

The Process of Generosity

Message Notes

Intro

- The back story of the gift to the believers in Jerusalem
- The word generous comes from the word noble
- The culture of the early church - SHARING

2 Corinthians 9:5–15 (NLT) — 5 So I thought I should send these brothers ahead of me to make sure the gift you promised is ready. But I want it to be a willing gift, not one given grudgingly. 6 Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. 7 You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." 8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. 9 As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever." 10 For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. 11 Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. 12 So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. 13 As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. 14 And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. 15 Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

1. Principle 1 - Sowing and Reaping

1. Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.
2. Commit to believing in the unchanging law of sowing and reaping.
 1. Naturally - seed produces crop. No seed, no crop.
 2. Relationally - time and friendship produces trust and affection.
 3. Financially - investing in good soil produces interest and reward.
 4. Kingdom - When you sow into the kingdom of God, there will ALWAYS BE A HARVEST.
 1. Whatever you give into the Kingdom of God will come back as a blessing!
3. Scott Bledsoes story about the guy who started tithing at 9 am, and got a raise at 10 am.

2. Principle 2 - God loves cheerful givers

1. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

2. Concept of freewill offering
 1. Your mortgage is not a freewill offering
 2. Your taxes are not a freewill offering
3. For God, the heart of the gift matters more than the gift itself.
 1. Seen in the widow's mite.
 2. The potency of the seed is in the position of the heart!
 3. "God loveth a cheerful giver. He who gives cheerfully gives twice." - St. Augustine
3. **Principle 3 - God is a faithful provider**
 1. And God will generously provide all you need.
 2. We sing the song "Jireh"
 3. Jewish people would say - Adonai Yi-reh
 1. They learned through experience
 2. Isaac on the altar was the first time.
 3. Israel in the desert receiving manna and quail was huge.
 4. They also received water from a rock.
 4. You must become convinced that God is behind it all!
 5. James 1:17 (NLT) — 17 Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.
 6. "God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart." - Charles Spurgeon
4. **Principle 4 - God is providing seed to sow and bread to eat**
 1. For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.
 2. It's not all meant to be consumed
 1. God really intends to give you both seed and bread.
 2. The seed is for sowing, the bread is for consuming.
 3. Taking out a business loan and using it to live.
 4. "God is looking for people through whom He can do the impossible. What a pity that we plan only the things we can do by ourselves." A.W. Tozer
5. **Principle 5 - Generosity starts a chain reaction**
 1. As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever. So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. 13 As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. 14 And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. 15 Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!"
 2. I love watching dominos, the worst is when you're almost all the way done and someone starts the effect before it's done.
 3. Butterfly effect - Chaos theory - One flap over a butterfly wing in the amazon could potentially cause a tornado in Texas.
 1. Spencer Silver worked for 3M and created a glue that he thought was a failure.
 4. Missions Monday - Homeless man under the bridge