

# Generosity – An Attribute of a Believer

Matthew Vander Els • 2016-08-30 • [foundedintruth.com](http://foundedintruth.com)

## MAIN VERSES

[Galatians 2:20](#) • [Romans 8:11](#) • [2 Corinthians 8](#) • [2 Corinthians 9](#) • [1 John 3:17](#) • [Matthew 7:2](#) • [2 Corinthians 9:6](#) • [Galatians 6:7](#) • [Luke 6:38](#) • [2 Corinthians 9:7](#) • [John 15:11](#) • [2 Corinthians 9:11](#) • [Mark 12:41](#) • [Mark 12:44](#) • [Proverbs 11:23](#) • [Proverbs 11:25](#) • [1 Timothy 5:8](#) • [Galatians 1:10](#) • [John 6:4](#) • [John 6:13](#)

On Facebook this morning when I announced about Nate and Alyssa coming today and leading us in worship, I said that we're going to be speaking about a controversial topic that I can't even share online. And that controversial topic is not how to say the name, it's not pseudo-archaeological pagan origins. It's not flat earth. It's not... Take your pick of whatever is sensational on YouTube right now. The topic that I would like to talk about today is the most controversial topic in this movement, and it is the topic of generosity. It's interesting because this topic causes frustration and anger in so many people in this movement. Trust me, I've met them. And I don't understand why. Maybe there's someone in here right now who, by me saying I'm going to talk about generosity, has got a pit in your stomach right now. Maybe you have an indwelling of frustration. Maybe there's some anger building up. Maybe you're forming an accusation to throw at Matthew because he's going to say something that I'm not going to like. I know there's at least one person in here today. If that's you, I want you to hold on to that feeling. Don't get rid of it. Hold on. Tackle it. Catch it. Right? And I want you to study it. And I want to ask you a question. While you're holding that feeling in the pit of your stomach right now, where is it coming from? What is feeding it? Where is it growing from? Is it growing from the Spirit of God that is within you? Or is it growing from somewhere else?

## Roots of Frustration

You see, many of us came out of church. And many of us still carry a lot of unforgiveness or anger or frustration for the things that we learned or didn't learn or whatever in church. Take your pick. The church taught us about Sabbath was on Sunday, kind of, sort of. Or they taught us that these days we're done away with and that Torah was done away with regardless of modern day Christian churches keeping 75% of the applicable commandments of Torah.

Regardless of that, they taught us that the Torah was done away with. They taught us that we can eat bacon. And a lot of us come out of church and we begin to walk in truth, as we call it, the expounded understanding of God's word, the Torah. And we reject everything that we learned in church, even if it's something that was applicable in Scripture. And so we know that church did all these things wrong and the church used to ask for money. The church used to encourage us to be generous. The church used to have fundraisers for missions trips that were in Africa. The church used to ask us for generosity to fund missionaries in India. The church used to have fundraisers for the teens. The church used to ask for money to have a church, to have a youth group, to have these things. The church used to take up offerings to help people in the fellowship and the community. And because the church did that, I'm going to say, that's wrong too. There are so many in this movement that have considered the attribute and the characteristic of generosity something that should not be in this movement. And that is not of God.

## Eat Your Vegetables

And so, you guys like to eat Brussels sprouts? Yes. See, all the more mature folk are like, yeah. Everybody else, you like to eat Brussels sprouts? Audrey, you like to eat Brussels sprouts? Yes. You know what I mean? The big green balls of nothing, like, "Ugh!" Right? And not with the cheese sauce on it. You like to eat Brussels sprouts? You like to eat cheesecake? We love to eat cheesecake. Cheesecake is good. It's a very exotic taste. Something we don't have too often. We love it, just wish we could eat it every day. Vegetables are typically not something that someone says is their favorite food. Let me lay out my metaphor. We have to eat our vegetables though, right? Why do we have to eat our bread? Why can't we eat cheesecake every single day? Because it's healthy. Today we're going to eat our vegetables, guys. It may not taste good. Maybe to some of us that are more mature, yeah, I'm used to vegetables. I love vegetables. It may not taste good to some of us, but we have to because it's healthy.

## The Generosity Lesson in Film

And so before we go into the message, I wanted to show a video clip. I love film. I love dramas. I love plays. And so I'm going to show a clip from a secular film that was based on a novel that got turned into a play, and that's what it's most well known for. And the name of the movie that I'm going to show came out in 2012. It had a lot of great actors and actresses in it. And it's called Les Misérables. That's how you say it. Less Misérables, for those of us who are not familiar with it. And I'm going to show a clip involving Jean Valjean and Bishop Mariel, if you're

familiar with the play. Now, Jean Valjean, who plays him? Who's that actor? That's not Russell Crowe. He was the guy. This guy was Wolverine, yeah. Hugh Jackman. And he plays essentially a street thug. He's a criminal and he just got out of jail, right? And so what they did is his papers, they stamped him as a criminal on his papers essentially. So he's marked, like Cain, right? He's marked for life. And every single place he goes, he can't get work. What are your papers? I'm a criminal. No, go away, right? And then he can't find a place to sleep and he's looking for a place to sleep. And this scene starts off right when he's settling down in an old barn because he thinks he can find a place to sleep, right? Even though he has a bad past. And so, indulge me, this clip is about three minutes long. Okay? You guys like watching movies at fellowship? Okay.

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Let me see your papers. I'll sleep in the stable. Please, I'm hungry. Get out. Hey! Come and suffer, you are weary And the night is cold out here Though our lives are very humble But we have, we have to share There is wine here to revive you There is bread to make you strong There's a bed to rest till morning Rest from pain and rest from wrong Bless the food we eat today Bless our dear sister and our honored guest Get in there! Put him down! Stay there! Monsignor, we have your silver. We caught this man red-handed. I get the nerve to say you gave him this. That is right. But my friend, you left so early. Surely something slipped your mind. You forgot. I gave these also. Would you leave the best behind? Monsieur, Melissa, this man has spoken true. I commend you for your duty. Now God's blessing go with you. But remember this, my brother. See in this some higher plan. You must use this precious silver to become an honest man.

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What'd you guys think? So Jean Valjean is a criminal. He gets taken in and he's looking for a place to stay. And then Bishop Mariel, he comes up to him and he says, hey, we have plenty. We don't have a lot, but what we have, we will share with you. And so what happens is he ushers him in and he feeds him and he gives him a fire to sit by and warm himself and he gives him a bed to stay in. And then Jean, he gets up and everybody's sleeping. And he says, I'm going to take their silver. And he raids the cabinets and he takes all the silver plates, all the silverware, all the silver, puts it in a bag, runs away with it, and he gets caught by the police. And he gets dragged back in, they beat him, they throw him to the ground, and they look to the Bishop Mariel and say, this guy, we recovered your silver. He said you gave it to him.

## Transformation Through Generosity

And then the bishop looks up and says, of course I gave it to him. That's correct. But Jean Valjean, you left so early. You forgot the most expensive silver in the whole building. These candlesticks, right? Here, you forgot these. Release him. What are you doing? Thank you for your service, officer. This man is innocent. And then when he gives the silver to Jean Valjean, he says, listen, you've been raised to life in this moment. You take this silver and you go and you make a new life for yourself. In that moment, through the actions of Bishop Mariel, he was trying to spread the gospel. Through what? His generosity. I love that. I love that scene. He says, now I've given you back to God. Now, many people in this movement would just be hung up that it's a Catholic priest. Just, he's a Catholic priest. No, he was a servant of God. Why? Because he was doing the very thing that Yeshua taught us to do, to be generous.

It's incredible because in [Galatians 2.20](#), it states this. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live. It's no longer who? I. No longer who? What? Lives. But Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up to me. And so Christ lives in me now. And I'm expounding. And maybe I'm just stretching this whole scene out. But I believe Bishop Mariel in this scene shows us this. Do you guys know that? You guys never heard [Galatians 2.20](#)? I think it's pretty darn literal. There's a spirit that is within you right now that was given to you the day that you proclaimed your faith. It enables you to do the same things. I asked someone the other day, and I heard another message. I said, you know, when Messiah was up on that cross, naked, stripped, right?

They're beating him, spitting on him. He looked up and he said, Father, forgive them. He forgave the people doing this, the ultimate shame that was put on. And I said, hey, could you do that? A lot of people were like, no, I could never do that. And I said, no, you could. Want to know why? Because the Spirit dwells in you. You can do it, right? [Romans 8](#), 11 states, and if the Spirit of him who raised Yeshua from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who now lives in you. Bishop Marielle, his example was the spirit of Messiah living in him. The flesh would have said in that moment, take this guy away. Hang him. He's just a criminal. Beat him up some more before you go. I want to see it. The spirit that was within him said, no, I gave him the silver. Here's some more. Go walk in your new life with this. Don't forget this gift. It's an unforgettable gift. And it's not me. It is the God I serve.

## The Foundation of Generosity

This message is based on Paul's letter to Corinth, [2 Corinthians 8-9](#). You should read it sometime. It's very enlightening. So Paul starts out and he's writing Corinth concerning the fellowship in Macedonia. Everybody loves Macedonia, right? I love Macedonia. There was an offering being taken up for the fellowship in Jerusalem. So not just the leadership, but all the people in Jerusalem. There's persecution. War was fixing to erupt in Jerusalem. There was a prophecy about a famine that was coming. And so Paul was going around to all the fellowships and he was like, listen guys, we need to take up an offering to send down to Jerusalem. Okay? And he starts talking about the Macedonian fellowship, and he says, listen guys, they didn't just give of their means, they gave beyond their means to give to this offering that's going down to Jerusalem. And so not only were the Macedonians supporting the fellowship that they had in Macedonia, they gave beyond their means this huge amount of money. And they said, yeah, we've gathered it up. We're not just making a pledge with our mouth, right? We're going to do this. And so they got all this money saved up and they told Paul, listen, we've got this big old sack of gold that's ready to take down to Jerusalem to help our brothers and sisters out in Jerusalem. Paul begins to brag about them to the ecclesia in Corinth. He's bragging about them. I mean, it's almost to shame Corinth, right? He states that Corinth, they made a pledge to give, right? But they haven't given yet, right? Paul hasn't seen that transaction go over through PayPal. And he's like, Corinth, listen, Macedonia has sent their offering. I know that you said you were going to send their offering, but I haven't seen it yet. So now it's time to put your money where your mouth is. We need to send this offering down to Jerusalem, right? And Paul gets a little bit bold. He states that if the people from Macedonia come to Corinth and they found out that you didn't even give anywhere near what they give, it will be humiliating. It will humiliate me and it will be humiliating to you within all of the ecclesia of the fellowships. It's amazing. So Paul actually, using the honor-shame culture, actually pits one fellowship to another. Like, who's going to give more? You don't want to be humiliated. Macedonia is outdoing you. Come on. And he continues this boldness for two chapters. He begins to remind Corinth not only of the blessings of giving, which we've all heard, and we're going to review them. Vegetables. But the responsibility as a believer to give, and not just give, but to shine in an attribute called generosity. Right?

## Why Generosity Matters

This topic is not taught on in this movement much. Despite how passionate I am behind closed doors, I'm very passionate about being generous in my life because I know the scriptures. And for the past three or four years, I'll be honest, can I be honest? I've refrained purposely from doing a message about something as simple as being generous. I've refrained for several

different reasons, but the number one reason was because I was scared. I was scared to talk about generosity. I was scared that there would be people who would criticize me, fruitless critics, accusers, people who would only want to judge others but never want to support a single human being in anything that they would need in their life. And it was these people that are in this movement that I was scared to even talk about an attribute that every believer should have called generosity. And so I'm going to speak about it today because I'm doing a disservice to every single person in here if I do not encourage this attribute that is trying to be snuffed out in this movement. It's interesting because I already know some people are probably thinking back in their church days, if you went to a prosperity church, you already know the spiel and the script and everything. And Matt's trying to encourage me to give away my money. That's correct. But that's not all. I'm trying to encourage you to give away your time too. And I'm trying to encourage you to give away your energy. And I'm trying to encourage you to give away your talents during the length of this message. I'm trying to encourage you to give of yourself throughout this message, and I don't want to encourage you so when people see you and they see your generosity—even if you're trying to hide it, maybe someone will notice—they'll think of you as some type of a nice person. I don't want people to think of you as a nice person. I want that sentence that they think in their mind to continue, and I want them to think when they say, hey, I know them, they are a generous person because they serve a loving God and generous God of Israel. They are generous because they follow the Messiah. They are generous because they're a son or daughter of the King of Israel. That word because is why scripture states we are to be generous—because it's not about you, it's about who you represent, right? Whatever you give to is what you represent. It's what you own in your life. It's what you show the world.

We're going to be talking a little bit more about this topic next week with a little bit of history behind it. So it's still going to be Brussels sprouts next week. It'll just have that cheese sauce on it. It's going to be awesome. It's going to be awesome. I'm nicking through this book, and I can't even tell you what it's about. It's going to be beautiful because you have the Spirit of God's love within you. That's the goal. I want you not to hesitate when you see a ministry in need. I want you not to hesitate when someone needs to talk to you and ask to take some of your time from you. I want you not to hesitate when someone in your fellowship, fellow believer is in need. I want you not to hesitate when you know that family down the road that can't afford new shoes for their kids. I don't want you to hesitate. I don't want you to hesitate to support the fellowship that you're a part of. I don't want you to hesitate when you come across a time where you could be generous, but no, no, you've built up a wall. You watch these Olympics and they run over these hurdles, right? And can anyone in here do hurdles? I didn't think so. Oh, he can do hurdles. I can knock over a hurdle. And so you ever try to run up to something and you're going

to jump over it because your friends dared you to and you run up and then you just kind of stop there for a second like I need to go back and examine this a little bit more. That is not how generosity works. You don't just come up to something and when a need comes you stop and examine it. Oh I need to jump this high and I don't know if I should give to this or I don't know if I should really. Maybe they're going to use it for not their kids shoes. Maybe they're going to buy something like I don't want them to buy or whatnot. Maybe I should just do that. You withhold yourself. And I love, I love seeing people who are so hesitant to, if we have a family in need in this fellowship, I love people who come to me and they have questions and they're like, well, are we sure they're going to use the money for that? I mean, maybe we need to make sure they're going to use the money for something. And like, maybe I'll just buy them the new pairs of shoes. I'm like, awesome, do that. I love seeing that because I love seeing the hypocrisy. And them never even going to the store and buying the shoes. They just want to be critical about what's going to happen in this generous situation. Generosity, as we show through scripture, was never supposed to be a hurdle that you jump over. It was supposed to be a piece of your everyday life. I want you to get over that. I don't want you to be used to stopping, holding up a filter over every single situation in your life. I want it to be very black and white for you. As a believer, very black and white. It's interesting because [1 John 3, 17](#), not [John 3, 16, 17](#), 1 John is the extra one over there. [1 John 3, 17](#) states that a lack of generosity shows the lack of God's love in your life. Marinate on that for just a second. A lack of generosity shows the lack of God's love in your life. So what does that make generosity? What does that make a situation where you are generous? It makes you Bishop Marrell showing the love of God through generosity.

As Paul writes to the church in Corinth—the Ecclesia in Corinth—he shares some basic components of the believing faith and instructs the Ecclesia on how one lives as a believer. In doing so, Paul lays out three elements that I saw involved with giving. He's trying to make these broad elements to push the point that Corinth, you need to support these people in Jerusalem right now. This isn't one of those things where, man, that's so far away. Do we know who's going to be carrying the money? Yeah, he goes through in chapter 9. We know who's going to be carrying the money. He's good. He's good to go. He's not going to take the money. Let's send it to Jerusalem. Well, do we know exactly who it's going to go to? There's some people down in Jerusalem that I don't really know about, but it doesn't matter. Put the money in a bag. Come on. We need to send this down there. It's a time of famine. People are suffering.

## You Reap What You Sow

The first point that Paul seems to lay out in [1 Corinthians 9](#) is you reap what you sow. Now we've heard this a lot, right? And this is the foundation for the prosperity gospel in all the churches. I hope you don't walk away from here thinking that if you're generous, you're going to get rich. That doesn't happen because you give of yourself. We're going to touch on that in a second. But Scripture talks a lot about planting seeds and then reaping the harvest. This is a metaphor that Paul uses in [2 Corinthians 9:6](#) when he's pushing the Corinth fellowship. He says this and repeats himself in Galatians. And so you can think of it as 1 plus 1 equals 2, 2 plus 2 equals 4. Whether you don't like it, whether you love it, whether you hate it, this is a universal law. You've heard it. Okay, finish the sentence. Whatever goes around, you reap what you sow in all areas of your life. It's incredible.

Yeshua confirms this in [Matthew 7](#) too. He says that the measure that you give will be the measure that you get. Whatever you put into the ground is what you're going to reap from it. Human nature, the flesh likes to throw off this principle. It's amazing. We would much rather believe that our \$3 Powerball ticket is going to get us \$500 million and then, bam, we are going to be able to reap a harvest that we did not plant. Anybody here ever won a lottery? Big lottery of Powerball? You've won the lottery once? Everybody else? Brussels sprouts.

There are times when you reap a harvest that you did not plant, but it's not part of the universal law. When that Powerball gets up to five, six hundred million, I'm going to the gas station before. Give me one ticket, if it's God's will. Anyone else, if it's God's will, just one ticket. Oh, I got \$20 in my wallet. Well, if it's not God's will, here's another \$20 just in case I'm upping my odds. We love the idea of not having to plant a seed and reaping a great harvest. And statistically, it doesn't really come through. In fact, I would dare say that every single lucky break that you've had in your life, you planted something to make that happen. Whether it be prayer, whether it be connections, whether it be networking at that job interview—something planted to make that happen.

In Luke chapter 6, verse 38, it states that. Everybody say, Amen. Amen. Everybody want that, right? You know what Yeshua was talking about right before he said this? Being generous to the people you hate. Being generous to your enemies. I don't want to be generous to my enemies. That was the context of when Yeshua said this.

## God Loves a Cheerful Giver

Number two, God's love manifests in those who are joyous and cheerful in their giving. This is something that Paul hammers on in the very next verse. In [2 Corinthians 9:7](#), he says, God

loves a cheerful giver. Anybody ever heard that verse? Anybody remember it when you come across a situation that you should be generous in? It's a hurdle. It's interesting—do I have it? Yeah, in [John 15:11](#), it states that these things I have spoken to you, this is Yeshua talking. Who's talking? Should we listen? These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you. His what? His joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. So what he's wanting is for the joy that he has to fill in you and come out of every single aspect of your life. This is what Paul's piggybacking off of. God loves a cheerful giver—a giver that is reflecting the attitude in the spirit of Messiah who dwells within you. God loves a cheerful giver. There's not a blessing that comes with giving out of a hardened heart or judgment towards the recipient. Thus Paul attempts to solidify his personal conviction. See, the rest of that verse is, God loves a what? Vegetables.

In the first principle, we learned everything we give bounces back to us in one way or another. Giving in cheerfulness and joy not only enhances the meaning of the gift given, but it solidifies its value. When you give something with pure joy, the love of God within you, it solidifies the value of that gift. This applies to everything and anything that you are generous with. It could be friendship. It could be the encouragement that you're going to give to someone else. It could be time. It could be energy. It could be your money. See, money is the result of your time and energy. That's why it's mentioned in giving throughout Scripture. Time, energy, money—these things, everything that makes you you, you should be willing to give up and be generous with to everybody and anybody who you come in contact with that has a need. No amens to that.

## God Blesses the Faithful

Whatever it is, Scripture states that it will rebound back to us. In [2 Corinthians 9](#), Paul comes to the climax when speaking about the coming generosity of the Corinthian believers. He states in verse 11 that, You will be enriched in every way. That word in Greek means to be rich, wealthy, right? And it's not always financial. If I was a prosperity pastor right now, I'd be like, yeah, man, you're going to get rich. Put that money down, right? No, it's not always financial, but you will be enriched in some way. You will be made rich in some way, shape, or form, right?

So God is going to bless you in the areas that you have been faithful in so that you can be generous in all those areas in every way, which should produce thanksgiving. God wants to make you a manager. He wants to see how you run your life and the things in your life He's given to you—money, time, energy, skills, talents. How are you using these things? Are the praises coming back to Him for how you're using these things? Are they silent? Do you give

more responsibility to someone who does nothing, sits at God's desk all day watching cat videos?

Hey man, listen, we're rolling out this new API on the hospital, and it's going to connect our hospital with the other hospital across town. I really need you to own this and we need it done. I need the VPN connected. Listen, I got all these systems upgraded. We need that thing plugged in on all the radiologist systems by Thursday. Can you do it? You wouldn't give that job to someone who's not trustworthy. The person who does the jobs and excels in the responsibility that you've already given him, that's who you give it to. You want to be promoted? Nobody wants to be promoted in God's kingdom. Okay. Amen. Of course we want to be promoted. We want to feel like God thinks that we're responsible.

## Giving as an Act of Trust

It is as if Paul is stating, look, if you really trust God with all that you are and all that you have, God will both provide for you and pour out blessings upon you so that you can be promoted to continue walking out and excel in the areas that you are excelling in your life. So giving in generosity is not so much an act of giving as it is an act of trust. When you give out of the spirit of joy that God gave you, you are trusting that God is going to take the seed. Using Paul's metaphor, He's going to take whatever you're going to plant, and He's going to plant it, and He's going to water it, and He's going to shine some sunshine on it, and He's going to make it into what He wants to make it into. Trust. An act of trust.

Anybody have an issue with trusting God sometimes? You don't have to raise your hands. I'll raise my hand. Issues with trust. I have no reason not to trust God, but sometimes I second-guess Him. So a while back, I was in between jobs, and I'm going to be real. Can I be real? I'm going to be real. Just jump out in front of the bus. So a while back, we were in between jobs, and when you're jumping from job to job, that nice, comfortable income that you got, it doesn't stay. And so we were looking at bills, and I remember this genuinely, we were looking at bills, and I'm like, all right, it's the beginning of the month, right? And we got our bills. And I see that we have this much money in the account, and oh, look, we got this much in bills coming up on the schedule—my little Google calendar. I got all my bills listed. All right, but we got enough money, just enough money to pay our bills this month.

## Trusting in God's Provision

And she looked at me and she said, "Even if we give to the fellowship?" Because that's our commitment. Our commitment is to give to the fellowship at the beginning of the month and middle of the month. That's how we show our generosity. That's our foundational generosity. And then we do other acts of generosity as they come and when we can reach out and do them. But that's one that we've committed to. And so I'm sitting here, looking at Jenny, and I'm like, "I wasn't counting the gifts. No one from the fellowship is going to call." I know we're part of this membership fellowship, but no one will even notice, babe. We would just do it for a month. We just won't give this month. And my wife—I'm so thankful that God gave me such a godly wife. She looked at me and she said, "We made a commitment to ourselves." I made that face. So what do you want to do? She's like, "It's the beginning of the month. We made a commitment to give at the beginning of the month. We discussed this. We made a plan. This is what we're doing. Send it." So I sent it. And it was a stupid gift because I didn't trust at that moment. And we gave twice that month.

And lo and behold, at the end of the month, I remembered the struggle I was having at the beginning with the area that I had committed to for generosity. And I'm looking at the account and I'm like, "We're not eating beans. What happened?" It wasn't even a worry. We paid out our bills. I don't really know what happened. I think we got a few extra side jobs that month or something. It was something that was so subtle that I didn't even notice that we had enough money to both give to the commitment that we wanted to be generous in and also pay our bills. I didn't trust. I didn't give out of an act of trust.

And so it seems that whenever there's a risk, that is when you're reminded of God's blessings. I'm letting you know that. If you want to know my more personal story about a risk that induced God's blessings into my life, talk to me afterwards. I'm more than happy to share it with you. Peter jumped out of a perfectly good boat to walk on water.

## God Provides

Slide three, pillar three: God provides. The type of trust I'm just talking about is hard. Some of you know what I'm talking about. It is hard. It hurts. It takes courage, and it's the progressive movement of maturing in your faith that makes it easier—depending on God. I found that if I am willing to risk, as I said, God comes through in my life. Anybody else?

Another universal law: When I am generous, God blesses me in some way, shape, or form. And the blessing is not always the seed that I planted. And this is what I wanted to talk to you about today. This is a prosperity message.

## Seeds and Harvest

So the seed that we sometimes plant—whether it be time, energy, money—what are the three things? These are the things that you invest and are generous with to things that you care about. Anything that you love, these are the three things that you invest in. Not one, not two, not three. These are the three things that you invest in.

And it's interesting because whatever you plant, Paul's metaphor, it's not always what you reap. In other words, just because you saw a homeless guy on the side of the road, or let's say you knew a family and you bought a \$30 pair of shoes for the kids, when you're driving home, it's not guaranteed, and you're probably not going to get a phone call from your boss being like, "Hey, the spirit spoke to me, and I want to give you a \$300 bonus check when you come in Monday—like 10-fold." You know what I mean? Okay, get you a raise.

Oh, I planted a seed and now I'm harvesting. That typically does not happen. Now, there are people in this fellowship who do have stories of this happening, and typically it doesn't happen, but the blessing comes in other ways. Why does the blessing come in other ways? Why is it that when I invest money, I don't get money back? The reason is because you guys know what a pumpkin looks like. You know what a pumpkin seed looks like. Does a pumpkin seed look like a pumpkin? Sometimes the harvest doesn't look like the seed that you planted. Every single one of you who've been generous with something big in your life—I know you're thinking about something right now—that was a blessing that came afterward. This is the universal law.

This is what Paul is trying to push.

## Yeshua at the Treasury

This brings me to Yeshua. In [Mark 12](#), verse 41, you guys are familiar with this. He's walking with his disciples, and he sits down opposite the treasury in the temple. This is in the women's court. And began observing how the people were putting money into the treasury.

Why was Yeshua watching people put money into the treasury? You ever thought about that? You ever thought about that? You ever people watch? Anybody ever people watch? Yeah, people watch. Yeshua was people watching the money that they were putting into the treasury.

You're fixing to give money to a ministry that you support, and someone comes over to you. "Hey, how much you giving? What you got there? What do you want to know?" This is what Yeshua was doing. "How much you giving? How much you give? What? What? All right. Yeah.

Yeah. Peter, how much you think he's going to give? Ten? Nah, I think it's going to be seven. Oh, seven. How'd I know?"

Why was Yeshua watching the crowd? Why? This verse actually scares me. This is an image I got from FreeBibleImages.com, and it's a semi-accurate image. So there's Yeshua back there. You can identify him because he has no kippah on, no hat covering, and he has the scarlet Caesarian robe that Caesar would wear, right? And there he is. Look—his brother's over there on the bench, people watching, just throwing money. Man, that's scary.

And so what we never really ask is what were people giving to?

## Tithes and Tribute

In church, I was taught this was a tithe. People were not giving their tithes in the temple court. The tithe was a tribute of your harvest, typically. It could be money if you wanted to turn your harvest into money, and then you had to pay 12% as a tithe. Regardless. This was not the tribute.

The tribute was something that you give to the ones that you serve. When Nebuchadnezzar came in and took over Judah, he killed the king of Judah, and then he raised up another king that vowed to pay him tribute. It may not have been a tenth—a tithe—it was probably 20, 30%, or whatever. But the kings that you have over you, you give them tribute.

The tithe was a tribute. This is what Jacob did. He vowed to give God 10% of his income or his abundance. Remember that? Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek. He was honoring, paying tribute to Melchizedek. Okay? When the temple was built, the tribute went to God in the temple, stored up in the storehouses for many different reasons. One of them was to take care of the Levites, and the others were to fund festivals every couple of years. So it was kind of a contextual dynamic.

And so you guys want to know a little bit about these things real quick? Can we do some history? Do some cheese sauce on these Brussels sprouts. So I pulled a quote from the Mishnah. Okay?

## The Temple Treasure Chests

And the Mishnah writes, "There were 13 money chests in the temple, specifically around the women's court where they're accessible, on which were inscribed new shekels and old shekels.

These are the half-shekel tax, last year's and this year's. And then they had bird offerings and young bird offerings for whole offerings."

I would admit, from what I read, if you gave birth and you couldn't bring a lamb, you could bring some birds. But if maybe you couldn't catch a bird, you'd go to the temple and put your money in there, and they'd give you a bird. That's my assumption.

You could give money for wood, frankincense, gold—items for the mercy seat. You can give to all of these little treasure chests right here. And six of them were inscribed with "free will offerings," right?

So Yeshua was sitting here, and he was watching people put money in all these chests. And as we'll see in a minute, he was specifically watching what people were going to give in their free will offering chests. The above and beyond chest. You're not simply just paying tribute right now. You're going above and beyond.

And it's amazing because these chests were called shofar chests—it's written in the Mishnah. You guys know why? Because of what the top of the chest looked like. It looked like this: a shofar—a big horn.

Now there are two theories on why they were called shofar chests or why they were made that way. One theory actually comes from [Matthew 6](#) as well. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward.

So Yeshua is saying, "Listen, you don't want to be sounding trumpets before you when you give to the needy." And so some scholars say that when you put your money in the chest, it would make a dong as it went around the shofar lid, and everyone would see that you're giving. I don't really buy that, but you can. That's okay.

What I think is, you've ever given a donation in one of those things at the mall? Perfect example. In the middle of the mall, they have these big old round discs with a hole in the bottom, and you put your quarter and it rolls around, and then it goes in the hole.

## The Offering Chest

So it's shaped like that for two reasons. Number one, it's really cool to watch it ring around. And number two, it's shaped like that because you can't fit your hand down into there to get the money. Little Santa Claus outside Walmart has that chest kind of domed in a little bit and has a little slot. You can't do that. I think that's why they were open to the public and people couldn't

go through it so far. They couldn't fit down into the hole. Regardless, that's neither here nor there. This is what the chest looked like that Yeshua was watching. And here's the rest of that verse. He says, "Nope. Here's the rest of the verse in [Mark 12](#)." A poor widow came and put two copper coins, which amount to a cent to widow's might. Worthless. Worthless value. She put two of these suckers in there. And then Yeshua goes ecstatic. He calls his disciples over. "Disciples, come here, come here, come here, come here. I was people watching. And you see this widow?" He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of the contributors did to the entire treasury. For they then out of their surplus. They had leftover. But she, out of her poverty, put in all that she owned, all that she has to live on."

## Teaching the Disciples About Generosity

Was he teaching his disciples a lesson? There's some of us that, I don't want to shake my head, yes. He was teaching the disciples that, yeah, you get a little bonus at the end of the year. You should be generous with that. Give that to your ministry, fellowship, people, poor, whatever. Give that. That's your abundance. You need it? No. No. You need to make taking care of others and being generous a part of your everyday life. Not just when you get a raise, not just when you get a bonus, not just when you find a \$20 bill on the ground, not something extra. It needs to be ingrained in your everyday life. It needs to be a part of what you do every day. This lady seemed desperate. I don't know the backstory on this widow, but she gave it all. A free will offering. She thought no one even saw her. God, I hope this is acceptable. It's interesting because when she did that, and maybe she was familiar with the scriptures, I don't know. I do not know.

## The Verses That Scare Me

[Proverbs 11](#). This is a verse that scares me. I have a lot of verses that scare me, which is why I attempt to not stop at hurdles in my life. I attempt to be generous. It's hard. Everyone says it's hard sometimes. It's hard sometimes. I attempt to be as generous as possible. This verse scares me because [Proverbs 11:23](#) states, "The desire of the righteous ends only in good. The expectation of the wicked in wrath." So we have two groups of people here that are being defined. Some scholars believe that this is the foundation for the next two verses. These two groups of people. "One gives freely yet grows all the richer. Another withholds in what he should give and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and the one who waters himself will be watered." So if verse 23 is a foundation for these two, who's the one giving? Who's the one who's withholding? It could be a stretch to connect the two verses, even

though they're right next to each other, and it even says one of these gives. Regardless, Proverbs states that if you withhold from giving anything to anybody, anything, anyone, any ministry, whatever, you will always be in want. Doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense.

## The Stagnant Water

Ah, and if you give away, if you're generous with the things that you have, then you will be made, you will be enriched, as Paul says. Made all the wealthier. There's a story about a man who had a rice field, and when the rain would come, it would fill his field, and then it would drain into his neighbor's field down below him. And one day he said, "You know what? This is my rain. It draws on my field. Why should I be giving it away to my neighbor? I'm going to keep my water from my rice field." So he builds a dam. And sure enough, the rain comes and neighbor doesn't get any. I got all my water. Water comes up, water in his rice. Water doesn't drain. Water becomes stagnant. Water kills his entire crop because he was unwilling to give any of it away. Another withholds for what he should give and only suffers want.

## The Command to Care for Your Own

1 Timothy 5:8. Do you guys understand why I'm teaching this message right now? Because we've talked about forgiveness. We've talked about encouraging one another. We've talked about not holding on to offenses. We've talked about all these little things because these things are attributes of a believer and things that we should strive in. Generosity is one of the attributes of a believer in Yeshua. It's something we should strive in. Paul seemed to be very, very, very, very bold in some of his statements about being generous to others, especially those in your fellowship, those in your community, those believers in Messiah that are your brothers and sisters of God.

1 Timothy 5:8. Everybody familiar with this chapter? We're going to talk about it a lot next week, I think. So 1 Timothy 5:8 says, "But if anyone does not provide for his relative and especially members of his household, he has denied the faith—and it is worse than an infidel." So basically what Paul's saying, he's setting up: "Listen, if you're not going to support your relatives, the members of your house, your family, men, your wife, your kids, you're not going to support them." "You've denied the faith. What do you mean I've denied the faith?" "You're not even supporting the people who are closest to you. Even the pagans do that. You're worse than a non-believer."

## Context and the Aramaic Reading

Now the context of this chapter is actually speaking about widows. We might talk about that a little bit next week. Basically, commanded to take care of the widows, but in the Roman Empire there was already a set welfare system. There were laws that had to do with their dowry. The younger widows didn't need the welfare from the fellowships. And so Paul was making an outline of what qualifies an actual widow. "You're 28 years old, get married. That was Paul. Yeah." Go get married. You're fine. You have people taking care of you. You have laws in place that are taking care of you. And so this is the context of what he's talking about. He's basically talking about the woes of your household. He's talking about sons and daughters taking care of your mom, so on and so forth.

The widows. What I find interesting is I looked at these words, "members of your household," and it wasn't words. It was a single word that encompasses all those words. Eikios in the Greek. It's the same word that's used in [Galatians 1.10](#). "So then while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." And so that caused me to look back at [1 Timothy 5:8](#), and Paul specifies the relatives, but then he goes an extra mile and says especially the members of your household, and that could be taken a lot of different ways, but maybe, maybe, maybe Paul is saying you need to take care of the members of your household, the relatives that you have, your family, but also the eikios—your family in the faith. And if you refuse to take care of your family in the faith, then you've denied Christ and you are worse off than an unbeliever.

The Aramaic Bible in plain English, I didn't actually think I'd find this because I was discussing this with a lot of my study partners and they're like, "Man, that fits the entire context of the chapter." And then I found this, this morning. Aramaic Bible in plain English states it this way: "For if a man does not take care of those who are his own, especially those who are the members of the household of faith, this one has renounced the faith and is worse than those who are unbelievers." Why? Because even the unbelievers take care of their own kind. Even the laws of Rome, the pagan Rome had a welfare system that would take care of Romans. A bunch of pagans taking care of their own. This is a very condemning verse.

## Generosity as Transformation

Generosity, guys, is not supposed to be a strategy for adding some kind of kindness into the world. It's supposed to be a strategy to transform the world. Generosity is not just about making the world a better place. It's about making the world new. It's about bringing in a new

kingdom into the world. Generosity is not just about making people think that Christians are nice or believers in Yeshua are nice or Torah-observing people are nice. It's about helping people see that God is good, compassionate, and responsive to their cries. That's what generosity is about. Generosity is a central activity for the followers of Messiah to reveal God to the world. Do you guys realize that?

## The Harvest of Generosity

So I'm going to reread a verse in the NLT version because I love it. I love it. [2 Corinthians 9:10](#) and 11. "For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer." So God's going to give seed to who? "And then bread to eat." So farmer's going to take that seed. He's going to be able to make bread out of it. "In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. 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 in turn thank God."

This is the plan. This is part of the job of emulating Messiah. When you're faithful over a little, God's going to promote you. Surely you're going to be faithful over a lot. God's going to give you the resources, the time, energy, money. Who gave you those things? God's going to give you the things that you are able to plant in other people's lives.

And when he hears the thanksgiving coming back to him, yes! All right, promotion, dump truck. And it's amazing because you won't even realize that you're enriched with time, energy, and money. It'll just happen. The more you give your time, the more you give your energy, the more you give your money, you won't even realize it.

The past couple weeks, I've been going to the hospital multiple times a week and hanging out with people on the phone all the time. Someone called and I had to talk for a real long time on the phone. I didn't know how I was going to do all the little stupid stuff I do—edit videos, graphics, websites, all this stuff that's on my list, right? These things took out hours out of each of my days. And at the end of the week, I'm looking at my list that typically fills up the whole week, and I checked everything off. Where did that time come from? I used it. I used it. I did it with a smile on my face.

You will be enriched. Why? Because God's going to give you seed so you can make bread. And then by that bread, others are going to thank him. But you have to be that medium between what God gives you and what you plant in others for that harvest to come.

## The Loaves and the Boy

Lastly, [John 6:4](#). Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand, lifting up his eyes. Then, seeing a large crowd of people coming towards him, Yeshua said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat? He said this to test them, for he himself knew what he would do. And Philip answered him, Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not even feed each of them a little bit.

So Yeshua said, Have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. Every single gospel points out there was a lot of grass in the area. I mean, I'd sit on a rock. I don't know why that has to be grass. The people were spoiled. Got to be grass. Tell everyone to sit down because it's grassy.

So the men sat down, 5,000 in number. That's a lot of people. Yeshua then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed it to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he gathered them up and filled 12 baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

And when the people saw the sign that had been done, they said, This is indeed a prophet who has come into the world. So the result was thanksgiving and recognition of God's glory. But what were the characteristics? What were the mechanics of this?

So Yeshua was going to give out bread, and they didn't have enough bread and loaves, but there's a key component here that's only mentioned in John, and I'm glad I found it, and it's called a boy. A boy had some bread and some fish. This boy had his lunch with him. He had a bunch of fish sandwiches ready to eat himself. And then, what had to happen for Yeshua to bless the 5,000? What did the boy have to do with his lunch for the day? The boy gave up his lunch, and Yeshua fed the 5,000. And what was the result? Did the boy get any praise or thanksgiving? Good! That's not how it's supposed to work.

What was the result? The people were amazed. Truly, he is the prophet that's coming to the world. Praise God! How many baskets of leftovers did they have? Who do you think got sent home with that? Scripture doesn't tell us who got sent home with that. My opinion is it went back to the boy. Can't even carry it all.

Are you the boy or are you the disciples? We can give them some food, but even if we spend all the money, Judas, give me the bag of money. I got 200 denarii. Even if we spend all of our money, Yeshua, even if we spend all of our money, everyone will just get a little bite to eat. It wouldn't even be worth wasting our money on. It's an impossible situation.

Hey, there's a boy that has lunch. Are you going to trust God with the resources that he has given you so that you can be promoted in God's kingdom? Are you going to have trust issues? Are you going to doubt? Are you going to be like I did? Are you going to be like the disciples did? Are you going to be like the little boy? I ate about half fish sandwiches, bet they were good.

## Forgiveness Over Resentment

This is something that we need to really start to ingrain in our lives. And it's hard, especially in this movement. Don't be like this movement. Don't. This movement is still growing. It's still being refined. Be like scripture says to be. Forgive others. Forgive the pastor who told you to give much money when you want to give. Forgive the pastor for teaching about Sunday and Sabbath. Forgive your pastor that he said about the poor. Forgive him and move on. Could you be angry at a church that you're no longer a part of? Could you disagree with them? Disagree with them and move on to edify your own family. Do not hold on to resentment. Do not hold on to anger. Do not hold on to unforgiveness. Scripture is very, very, very, very unforgiving about unforgiveness.

That's not something you want to bring into a walk that is supposedly founded on truth. Generosity is one of the many expected attributes of a believer in Yeshua. So is forgiveness. So is repentance. So is graciousness. So is encouragement.

We need to start considering that learning a bunch of stuff is really cool. Trust me, I know. I love learning. I love reading books. I do it all the time. It's really cool. Cheesecake is really good to eat. It'll kill you if that's all you eat. It will kill you if that's all you eat. You need to eat your vegetables so you can grow strong. Popeye, spinach, do it so that you can learn to walk with integrity in this faith. And so when people look at you, they don't see you. They don't see some guy who's smart. They don't see some guy who knows a lot of Hebrew. They see an emulation of Yeshua. That's the goal.

And that's when everybody says: Hey guys, I'm Matthew Vanderels, pastor at Founded in Truth Fellowship, and I really hope you enjoy this message. If you would like to see more messages and teachings like this one, please subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking [here](#). You can also visit our website to find out more information about our ministry and what we do right here. And if this message has been edifying to you, please consider supporting us and the ministry through our secure online giving portal [here](#). This will ensure this message, along with many others, will continue to reach those who find themselves far from God. If you'd like to write us, you can do so at Founded in Truth, P.O. Box 38042, Rock Hill, South Carolina, zip

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