this was very, very costly stuff. So much so that the disciples were murmuring amongst themselves. Calling this a waste. This is such a waste for this woman. They were complaining about it.

This woman giving of this costly thing. And then on the other hand. In that same passage. The very next thing it says of Judas Iscariot. That he went to the chief priest. And he said to them.

[6 : 35] What will ye give me? That I may deliver him unto you. And he's looking to get something for himself. Going to betray Jesus Christ. And so the message that morning was about a giver.

And a taker. It was contrasting the two. And showing you how Mary loved Jesus Christ. And would give the most costly thing she had for him. Which seemed to be a waste. Just pouring it out.

And yet Judas Iscariot on the other hand. Couldn't stand the thought of that. But then even went on his own. Behind the backs of everybody else. And said what will you give me? And he was a taker. Mary was a giver. And I want to contrast this morning with you. Greed. And generosity. Greed versus generosity. Now I think you can pretty well gauge that.

Which one's right. And which one's wrong. And the Bible has so much to say on this topic. We're going to look at a lot of scripture this morning. And be turning back and forth a good bit.

[7 : 34] But I'm just scratching the surface with what the book has to say. Greed. We'll start with a few things about greed. Greed is ugly. Like there's nothing good about greed.

In the Bible it's associated with envy. With corruption. With selfishness. With theft. With covetousness. With lust. With extortion.

With deceit. And with murder. There's nothing good about greed. There's nothing pretty about greed. On the other hand generosity. What the one will contrast.

Is beautiful. And generosity is comely. In the Bible it's associated with giving. And with blessing. And with caring. And ministering. And charity.

It's pretty obvious. Where we want to be at on this. But what I want to point out to you. And attempt to get across this morning. Is that inside of you. Right where you're sitting.

[8 : 31] Is both. In a new man. It's generosity. And giving. And being a blessing. In the old man. It's greed. And lust. And covetousness.

And never content. And we want to point this out this morning. And see if the Lord will use this to help you. And to perfect something that might be lacking in your Christian life here.

So greed versus generosity. Let's take a look at greed here. Look at Ezekiel chapter 22. Moving to the right. Ezekiel 22. And the first thing I want us to think on.

And consider from the scripture. Is that greed. Is a great replacer. Of God. Greed is a great replacer of God.

Greed will set its affections on something. Will take over. And will kick God right out. And what God wants. And what God says. It doesn't have room for both.

[9 : 40] Ezekiel 22. And we'll just look at verse number 12. In thee. Have they taken gifts to shed blood. Thou hast taken usury.

And increase. Thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbors. By extortion. And notice this. And hast forgotten me. Once you set your heart on gain.

And on increase. Using extortion. Shedding blood. Whatever the case. There's no room for God. God has got to be shut up inside of you.

He's got to be put away. Because he will not. He will. He will be a stumbling block to your greed. And to your. Feeding your carnal natures.

And desirous of other things. He will put a check on that. And for you to. To go that direction. And to feast upon whatever your flesh wants. You've got to put God away.

[10 : 39] He's got to shut up. He's got to disappear. Because the two won't go together ever.

Greed though. Is a great replacer of God. They've forgotten me. The Lord said. Look at Romans chapter 16.

Come back now to Paul's epistles. And let's see some more of the same. Romans 16. I want you to look at two places actually. Romans 16.

And Philippians 3. And we'll put these two verses together. Last chapter of Romans.

16. And then Philippians chapter 3. Greed is a great replacer. Of God.

And let's take a look here. Romans 16 and verse 18. I'll back up to 17. Get the context. Now I beseech you brethren. Mark them which cause divisions and offenses.

[11 : 42] Contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. And avoid them. For they that are such. Serve not. Our Lord Jesus Christ. But their own belly. And by good words and fair speeches.

Deceive the hearts of the simple. They are replacing God. And serving Jesus Christ. To serve themselves. Their own belly is the word. Alright. So now flip over to Philippians 3.

And compare this verse with that. And we'll start in verse number 17. Verse 17. Philippians 3.

17. Brethren. Be followers together of me. And mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. For many walk of whom I have told you often.

And now tell you even weeping. That they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Whose end is destruction. Whose God is their belly. Whose God is their belly.

[12 : 45] They don't serve the Lord Jesus Christ. They serve their own belly. That's their God. Now keep that in mind. And flip over to Ephesians chapter 5. Back just a page or two.

To the left. Ephesians chapter 5. And here's a verse that. It's only the Bible would say something like this. Ephesians chapter 5.

And verse number 5. Ephesians 5. Ephesians 5. Ephesians 5. Ephesians 5. Ephesians 5. For this ye know. That no whoremonger nor unclean person.

Nor covetous man. Who is an idolater. Remember reading that and thinking what? Idolatry and covetousness are one and the same.

Are they? They're two different words. They seem to be two different things. Worshiping idols. And just being covetous. And yet the Lord says in the word of God. And like I said.

[13 : 43] Only the Bible is going to tell you this. You're not going to think this way. Man's not going to talk this way. But the word of God is going to illuminate you to something. And what it's showing you is informing you that covetousness and greed is a form of replacing God.

Or idolatry. And that's what it does. Setting your affections on things other than him. You're not serving the Lord Jesus Christ. You're serving yourself.

I don't think I need to spell it out any plainer. You get the idea. Greed replaces God. Flip over to 1 Timothy chapter 6. 1 Timothy 6.

1 Timothy 6. And here's this famous passage on loving money. Well, we'll just start in verse 8.

And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

[15 : 02] For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

They've erred from the faith. And I'm telling you that greed is a great replacer of God. You can't serve Jesus Christ and have a life of greed and lust and have it active inside of you. It's a replacer of God. It's going to keep you from trusting God. It's going to keep you from believing God like you're supposed to, because that's the relationship is he's God. You're his child. You trust him. You walk with him. You lean on him. And he leads the way. But greed says, I'm not doing that. I'm not trusting him. I want this instead. And it replaces God. Greed keeps you from trusting and believing God. It keeps you from enjoying what God has given you. Look at verse 8 in this passage. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

[16 : 06] Greed says, uh-uh-uh. I'm not going to be content with food and raiment, because I want more. And there's more to be had. And I can get my hands on it, and that's exactly what I intend to do, no matter what it takes.

And greed is a great replacer of God. You have to tell God whatever you desire, whatever your will and way is, it can't fit with the way I'm walking. Because greed, as this passage shows, you're going to have to leave the faith, and leave the Lord to chase after the will to be rich or other things, or a love for other things, whether it's money or power or position or whatever it is, that your soul is going to covet after.

You'll have to leave the Lord behind, and you're going to fall into some temptations. Verse number 9. You're going to fall into some snares along the way. Not just things that trap you, but you're going to be putting yourself in a position that you should never have been in and never had to expose yourself to, but because you're greedy and lust and covetous, and you want more than God has given you, you're going to find yourself pierced through with many sorrows.

All right, greed's a great replacer of God. Now, let's go back to the Proverbs, and just stay back here for a minute. Back to Proverbs 27. Something else about greed.

It's ugly, and greed is an appetite that can never, ever be satisfied. It will never go away.

[17 : 44] It will never say just a little bit, and now we're good. We're just going to chill out on that. Thank you for satisfying. It doesn't work that way, and it never will work that way. It's deceiving.

Greed is an appetite that can never be satisfied. Proverbs 27, verse number 20. Hell and destruction are never full.

And isn't this interesting? The Word of God compares the eyes of man to hell and destruction. The eyes of man are never satisfied.

Now, I want to add to that thought, so let's get another verse here. Look at chapter 30. Proverbs 30. And look at 15 and 16.

The horse leech hath two daughters. Now, you don't want to be compared to a horse leech, do you?

[18 : 49] You don't want the Lord to use something so despicable and liken that to what you are. All right, so let's steer clear of this. The horse leech hath two daughters crying, give, give.

There are three things that are never satisfied. Yea, four things say not. It is enough. The grave. The grave hasn't stopped taking people. Every day, every moment, every second, the grave is snatching them.

The barren womb. The earth that is not filled with water. And the fire that saith not, it is enough. Those four things.

The Proverbs say, they're never satisfied. Hell and destruction are never full. There's four things that are never satisfied. They're likened to a leech that's just crying, give, give, give, give, give. It's never, ever going to stop crying, give me more. Now look at Ecclesiastes chapter 1. Just another page to the right. Ecclesiastes chapter 1.

[19 : 56] Greed is an appetite that can never be satisfied. Look at verse number 8. Ecclesiastes 1.8. All things are full of labor.

Man cannot utter it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. All right. Table that thought. We're going to add one more to it. Chapter 6. That's the eye and the ear. And now Ecclesiastes 6 verse 7. And here's the mouth.

Ecclesiastes 6 verse 7. All the labor of man is for his mouth. Yet the appetite is not filled. It's not filled. Your eyes never stop desiring to see more.

You could say, well, you get satisfied with one thing, but when do you ever wake up and say, I'm just going to keep my eyes closed all day long. I heard a noise. I'm just going to ignore it.
[20 : 59] Your eyes are always calling to draw in more information. Same with your ears. They don't get tired of hearing. They're never satisfied with hearing. And your mouth will always desire to be filled with more.

You get so stuffed, but just let two days pass, and you're going to be bawling and crying for food. Your mouth is never satisfied. Your eyes, your ears.

And this is likened to greed. Look at chapter 5. Ecclesiastes chapter 5. This is the way greed is inside the heart of a man.

Ecclesiastes 5 and verse number 10. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase.

Take it from a man who had it. But you probably won't take it from a man who had it, because you think in your mind, if I could just get a little more, I'd be satisfied. If I could just get a raise, that would make all my problems go away.

[22 : 06] No, it won't. If you're not satisfied with what you have, getting more, according to the Word of God, who's right? You were the Word of God. You're not right.

You want more. And you will always want more, because inside of your flesh is greed and lust for more. And you might tease yourself and say, no, I'm really not that way.

Maybe in some ways you're not, but in other ways you are. It exists inside of your heart. And it's a sin. It's a work of the flesh. And so it's an uncontrollable appetite.

It's an insatiable appetite. And it's ugly. And it's selfish. And it causes mankind for centuries and centuries to do horrible, horrible things.

Things that they never thought they would do. Mothers look at their baby boys and never have any clue that they're going to grow up to do X, Y, and Z, because greed gets inside of their heart.

[23 : 07] They'll lie to others. They'll hurt others. They'll cheat others. They'll beat others. They'll steal from others. They'll kill others. All for greed. It's a horrible appetite.

And it exists inside of you in some way. Now let's contrast this with generosity, because this is where we want to aim for. And you can already get the idea from our very beginning verse.

It's giving. It's putting it out. And to put it out, guess what you have to get this mindset is not to hold on. You're going to have to be willing to let go, to be generous, to give.

Generosity is not just for rich people. Don't get that idea that if, well, if I had more, I would give more. Probably not. Probably not. If you had more, you'd probably hold on to more.

Generosity. A poor person can be generous. Understand that. That widow in Luke that Christ watched at the treasury, gave those two mites, even all her living. Generous.

[24 : 07] Poor people can be generous. And rich people can be stingy. So it's not about being wealthy. It's an attitude. It's a spirit. And let's look at Proverbs 22.

First thing I want us to think on this is that God blesses generous people. This is something that pleases the Lord to see you give.

When you realize that everything you have is given to you by God, and you're not trying to hoard it for yourself, God doesn't hoard it for himself. He gives things richly for all men to enjoy.

And when he sees that spirit and attitude in you, it pleases him. And God blesses generous people. Proverbs 22, verse number 9, He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed.

For he giveth. See that bountiful eye. There's a bountiful eye and there's an evil eye. And if you run the references on the evil eye, it's always connected to money and to trying to get money and gain money and hold on to it.

[25 : 18] But a bountiful eye is one that gives and is generous. He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed. For he giveth of his bread to the poor. He's a giver.

He's generous. Look at chapter 11. Proverbs 11. Again, we're just scratching the surface with the scripture on this kind of thing.

But I hope it's enough. Proverbs 11, verse 24 through 26. Here's an ironic truth or principle in scripture.

That when you give things away and when you pour it out, you get more filling up. There is that scattereth and yet increases.

You wouldn't think that. You'd think if you were scattering, you're giving it away, that you'd be decreasing. But the irony is that you're blessed. You increase. And there is that withholdeth more

than is meat.

[26 : 19] So you're holding on to it. But that tendeth to poverty. Thinking you can keep it. So there's a biblical irony there. In verse 25, the liberal soul.

That's the giver. Giving liberally. The liberal soul shall be made fat. And that thought there is prosperous and set up and wealthy. And he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him. But blessing. There it is. Blessing shall be upon a head of him that selleth it. We could read the rest of this chapter.

It all is in context with it. But just know for now, God blesses generous people. The Lord gets involved when he sees your giving and your generosity. Look at chapter 19.

Proverbs 19. Proverbs 19.

[27 : 19] Look at verse 17. He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord.

Now isn't that something? God sees your generosity and considers it a gift toward him. Lendeth unto the Lord and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

God will render to you your dessert. Isn't that interesting? You're giving to the Lord when you're being generous. Now the New Testament rewards in our day are laid up in heaven.

Now we're reading some Old Testament passages where a man can expect God to increase things in his life based upon his obedience to the law. That was a condition of the Old Testament law.

And they could expect physical blessings. You can't necessarily claim that today and expect God to give you more money in your bank account because you gave certain monies to the offering or to a missionary and so forth.

[28 : 35] God may not bless you in financial ways. But he's going to bless you in spiritual ways or in heaven where you're laying up treasure in heaven. When God repays you again, it may not be down here on this earth.

And so just be aware that every \$5 you give doesn't mean \$50 is going to come in the back door because God said so. And just because some moron gets on TV and dresses in a \$2,000 suit and tells you to send your \$200 gift in or somebody could just write a check for \$1,000 today, God will bless you with more.

And God will take care of your mortgage. God will take care of all the expenses that you racked up. Don't listen to that nonsense. These Old Testament promises are Old Testament promises to the Jew.

And in the New Testament, we are blessed with spiritual blessings in heavenly places. And there's no, I mean, God promises, we're not going to go this way, but he said, My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

And in that context of Philippians 4, these people are giving to supply the needs for others. They're being generous. And the promise is God will supply your needs, not your greeds, your needs.

[29 : 50] He'll take care of you. And the rewards will be in glory for your work and labor of love in this life. Now come to 2 Corinthians 9, and we're going to spend the rest of our time here.

2 Corinthians 9, because here's a very strong passage about New Testament giving and generosity. This is not about tithing to your local church.

This is not about giving God a tenth of your income and being obedient. This is about giving above that and helping someone else in need. And like a point and case in our world would be if a missionary came through and they had a need and they had a vehicle broke down.

That actually happened here, I don't know, what, two years ago? A missionary was coming down through the area and their transmission dropped out on them up there in Santa Clarita.

And they were able to get down the hill and pulled over and found a transmission shop. And through word of mouth, we were able to get in contact with them. They came here on a Wednesday night and were with us. And we were able to give them an offering and paid for most of that transmission work.

[31 : 00] And that was a blessing to them. That was us supplying a need. But it wasn't you giving of your tithes to that. It was you giving above that. And you helping them.

And this is what we're going to read about. That kind of a thought of taking care of the brethren and helping in a special way. And so, first, God blesses generous people.

And secondly, God uses generous people. And if that's something you have in your heart to be used of God, then consider this. This is a way that God can use you. To be a help to others and to be a blessing.

And the benefits of this abound. I'm going to read a passage here. Let's start in verse 6. And we'll read to the end. And then we'll come back through and comment on what we're looking at here. Chapter 9, verse 6.

This really isn't the entirety of the passage. We'd have to read chapter 8 and 9. But let's start with verse 6. 9-6. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.

[32 : 00] Now, pause. I didn't give you the full context here. They're taking up an offering. Paul's writing to the church about an offering they're taking up for other believers. And he's giving them some principles or some guidelines to what they are able to do.

And so in verse 6. He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. And he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give.

Not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loveth a cheerful giver. Again, this is not your tithes to your local church.

This is not grudgingly or of necessity. And I might argue that that one is obedience to the Lord. You might place that in the necessity category if you're seeking to do what's right.

This one is over and above. This is you have an option to give and to help if you're able to. And so he says, God loveth a cheerful giver.

[33 : 03] And God is able to make all grace abound toward you. So this is on top of don't forget that God is able to make all grace abound toward you.

That ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. As it is written, he hath dispersed abroad. He hath given to the poor.

His righteousness remaineth forever. Now he, this is God, he that ministereth seed to the sower, that would be you, both minister bread for your food.

In other words, he's going to take care of you. And multiply your seed sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Now let's back up to where we ended on verse 8 so that we'll skip the parentheses and jump to 11.

Verse 8 ends by saying, Now let's cover a few things here.

[34 : 34] Because God uses generous people and the benefits to this thing abounds. In the first couple, well, in verse number 8 and skip into like the beginning of verse 11, God faithfully cares for the giver, for the generous person.

He is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. If you have to give, it's because God supplied that for you to give.

And if you're willing to be generous with it, God's able to make all grace abound toward you. That well is not going to run dry is what he's saying. It's because you give of your last 20 bucks.

If you're doing it for the Lord and the Lord's leading you to do it, He's able to supply that and to continue what you need to have, being enriched in everything to all bountifulness in verse 11.

So God faithfully cares for the generous giver. Something else that's amazing here is in that this is a way that you probably, without the scripture, you just wouldn't consider this.

[35 : 46] Because you'd be thinking about the need that was met, the money that was spent, and God taking care of you, like the balance of it all. But something that the Lord shows us in verse 11 is the end of the verse says, which causeth through us thanksgivings to God.

And the end of verse 12 is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. Do we really focus and consider that that believer who had their need met through us is turning to the Lord and thanking God for you, for supplying the need, for caring for them.

You see how God is getting lifted up and some pleasure, some incense coming up before the throne that He is pleased with. And so there's some benefits to being generous.

God uses generous people and God gets thanksgiving. In verse 13, God gets glory and says, they glorify God for your professed subjection under the gospel of Christ.

So God is thanked and God is glorified. And on top of that, the believers are edified and strengthened together in Jesus Christ. In verses 13 and 14, they glorify God for your professed subjection under the gospel of Christ and for your liberal distribution under them and all men.

[37 : 12] And by their prayer for you, which long after you, for the exceeding grace of God, it's in you. You do something, a blessing, and you could do it anonymous and this part won't really show up.

And I'm not telling you either way here, but when you're a blessing and you're generous to somebody else specifically that is in need, like this context, that person is thankful to God. They glorify God. They pray for you, verse 14, which that's pretty good. And they long after you. There's a bond that's formed in Christ over your subjection and obedience to being generous. You're showing them how to live the Christian life. You're showing them how to put God first and His people first and not allow greed to consume you and be your God and your money to be your God.

And so God uses generous people. And you're being an example to these other believers as well how to liberally distribute to them. It reminds me of a verse back in chapter 8.

[38 : 31] Look at chapter 8, verse 14. He says, But by inequality that now at this time, at this time, your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want.

And it may come back. You're teaching them how to be a blessing, how to be generous, how to be a Christian. And one day the tables may be turned and you're going to pray to God that He'll supply your need or that He'll work it out and you know what?

He just may use that brother who's in a different position just as a means there of understanding how this can work. God uses generous people and He could use you to be an example to another brother to grow them and to teach them how to give and how to be a help and a blessing.

Now finally here, a quick forexertation here about giving and being generous. This is what Paul says to this church in beforehand taking up the offering.

He says, Number one, Give bountifully. Verse 6. He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Which one do you want to be?

[39 : 43] Now it's not about consuming something for yourself or being lustful but the obvious answer is give. Give bountifully. That's what he's pushing them to do as a church. Be givers. Be generous.

Help. Give bountifully. If you're able, do more. You can't take it with you. It's not going to last long. If you don't give it to God, you probably will give it to yourself in some vain way of just pleasuring yourself. And like I said the other week, the more you give to the Lord and to His work, the less you're going to have wasted and burn up before you at the judgment seat of Christ for the stupid things you did with your money, the ways that you've wasted it.

Do something eternal with it. So give bountifully. And I'm sure you'll reap rewards in heaven where it's going to count, where it won't fade away and where the government won't tax it and they won't take it.

Give cheerfully. Verse 7. Not grudgingly or of necessity for God loveth a cheerful giver. Give cheerfully. This is an exhortation on being generous.

[40 : 53] Believe in what you're doing. Don't do it because, oh, I have to do it. It's going to hurt, but I have to. Or God's going to strike me dead or He's going to poison me or I'll get cancer.

That's grudgingly. But give cheerfully. Why? Because God loveth a cheerful giver. You want God to love you and your spirit and your attitude? Then give cheerfully.

If you don't believe in giving, then don't do it. Don't do it because you're 20 bucks. What's that? What's that to God is what I mean. If you can't give cheerfully, if you can't give out of a heart that loves the Lord and loves His people and wants to please Him and you can't give generously, then why do it?

If you can't give cheerfully with a thankful heart, get your heart right. Get your heart right. Let's stop with that.

[41 : 56] Give with an attitude that you desire to glorify God. You want God to use you. And I have memories when I say this, they come flashing to my mind of times as a young man with just in church, single still, just sitting in a pew by myself and the offering plate coming by, taking up an offering for something and some cash in my pocket and nobody knows, but in my heart, I gave as much as I could give because that was a blessing to me to feel like I'm serving God.

This money is the Lord's. I'm not worried about it. I don't have major debt and big bills and a family to feed and at the time, I could give it to the Lord and I wouldn't spend it on myself.

And I enjoyed that. There was something that thrilled my heart to give and I hope you have that same cheerfulness in giving. It ought to bring you cheer. It ought to rejoice you to be able to give and give obediently.

In verse 8, he says at the end of that verse that you may abound to every good work. It's a good work to be able to be a giver and to be generous, to see it as an opportunity to do good. Remember, you were created for this. You were created in Christ Jesus unto good works and you've been called unto good works. This is an opportunity to show yourself faithful, a pattern of good works, to maintain good works.

[43 : 24] And so it's just being obedient to your calling in life. If you're able to give, give. Give cheerfully, give bountifully, give obediently and then fourth, give expectantly, meaning in faith.

In verse 10, it says that he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food and multiply your seeds sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness.

So two things. Number one is expect God to supply your need. Expect him to care for you, to recognize your generosity and your heart for him.

Expect him to take care of it. And then expect, secondly, that he'll multiply your seeds sown and that the fruits of your righteousness will increase. Expect God to use it.

That's a good thing. When it leaves your hands cheerfully, let it leave your hands. And expect that the Lord's going to be pleased with this. And the Lord's going to use this. And in one day, some way or another, I'll be blessed for it.

[44 : 29] So, my pastor growing up, he'd always say this, it's kind of a mantra around some Baptists, is you can't out-give God. And that's just straight truth.

I'm not going to say that every time we take up an offering to put pressure on you. But in this lesson, it's fitting. You cannot out-give God. It's impossible.

How much can you put together to give to Him? Can you put a figure on it? Can you give everything? What is that to God? Where did you get it from? He's able to make it abound.

I mean, so, you cannot out-give Him. And as a matter of fact, in verse 15, He's already given an unspeakable gift. For God so loved the world that He gave, His only begotten Son.

And we could do a lesson on the gifts that God has given us. We'll save that for Christmas time, maybe. But you can't out-give Him. Your gift is nothing close to what Jesus Christ gave when He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

[45 : 38] So, we've got greed, and that's a work of your flesh. It's the selfish sinner inside of you that wants to hold on to what you get and get more of it.

And then you've got generosity. It's a Christian virtue. It's a work of the new man. And it's being able to give and to enjoy doing it.

And it's a blessing to be a giver. And one thing being generous will do, it'll keep your heart from being attached to money. and being consumed with money. When you can start giving it away, it'll keep you from being latched on to it and you'll experience the joy of being generous.

So, let's close with that. I'll have a word of prayer and then we'll take a few minutes break. Lord, I pray that You'll train us in our hearts to be generous and to give with cheerful hearts to You as unto the Lord.

God, I pray that this would be received, that it would not be mistaken for anything undercover or trying to address anything. But Lord, just a scriptural admonition to not be greedy but to be generous and to be a giver.

[46 : 49] Thank You for giving us all that we have. Thank You for giving us Your Son. Thank You for the spiritual blessings in heavenly places and for the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Father, all these things aside, we tend to struggle with the carnal things in life and with money and with bills and with just getting more and making ends meet and it's a never-ending cycle.

And so, Lord, help us to not set our eyes upon those things which will be gone tomorrow. Help us, Lord, to look to the future, to look to pleasing You and to being faithful with what we have.

And I pray that You'll bless us for it. Please bless this church in its giving and in its finances. I pray that You'll bless each individual family and single person here that can give and that they get their heart right with it.

They be right with You in the area of giving and being generous. And, Lord, that You'll bless us for it. We thank You for this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Let's take a break.