

2 Corinthians 9 - God loves a Cheerful Giver

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

2 Corinthians chapter 9 is where we are. If you're turned there, I'm going to go ahead and read the chapter. Go ahead and follow along with me if you would. It starts off by saying,

“Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, (By the way, how many of you have used superfluous in the last week? Yeah, me neither. In fact, I consider it rather superfluous. Anyway) ²for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them. ³But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be.

⁴Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. ⁵So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction. ⁶The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

⁷Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹²For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.

¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!” (ESV)

Let's pray.

Thank you Father for giving us the Ministry of Your Word. Thank You for this chapter. Thank You for Paul's comments here. I pray Lord God that as we spend just a little bit of time this morning unpacking these verses that You would reveal the purpose of Your will in having Paul share them and You preserving them all these years for us.

Teach us, Lord, what we need to know. That's why we come to the Word that we might be taught. We ask you to be with us in Jesus name, amen.

You might have noticed, for those of you that were with us last week, the first five verses of this chapter really are a reiteration of what we dealt with last week. Paul's encouraging the believers there in Corinth to be diligent to complete the offering that they had expressed a desire to complete, and it was an offering for famine stricken believers in the area of Judea, Jerusalem and all of Judea.

A famine had struck that area pretty hard and the people were struggling to have even anything to eat and so Paul was taking up offerings for them in the various churches, and here in Corinth he was doing the same thing and he was encouraging them now, and saying to them that I'm going to be sending a couple of brothers to before I come, I'll send them along ahead of time and they can help get this offering that you've been preparing ready so that it's all complete and ready to go so that when I get there it'll all be ready and so forth.

Obviously, as you can see from reading through the chapter, it continues with the subject of giving, and together with the last chapter, it provides for us, frankly some of the most insightful information concerning the issue of giving, and most of it comes in the form of principles. You'll remember in the last chapter we dealt with the first principle that Paul gave on giving and I'll show it to you on the screen so that we can see it together from chapter 8. He said,

2 Corinthians 8:12 (NIV)

“For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what you don't have.”

“For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what you don't have.”

It's very possible that the Corinthians were delaying putting their gift together because maybe they thought if they waited a little longer they could gather a little more to give and that sort of thing. Well, whatever might have happened, Paul is just reminding them in that first principle from the last chapter that it's not a question of how much we give that makes our gift acceptable to God.

You guys remember, the widow who came along, Jesus was sitting in a place where He could see people coming by the offering area and people were putting in all their money and this woman comes along and gives this mite, which is worth a fraction of nothing, and Jesus called this act of giving to the attention of the disciples even saying she gave more than all the others.

So, we know that it's not a matter of size that makes our gift acceptable to God, size doesn't play into it, but imagine if that widow would have watched some of the other people giving, and said why should I even put my little single coin in? Why should I even do that, all these people are putting in lots of money, my gift doesn't count. And yet here's Jesus, who uses her as an example to say that her giving meant more than all of the others put together because she gave out of her poverty.

We know, we know that it's not the amount that you give that makes a difference. It might seem impressive to some, but to God, the acceptability of the gift is not predicated upon the size as we're reminded in that first principle, it's acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have okay? So, don't look at what other people are giving and say, God doesn't care. My gift isn't acceptable.

You know, that. to be different. Here's what's interesting. As we get into chapter nine, Paul turns the table slightly to say that size of a gift does matter, but not in the area of it being acceptable okay? He's no longer talking about it being acceptable to God. He's talking about a different principle that comes into play related to size, and it's in points there.

Verse 6. Let me read it for you. You look in your Bible, if you would please. Verse 6. He says the point is this. *“Whoever sows sparingly, will also reap or harvest sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”*

All right? Now again, Paul's talking now about size, but he's not talking about whether it's acceptable, he's talking about the fact that when you give, the size

of your gift, it will be proportionate to what you get back alright? Now, somebody in the room, maybe it's you, might be thinking right now and saying whoa, wait a minute here. I thought we were talking about giving.

Why are we all of a sudden discussing receiving or what we get back from God? And if that's you that asked that question in your heart and mind, kudos. That's a good question, but the reason that we're talking about what you get back as it relates to what you give is because of an unmovable principle in God's kingdom. And that principle goes like this from Galatians chapter 6.

Galatians 6:7 (ESV)

“..whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

“..whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

Now, the context of when Paul first wrote that principle was related to sin, but the principle exists even in other contexts. In other words, it is true in the context of kindness. If you sow kindness, you'll reap kindness. It's true in the area of forgiveness. If you extend forgiveness to others, you will reap forgiveness. By the same token, if you sow anger and unforgiveness and impatience, those are things that you're going to be getting back.

What a man sows, so also shall he reap. It's a universal principle that God has factored into His kingdom, and so the truth of it is no less true or applicable if you will, as it relates to the giving of our money and the giving of our possessions. It's the very simple thing that basically says what you plant in your garden you'll find growing in your garden. I mean, that's simple enough for even me to understand, you know?

What you plant, you're going to find growing. You don't look in your garden and go, oh daffodils. I planted daffodils, that's why they're coming up, or something like that. And if I plant well, whatever I plant is going to come up. Here's the interesting thing about it here. There's a rule of agriculture, even in planting that every farmer knows, even gardeners, people who do fruit, vegetable gardens or whatever.

They understand that you plant a seed of something and you get many more seeds back, and that too is another principle of the kingdom. It's called the principle of multiplication. Related to that, in other words, if I plant an apple seed, and it grows like it's supposed to, and it turns into an apple tree, and then it bears fruit the way it's supposed to, how many seeds am I going to get back from my single seed that I planted?

Well, exponentially more than what I planted, and that's a principle that comes into play as it relates to sowing and reaping. It's just something God established. You can see it in the agriculture of our world. You can see it also in giving, and we're going to see how Paul talks about that in, as we go a little bit further. But it's just the way God created things to work, right? I plant a single seed and I get back a multiplication of seeds from that single planting, and no less true, Paul again says, whoever sows sparingly, so the same is true.

Whoever sows sparingly, they're going to reap sparingly. Whoever sows bountifully, they're going to reap bountifully. Or I love this in the new living translation, sometimes I like to look at these in a more simplified English version to help me. Cause I'm pretty dumb. Anyway, let me put it up here. 2 Corinthians chapter 9:6.

2 Corinthians 9:6 (NLT)

“...a farmer who plants only a few seeds is going to get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.”

“...a farmer who plants only a few seeds is going to get a small crop. (We're not talking rocket science here, folks. Right?) But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.”

I can handle that. So, you understand, there are principles that go along as it relates to this, and especially it relates to giving. Let me show you some other passages throughout the Word that referenced this idea of multiplication and that sort of thing. Proverbs is another great one. I love this one. Chapter 19, verse 17.

Proverbs 19:17 (ESV)

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed.”

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed.”

You see, you can't separate giving from what you get back from the Lord. You can't. You can try to. I've had Christians say to me, well, I don't think it's proper to talk about what we get back, when we're talking about giving because it just... And I know that sounds pious, but you know what? God talks about it all the time! I mean, Jesus told all kinds of parables about it, about what you get back from what you put in, boy, throughout the Old Testament, you looked at

that passage. Can we put Proverbs back up just for a second? Again, look at this idea. And this is an observation by the writer.

Proverbs 19:17 (ESV)

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed.”

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed.”

He says, whoever is generous to the poor is actually lending to the Lord and the Lord is going to do the repaying. Do you see that the concept here, the element that you can't remove? You can't remove our giving from what God is going to give back. You can't separate it. You can choose not to talk about it, I suppose, if you think that sounds holy, but you know what? God talks about it all the time. Let me show you another one from Luke chapter 18.

Luke 18:29-30 (ESV)

“And He said to them, “Truly I say to you there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time and in the age to come eternal life.”

“And He said to them, “Truly I say to you there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time and in the age to come eternal life.”

Isn't that interesting? So, Jesus says right there, listen, whatever you sacrifice for the kingdom of God and for the work of the Gospel, you will get back by multiplication many times more. Again, He's telling you here, you give, listen, God is not going to be any man's debtor. You've probably heard that phrase before. It's not in the Bible, but it's true. God is never going to end up owing anybody.

You give to the Lord, He's going to give you back. It's that law of multiplication. You plant a seed, you're going to get lots of seeds back, just like in your garden. Let me, and then Malachi chapter 3, you guys probably know this one. This is a great passage.

Malachi 3:8-10 (NIV)

“Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you —because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will have room enough for it.”

“Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you —because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will have room enough for it.”

A great passage. The Israelites had gotten to a place where they had stopped bringing the commanded tithing offering, which came under the Mosaic law, into the storehouse and so forth, and so God challenged them, but He didn't just challenge them with obedience. He didn't just say, listen, you guys need to be obedient and do this.

He challenged them with His response, and He said, just test Me, go ahead and test Me in this and see if in response to your obedience, I don't end up blessing you so much that you don't even have enough storage to contain everything I'm going to pour out to you. You get it? You see what's going on here? You see this principle of multiplication? This idea that you can witness in your own garden or in your field that also comes into play as it relates to your giving?

God has promised and has factored this into his kingdom, that when you give, He multiplies back to the giver, and that's just a reality. Now, the interesting thing about this passage that we just read in Malachi is it talks about tithes and offerings, and that, of course always brings up questions among believers and it's not uncommon for me to be asked by people, are we still supposed to tithe of our income?

Some people word the question a little differently. They'll say, does the New Testament teach that we, as God's people, are still supposed to tithe? Well, I want you to know that right here, right now, in second Corinthians we're going to answer that question for you okay? We're going to put it all to rest. Look at

verse seven in your Bible. It says, ⁷“*each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.*”

There it is. That's the answer to the question. What is the idea of giving, what is the command, if you will, related to giving? It's, is it 10% is it tithe? No, no it's not. It's changed, we're not under the Mosaic covenant. Do you guys understand the Mosaic Covenant was made between God and the Jews not God and the Church. We're not under that covenant. We're not under the command to tithe. The word tithe, by the way, means 10 percent and a lot of Christians do it and there's nothing wrong with that, but I just want you to know you're not under the command to do that.

What God says to you is, you are to give according to what you've decided in your heart to give and so forth. So, this is the wonderful beauty of what it is to be a New Testament believer who's under the New Covenant where we don't have an external law that says to us, thou shalt give ten percent. We have the law giver who lives in our hearts who now is speaking to our hearts and helping us to make a determination related to that area of giving.

What we're saying here is that what God says today is instead of an external command written on stone, not that that one was written on stone, wasn't part of the Ten Commandments, but you know what I mean. Rather than an external command, He wants you and I to be led by an internal voice through our hearts, led by the Holy Spirit. We're to be led by the Holy Spirit. Because Galatians 5:18 gives us the answer.

Galatians 5:18 (ESV)

“...if you're led by the Spirit, you're not under the law.”

“...if you're led by the Spirit, you're not under the law.”

If you're led by the Spirit, you see if you're led by the Spirit, you can't be under the law. The law is outside of you, the Spirit lives within. The law was given by God written on tablets, given externally to the Jews. You and I have the presence of God's Holy Spirit living in our hearts, right? The law giver lives within our hearts and do you see how much superior that is to an external law?

You could live, I suppose, by external commands out here beyond you, or you can live by internal directives governed by the Holy Spirit guiding your heart. But do you understand how much more superior that is? God can only say so many things in writing outside of you. There is an unlimited amount of information and insight and direction that God can speak to your heart from

within, right? So, it is a superior thing. So, the man who is led by the Spirit is not under the direction of the law. That's pretty obvious.

So, under the old covenant God commanded His people to give 10%. Under the New Covenant, we owe God 100%. I always love to see people's eyes when I say that. We know that we owe Him 100%. By verses like this from First Corinthians chapter 6, he says, Paul writes,

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (ESV)

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; for you were bought at a price. So glorify God in your body.”

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; for you were bought at a price. So glorify God in your body.”

This is why we know, this is how we know that we owe God a 100%, because we've been purchased. He says it very clearly in this passage. You are not your own, and if you're not your own, if you don't belong to you, then who do you belong to? Well duh, you belong to Who purchased you, and the one who purchased you is Jesus and He bought you with His blood.

He paid for your life with His blood and you are now His, and that means all your stuff too. In other words, when He purchases you, He purchases all of you, everything that you are, everything that you have. Here's the interesting thing. He owes, or we owe Him everything. We owe him our very lives because He purchased our very lives for us but instead of demanding a hundred percent, which He has every right to do from you and I, right?

Every right in the world to demand a 100% from you. Here's what He says. Give what's in your heart. Give how you're led. Give how you're led. Okay? He says, we got a new relationship going on now. No longer this external law. Now I'm living inside of you so I want you to listen to My heart. I want you to listen to My voice. I want you, because this is where God is communicating to us and so forth. And I want you to search your heart, and I want you to be led by the Spirit.

Now, let me address the elephant in the room. We don't like this stuff. We don't like people to tell us to be led by the Spirit. We don't particularly like that. The truth is the vast majority of believers would just rather be told. When people

have asked me over the years, pastor Paul, what, how much does the Lord want me to give of my income or whatever?

And I'll say, well I'll take them to 2 Corinthians chapter 9, it says that you need to be led by the Lord. You need to give according to what's in your heart and they go, can't you just give me a number, just give me a number. You know, we don't really particularly like the idea of being sent back to our prayer closet to figure this thing out because it's like, I'm just going to go with 10%. I mean, 10% was good enough in the Old Testament, it must be good enough now. We're just going to go with 10% and just not going to worry about it. Okay, 10%, boom, there we go. Or whatever.

But we're bothered by the whole idea that we've got to lean into the Lord to figure this stuff out and so, what we end up doing many times, Christians will often just gravitate to somebody who will just tell them what to give. What do you think I should give? Well, I think you should give this much. Okay, we're done. Boom. You see, the problem with that is, eventually your giving is going to be done for the wrong reason and that's what Paul goes on to talk about there also in that same verse.

Look at verse 7 again with me. Verse 7, he says, "*each one must give as he has decided in his heart.*" Look what he says, "*not reluctantly or under compulsion.*" He brings up two things right there that can spoil your giving, and the first thing is when we give reluctantly, and you know what really fosters that reluctance to give? It's when somebody tells you what to give from outside.

Here's what you need to give. Okay, and you're going to probably do it for a while, but you don't really, you're not very happy about it. So, what happens? Your giving is spoiled because you're giving reluctantly. The other thing he talks about is when you give under compulsion, and the compulsion could be a lot of different things, but it speaks of an external duty. In fact, let me put the definition of compulsion up on the screen for you. It means,

... an irresistible persistent impulse to perform an act.

... an irresistible persistent impulse to perform an act.

It's just this something that's programmed into your subconscious that says, do this, and you don't really even question it anymore. You just do it because it's what we've always done. Isn't that what we Christians often default to? Why do you do this? Well, we've always done it that way, as if that's a reason or

continuing to do it that way. Paul says don't do it reluctantly, don't do it under compulsion right?

That's not how the Lord would have you to give. How does He want you to give? Look again at verse 7. *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart not reluctantly not under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.”* God wants you to give willingly and cheerfully. But you know what? If we're going to be honest here today with one another, we're going to admit the fact that that is rarely the attitude behind our giving. We're rarely cheerful about it, but you know what?

If we receive something from somebody and they're less than cheerful, we know how we're affected. Have you ever received a gift from someone or something from someone that you know they didn't want to part with? They didn't want to give you but they did just because it's like, they felt obligated or something. You know, they didn't really care, didn't really, and it's like thanks.

But boy, you know when somebody gives cheerfully, how cool is that? Have you ever, do you remember when your parents used to watch you open up presents at Christmas or on your birthday, and they couldn't wait for you to open presents because of the cheerfulness of their heart to give and their desire to see you delighted by your gift. I got to experience that as a kid, and then I got to experience that as a dad, and now I'm experiencing it as a grandpa.

It's so much fun! In fact, I never would have believed it as a kid that it would be more fun to give, and to watch that, and to receive the joy of that sort of a thing. Now what Paul goes on to do, as we look in some of these latter verses of the chapter, is he begins to talk about the blessings that accompany those who give cheerfully, who give willingly, not, we're not now, we're leaving out the people who are giving because of obligation or compulsion or reluctance.

These are the blessings, the benefits, that attend those who give cheerfully. Verse 8, look with me in your Bible, *“and God is able to make all grace abound to you so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”* In other words, to the cheerful giver, God pours out the ability to do even more okay? That's one of the great benefits of giving cheerfully. You're given the ability to give more right?

Verse 9, and then he quotes Psalm 112 here, *“as it is written, he has distributed freely (and the “he” in this passage is the one who gives cheerfully, who gives generously). “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor” (and what's the blessing? What's the benefit?) “His righteousness endures forever.”*

What's Paul talking about here? He's quoting Psalm 112 to remind you and I that when we give cheerfully and generously, that the blessing is we lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven. We lay up treasures. You know, just a few weeks ago, somebody wrote me that question as a Q&A and said, how do we lay up treasures in heaven? I thought, wow, what a great question. Really good, and this is one of the ways. When giving cheerfully, and so forth, we lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven.

He goes on here, verse 10, he says, *“he who supplies seed to the sower (and of course that's God) and bread for food will supply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. (More laying up of treasures) ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God”*

Now Paul begins to outline here the myriad of ways the Lord is going to bless, multiplying your seed, increasing the harvest, as he said, verse 12. I love this. I love this, *“For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, (but what else is it doing?) It's also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.”*

You know, we forget about this sometimes. We forget that when we give to somebody who's going through a hard time, we give to the poor or whatever, thanksgiving rises to God because of our obedience and our faithfulness. You know, over the years, Sue and I have had the privilege and blessing on several occasions to give a gift of money from some of our members to another some of our members.

It happens quite a bit actually, people get to know each other, they find out that somebody's going through a rough patch, for whatever reason it might be, and they'll sometimes walk up to us and just say, hey this is, I want to give this gift anonymously to this family over here and we get a chance to do that and you know what we see, from our perspective, is not just the need being met, but we see that incredible cheerfulness of thanksgiving then that comes out from that just that they're like, oh, praise God and you can just see it on their face, and it is really a beautiful thing, and that's what Paul's talking about here.

Not only when you give, are you meeting a need, but you are causing an overflow of thanksgiving to erupt because of your obedience to the Lord. He goes on in verse 13, he says, *“By their approval of this service (in other words, when they see and recognize that what you've done for them, you've given them this stuff, he says) they're going to glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ.”*

In other words, because you've become a believer, you've put your faith in Jesus and you've made a commitment now to serve Him and to love Him and to minister to God's people, they're going to see that, he says and he says, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others and then they're going to long for you, they're going to pray for you because of this grace that God has poured out upon you.

So, there's going to be thanksgiving, there's going to be prayer that's going up. Paul says it's like a domino effect. You give to someone who's going through a difficult season and there's this thanksgiving and there's these prayers that are offered up and this is, it's this beautiful movement of the things of the Lord. He says in verse 14, *“while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you (and then he says) ¹⁵ thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift.”*

Giving is really a crazy thing in the kingdom of God. It really is. Here's the deal. God gives us resources in the form of money and stuff, and then He gives us opportunities to bless others with the resources He's given us, and then He multiplies the blessing back to us, for giving of our resources to bless others, and it produces all this really cool stuff of thanksgiving and prayer and joy. And he allows what we do, to be a treasure that we can actually lay up in heaven, and redeem later on.

That is the weirdest thing in the world. Usually we think of term of investment, we think of something we have to work hard for, we have to make money and then I'm going to get my money together and I'm going to put it over here and then invest it over here, and I don't even know if these investments are going to do very well, but I'm going to give it a shot anyway, I'm going to do that, but I'm going to take my hard earned money and I'm going to put it in and maybe I'll get an investment out of this thing, and God's investment program is so much different.

He says, all right. Here's resources. By the way, I'm the one who gives you the ability to earn wealth. That's what it says in the Word. It's Me. I bless you with everything. So, I'm going to give you this stuff to take care of you, but then I'm going to give you, I'm going to challenge you at times to take care of others when you see those needs arise, and when you do reach out, out of obedience to take care of other people, I'm going to bless you.

I'm in fact, I'm going to multiply the blessing back to you. What you sow, is going to produce more seed so that you can bless more people and the more people you bless, the more I'm going to bless you, and there's going to be joy

and there's going to be thanksgiving and there's going to be prayer that rises up because of this thing, and it all starts with God and what He gives. The question is, are you and I going to be obedient? That's the question, because we know what the Word has to say here. We understand these principles of multiplication. I mean, we understand it from an intellectual standpoint.

Principles that God has established in His kingdom that says you give and there will be a multiplication. I will bless you. Even like God said to the Jews living during the time of Malachi. Just test me, go ahead and test me. See if I don't do this. God is laying this thing on the line and challenging us to obey. The question is, do we believe His Word enough to step out in faith? Do we believe what we're seeing in the Word of God enough to step out in faith and to be obedient to the Lord?

Let me end here this morning with a very interesting proverb, once again, I love the proverbs. Chapter 11, verse 24,

Proverbs 11:24 (NIV)

“One man gives freely and yet gains even more. Another withholds unduly when it comes to poverty.”

“One man gives freely and yet gains even more. Another withholds unduly when it comes to poverty.”

Isn't that a great proverb? Again, the proverbs are observations of the wise, and this observation is, Solomon is thinking through life, and he's going this is interesting. I see that there's this thing going on. There's one man who has his money in his hand, but his hand is open, and when the poor and the needs of life come along, he's free to help people out with that money, and I've seen this, I've watched this. And he gives, and he gives, and he gives, and yet he just keeps getting more.

But then I've seen something else in my observation of life in this world. I've seen another man take his money and hold it like this. He's got a clenched fist, he's got a closed hand and he doesn't look toward the poor or look toward the needs or whatever the people around him. He basically takes his money and he stuffs it in his pocket and says, that's my hard earned cash, and I'm not helping anybody with it because it's mine.

Kind of like Nabal. You guys remember Nabal who David ran into? David not only got his stuff, Nabal's stuff in the end, he got his wife too. That's a whole other sermon, let me just, we won't go there here today. But that's the idea that

Solomon is bringing out in this proverb, I've seen the man who has the closed fist and he's hoarding everything he can get his hands on and yet he still comes to poverty.

What's going on here? What's going on is there's a rejection of the understanding of the principles that God has laid out in the kingdom related to giving, related to sowing and reaping, related to the multiplication of giving and giving back. Question is, do we believe it?