

0 (0s):

Right. Hello everybody. Good morning. My name is Matt Wolf. I'm the lead pastor here. If I haven't had a chance to meet you, I want to. So you should either fill out that form the connect form at denver.com/connect, or you should come to our splash bash up to the second service. In fact, you should probably just do both splashed. Rest is going to be up to the second service is going to be awesome. We have up here connect four. That's kind of our theme for the season because people are so socially distant and lonely and relationships are broken apart and we want to connect people. So we want you to connect with four people over the next three months. And our splash bash today is a great chance to meet some people so that you can connect with them outside of church. So make sure you come to that. It's going to be awesome. Also, if you saw this video, this VBS video, which was pretty awesome.

0 (44s):

I don't know if you guys knew this, but the kids here at RVPs this summer paid for that entire VBS done in Mexico. Isn't that amazing? Just the generosity, the, of the kids and their families to do that. You know, we send down a global outreach team of go team every summer down in Mexico, but we couldn't this year because of some COVID issues, but we were able to sponsor that BBS down there, which is really awesome. So I'm excited about that. So we are going to continue our engage series in week four of this series. If you miss any of these messages, you can go to [rise. Sambo com slash media](https://rise.sambo.com/slash/media). We have the audio, the video and the transcript of every single message in this series. So you shouldn't ever miss a single message again, right? For the rest of your life, subscribe on YouTube and on your podcast app.

0 (1m 26s):

Yeah. You can always get those there. And in this engaged series today, we're going to be talking about giving because I think, and it's going to sound a little strange, but I think that most of us need

1 (1m 39s):

To be refreshed. Right?

0 (1m 42s):

I think we all want to feel refreshed. You know, I have run a few races and one in particular, I remember running a half marathon in Moab. Utah is through the, the, the canyon there. The, if you've ever been there, the Colorado river, you run into the candidate, into the town. And I was just like, it's, it's, it's a hot zone there in the desert. Right. I finally finished this half marathon. I get there. And when I run a lot, I might be weird. I don't know why, but I have like salt all over my head. Anybody else do this? Do you know what? I saw a few nods, no one I'm talking to other people. They're like, oh, disgusting. It is disgusting. Okay. But it's seriously like when you run like that and you sweat so much, like it's not enough to just drink water, right? You need some vitamins and minerals in there. You need some right.

0 (2m 22s):

You need even more than that. You need some protein. If I don't eat protein within like a half hour of running,

I get headaches because I need to rejuvenate. Right. And I'm saying, because some of us have run a marathon in life for the last 18 months. Right. You know what I'm talking about? We have been pushing it. It's been hard. We've been making decisions. We've been worried about mass. There's been things that we were afraid of and worried about. And we're trying to figure out kids in school, kids at home while we're working online, trying to figure out how to work online and not lose productivity and, and see our colleagues. It's, it's hard, right? It has been a challenging 18 months. And some of us have had

1 (2m 54s):

To deal with sickness with COVID.

0 (2m 57s):

Some of you are home right now, perhaps sick with COVID to your have friends and family members that have been sick or died. This has been a grueling season for us. And I think we're ready to be refreshed, right? So this series engage is really helping all of us move past this. And we're calling it normalize a better life

1 (3m 13s):

As the subtitle of this series,

0 (3m 15s):

Because only 9% of people actually want to go back to the way things were pre pandemic, only 9% of people. So that means we want something, but we want something better. And we've got a normalized, some things in our lives create some new habits, some new practices in our life in order to do

1 (3m 29s):

That. So two weeks ago, we

0 (3m 31s):

Learned that one of those practices that has tremendous impact, not only according to scripture, but according to secular studies is to worship weekly that when we come together and worship, whether it's online or here in person, that it does something to our lives, that's very beneficial. You should go back and listen. That message. If you disagree with me like secular people study, and they're like, wow, this is incredible. Just so many good things for your life. And then last week we talked about how we should serve somewhere that when we serve, we're actually strengthened ourselves. There's something about volunteering that builds us up. And today we're going to learn something that might seem the most contradictory on its face. But as we look more deeply into it, you'll see how realistic it is. That that when we give generously, we actually receive so much more.

0 (4m 13s):

And so what we're going to learn today from our one verse, we're going to look at a whole bunch more, but we're one verse that we're doing as our main scripture today is that God fills

1 (4m 24s):

Opening hands.

0 (4m 26s):

God fills open hands. When we are open handed

1 (4m 30s):

With our time, with our talents,

0 (4m 32s):

With our treasures, with our money, with our stuff, when we're open handed with those things and we give them away. When we're generous, we actually get filled up more than we give away. We're going to see this as a really interesting passage and what we're going to see here from the scripture. So if you have a Bible, w our, our main verse today is Proverbs 1125. So go ahead and get there. If you're using the YouVersion Bible app, you can go find our event, rice church, Denver, and you can take notes. We have all the scriptures. We're gonna look at there, get your Bible, get your smartphone, whatever it is to Proverbs 1125. So Proverbs 1125 says this, a generous person will

1 (5m 10s):

Prosper.

0 (5m 11s):

Whoever refreshes others will be

1 (5m 14s):

Refreshed. I think

0 (5m 15s):

This verse is so good that we should memorize it. Don't you think? Okay. Let's say it together. A generous person. Just say what I'm saying. I'm going to teach you guys how to memorize this. Greg, a generous person, a generous person will, whoever a generous person will prosper. Whoever refreshes. Okay. A generous person will prosper. Whoever refreshes others will be.

1 (5m 54s):

Okay. Let's take the verse off the screen. Take the verse off the, can we do that? Okay. A

0 (6m 1s):

Generous person will prosper. Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. You guys just memorize the verse right there. Proud of you. You guys good job. Good. Yeah. Give yourselves a hand. This verse is so good and so short and it's so powerful. It really shows us how God's economy works. It's not about supply and demand. It's actually about when we give, when we're generous, will prosper. That word prosper here means like get fat. Okay. It doesn't mean just like you'll have enough, but more than enough. And what's really interesting. I want you to look at this refreshed here, this, this word, refresh, it occurs twice, right? In that second line. Do you see that? And that is, let me make sure I pronounce this right.

0 (6m 44s):

I know I studied Hebrew, but it's been a little while. Okay. So it's the Hebrew word. Riva.

1 (6m 48s):

Can you guys say Riva Riva

0 (6m 51s):

And that word revolt here, it's refreshes and refreshed. It is a term that really means filled. It means satisfied or satiated. It's a term that when there's a huge outpouring of rain and the ground, he's drenched, it's Rivas, it's, you've eaten so much that you're completely full and satisfied. It's a word that means all sorts of things I got. So, so satisfied or filled up would be I think, a pretty good translation of this verse. So when we're talking about how we want to be refreshed, we want to be rejuvenated. We want to be filled up ourselves. I think this verse kind of shows us how to do it. And, and what does it tell us to do

1 (7m 30s):

Refresh others? Interesting. Right?

0 (7m 34s):

Those of us were like, when am I going to get rejuvenated? I need to go on a vacation. And then you go on vacation. You get home and you need a vacation from the vacation, right? Yeah. Because you're exhausted. You've been, oh my gosh, it's crazy. And then you try to get back into the swing of things. And you're like, oh my gosh, this is worse than before I left left. I'm exhausted. You're like, okay, now I'm going to, I'm just going to go treat myself. And then you feel worse afterwards. Right. Spent too much money. I ate too much food. Right? Don't we do this when we're just looking after ourselves. It's not very refreshing. In fact, however, when we start to look, how can I refresh others? It in turns, refreshes us. That's what the scripture is telling

1 (8m 7s):

Us. And

0 (8m 10s):

The generosity here I believe is about everything in our life. In fact, we have a core value here at our church called generous living. Okay, generous living. We don't just mean with your money, but with everything you are, are you generous and the way you live with your time, your talents and your treasures. So we say here that we gladly give our time talents and treasures to serve God and one another. And when we do that, what we're seeing here is that we're actually refreshing ourselves. We're actually refreshing ourselves, that we get so much more in return than what we give. And that's why we need to learn how to revolve others, right? So that we could be revoked. That's not proper Hebrew grammar, but you guys get it right.

0 (8m 52s):

So I read a book earlier this year called the giver and the gift and just started reading it. It was about generosity. And it was co-written by, by one guy who was, I mean, one guy who ran a nonprofit. And it was also by written by a philanthropist. So they're saying how they work together, you know, the giver and the gift and this philanthropist. I didn't even realize it until I started reading. It was a guy by the name of David Weekley. You ever heard of him? Who in here lives in a David Weekley home, anybody we got, we got one over here. You had David weekly. If you go around some of the homes in central park or out in green valley, ranch are David Weekley homes. And I nothing about the dude, right? Some guy in Texas turns out, but as I read it, he started sharing his story because David weekly is a follower of Jesus.

0 (9m 34s):

And he has built the, the largest private home building company in the entire country. It's like, oh, that's pretty impressive. But then he taught, what about some of his stories? So David Weekley started his company when he's 23 years old and it boomed boomed in the late seventies, early eighties, he was going great. He was at one point building 300 homes a year with a small company, making millions of dollars. He bought his BMW. He had broken ground to start building he and his wife's dream home. That was 10,000 square feet. And one of the best neighborhoods in Houston going great. But then in the mid eighties,

1 (10m 11s):

The housing market crashed it tanked. He lost almost everything. He had to sell his BMW. He

0 (10m 19s):

Had to sell his home. He lost everything in barely was scraping by every year just to survive and make his company make it through there. He said that he was driving one day and he saw that there was a car in front of him. And on the bumper sticker, it said, Lord, if you give me another boom, I promise I'll do it right next time. And he saw that and he's like, that's going to be my prayer. He said, God gave me another boom and I'm going to do it right next time. And he started praying that I'll do it. Right. And then he made a commitment. He made it commitment, not just to be because he had been a Christian before. And he said, you know, I thought I earned my success by my hard work in there on my smarts. He's like, but, but I realized I had lost everything by my smarts.

0 (10m 59s):

So he said this, his commitment was to give away 50% of his

1 (11m 4s):

From then on and 50% of his time. That's

0 (11m 11s):

50% of the time. He said, I'm going to give away 50% of my income and 50% of my time, as long as I can. And he started doing it. And of course, a business that as the housing market started to grow again in the nineties, he and his business grew, he had to hire a COO who eventually became the CEO so that he could give 50% of his time. So what he started doing was giving away money, a lot of money, 50% of his income. And then he would work with those organizations and coach them as a CEO, knowing how to build companies. So we would take little non-profits and teach them how to grow and expand and reach people all over the world through micro loans and through helping people with water and food all over the world and working with ministries.

0 (11m 52s):

And he realized that he could do it. And this is one of the coolest things he said here at the end of the book, he said this, when I give freely of my time, talent and resources, I feel and awesome. Joy not only did is his company right now, the biggest private home builder in the entire country, that he has made a lot more money since then. And his company is rated one of the best places to work in, in the state of Texas. On top of that, he feels an awesome joy as he does.

1 (12m 22s):

That's pretty cool. Right?

0 (12m 24s):

I think that shows how this works. See a lot of us think that when we, you see someone like David weekly, when we see generous people and we're like, wow, they're giving so much money. They're giving a million dollars over here. Wow. That's so amazing. Got a wing named after him over here. It's because they're rich that they can do that. But perhaps we're thinking about this backwards, perhaps the reason why they are rich and can give more is because they chose to, if not always, but I think in God's economy, he's waiting for us to give, some of us are like, once I make a certain amount of money, then I'll start giving. Once I reach a certain level, then I'll start typing. Once the kids are out of the home, you know, we have these things after this time, then I'll be generous, but maybe we need to reverse it and say, maybe I should be generous

1 (13m 8s):

Now. And then

0 (13m 10s):

Watch to see will God bless me and prosper me in these things. Now some of you are like, Hmm, man, I don't know. You're kind of getting a little bit out there, but let me just look at some of these statistics, because he talks about the awesome joy of giving. And there's been a lot of studies on giving and generosity. There was one out of Harvard in 2008, and this study tracked people and looked at how much they gave and where they gave and what they found. And this is the cool thing in the study that people who give away money, who are generous with their time, talents and treasures, not, not just money, but their time as well. When they volunteer that they have lower cortisol.

1 (13m 43s):

You know what cortisol is, causes stress and anxiety.

0 (13m 48s):

You're like, oh my gosh, I'm so stressed. Maybe you should try giving. Okay. Studies have found that people who give more have lower levels of cortisol. There's another study out of the university of Buffalo that found that people who give generously live longer, Christian Smith and Hillary Davidson, two professors out of Notre Dame wrote a book called the paradox of generosity. And they studied all of these things as sociologists. And what they found was that those who give are much more likely to have excellent health to report being very happy. They have less depression and less instances of mental.

0 (14m 28s):

Okay? These studies aren't even looking at the Bible. Okay? Scripture says, if you refresh others, you'll be refreshed. But this is telling us that something happens in our lives when we're willing to give study after study. And yet what they have found is that 85% of people in our nation give less than 2% of their income away. 85% give less than 2%. And half of those people give nothing

1 (14m 52s):

Away. No wonder

0 (14m 55s):

Why we're so angry and upset and unhappy and dine early, right? Because this one thing that's now psychologically proven to refresh you and make your life better. People are choosing not to do it. They're holding on too tightly close fist, right. With the things they have. And that's why I'm saying from the scripture. And we're going to look at all a bunch of scriptures here in just a second from the scripture we learned that God feels open hands, not close hand. If you have a close hand and you're holding on tightly to things, unwilling, to let things go, and you say, I got to hold onto this. I don't have enough. I don't know if I'll have enough. What, what in case, what if something happens? I just need to keep this in case when we do that, God might not fill our hands.

1 (15m 40s):

See God feels open hand. So we've got to learn to let go of that alert to let go. Andrew Carnegie of course was one of like the first like super wealthy people

0 (15m 49s):

In our nation. Right? He was just a businessman, made a ton of money and he became a philanthropist and started giving him his way as money. And he gave a lot of money every year to the New York Philharmonic. And they came to him one year and they said, would you please write us a check for \$60,000? We need a grant. And at the time that that's a lot of money. Okay. Just in case you guys didn't know that,

1 (16m 8s):

Okay. It was a lot of money back in

0 (16m 10s):

60,000. It's a lot of money today, right? \$60,000 me. And he's like, ah, just getting a little annoyed about this. Okay. Every year he's got a fun, this Phil harmonic, right? Everybody else gets to benefit. And he said, why don't you go find some other people, other people that want to give, right? So if you go find somebody or a group of people that can give \$30,000, I will give the second 30,000. You come back to me. So this fundraiser for the New York Philharmonic leaves and the next day he comes back in and he says, I got the \$30,000 right here. So will you write that check? And your Carnegie's like, well, that was, that was quick, but okay. I'll write the check. And he said, you know, I'm just curious, who wrote the check for the other half of the money? And the man replied.

0 (16m 51s):

It was Mrs. Carnegie. <inaudible> You know, if we have to learn to not have close hands, right? We've gotta have the open hands. God has given us so much. How can we hold onto it as if it was ours to begin with, as if we brought it all up on ourself, our success, our earning, our money, our, our savings account, all of it. We've got to hold onto it. God is saying

1 (17m 14s):

Open your hands, open your hands. Cause God feels open hands.

0 (17m 19s):

Now I know that some of you are already struggling with this. You're like, I don't know, he's this, this right. Theologically. Like, where are our, where is it? Okay, so this is what we're gonna talk about. Let me tell you, there are two areas. When it comes to our theology of money on one end is prosperity. Theology. If you've ever heard of prosperity, theology of prosperity preachers, it is an error. It's not taught in the Bible. These are the people who will preach that. If you give your money to me, they'll say that, right. God will bless you. If you give me a hundred dollars, God will give you 200. And if you, you know, fund my private, it's my second

private jet. It's only \$80 million. If you fund that, bless you. I wish I were making up that story. Okay.

1 (17m 56s):

But that's a true story.

0 (17m 58s):

Was reading the news. That's prosperity, theology. It is running rampant around the globe. As people take advantage of people in poverty gate, it is a lie. It's not true. God does not promise us like an equal amount of riches. If we give away money, okay, that's prosperity theology. It's an error on this side, but there's also a second error. And it, I would call it poverty, theology and poverty theology is that Jesus was homeless. You should be homeless too. And they make you feel guilty for having anything. And, and there's nothing good that God promises you in this life. It's only after you die. Maybe things will get better. Then that's poverty theology. And it's just as wrong because in the scriptures, there are promise after promise after promise after promise after promise after promise related to our generosity.

0 (18m 43s):

In fact, Jonathan Edwards, the great American theologian

1 (18m 46s):

Said this. If we have this quote from Jonathan Edwards, if I have a slight person,

0 (18m 55s):

Jonathan, where it says there is scarcely, any duty spoken of throughout the Bible, that has so many promises of reward

1 (19m 2s):

As this weather for this world or the world to come in. Do you know what he's talking about? Generosity. This guy, I

0 (19m 9s):

Study the Bible backwards and forwards. He's considered the greatest theologian America has ever seen. And he's like, look at the Bible. It's generosity, generosity, and it's promises and promises of reward. So I want to show you eight things from the scriptures you get. When you give we're just going to look at the scripture, okay? We're going to see what the Bible actually says. Eight things you get when you give. So what are the eight things that the Bible talks about? And I looked at tons of scripture this week and I boiled it down to these eight for you guys. You can take me later. Okay? So eight things you get when you give one abundant provision, abundant provision, sinker Corinthians nine, seven, and eight says, each of you should give, and God was able to bless you abundantly. So that in all things at all times, having all that you need, God has provisioned for you.

0 (19m 56s):

The food and clothing and nothing else, but he can provide and abundantly. It says, okay, so this is more than you need. This is you're gonna have, I have what you need. Plus this is a promise from God that we can claim in every moment of my life until I die until the Lord takes me, I will what

1 (20m 13s):

I need. Okay. The second thing God's presence.

0 (20m 18s):

This was Malakai. God says return to me. Then I will return to you. It says the Lord, but you ask, how can we return? And God responds. You steal from me when you do not bring me a tent,

1 (20m 32s):

Tife

0 (20m 34s):

Got to sing. I'm not going to be with you. You're my presence is not going to be with me because you're robbing me of giving me what

1 (20m 41s):

I deserve. I'm only

0 (20m 42s):

Asking for a 10th. I gave you everything. I will return to you. Your God's presence will be with you with generosity. This is a promise from the scripture. So let's look at

1 (20m 50s):

Another one more blessings.

0 (20m 53s):

Remember that our Lord Jesus said, Paul reports, more lessons come from giving. Then from receiving is more blessed to give and to receive what are all the blessings? I don't know,

1 (21m 4s):

But there's going to be more of them. If you give for

0 (21m 10s):

Personal honor says homes, they share freely and give generously to those in need. Their good deeds will

be remembered forever. They will have influence and

1 (21m 21s):

You'll

0 (21m 22s):

Gain influence. You will be able to honor other people when you give

1 (21m 25s):

And people will honor you five help later. Yes.

0 (21m 32s):

Later. Okay. It says right now, Paul wrote to the Corinthians right now you have plenty and can help those who are in need later. They will have plenty and can share with you when you need it. There's something about finding help later by helping those in need right now.

1 (21m 47s):

Interesting, right? Six, your enjoyment.

0 (21m 54s):

A lot of people miss this one, this is good. Your enjoyment teach them. Paul says to Timothy, who are rich in this world, not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. God wants us to enjoy things. Enjoyment, pleasure, happiness. When we give there's something amazing. When you give, seeing someone smile, when you, I give you a hug, you know, it fills you so much more. This week. We got to cut a big check from our church for a church planter that started out here next month. And it was so cool that I sorry, guys, I got to make the phone call and talk with this guy.

0 (22m 36s):

Anything. We helped another family this week, who was in need, who was trying to get on their feet and things have been going good. And then they had kind of a setback and we were able to help them financially because you guys have given through our benevolence fund. And it is amazing to see the joy in people's lives. And we receive an enjoyment too, through that we can give and it's for our enjoyment. Number seven lives transformed Matthew five 16 says, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven. When we give generously, it impacts eternal destinies. We can change people from being like, wow. I thought Christians were mean hate-filled hypocrites.

0 (23m 16s):

Now I know that they they're at least generous, hypocrites, right? Changing some hearts. And maybe one

day they will glorify their father in heaven. Become a follower of Jesus. We can see lives transformed. We give and number eight,

1 (23m 31s):

You turn on rewards.

0 (23m 33s):

The disease. These are probably the best of all the bunch. It says, tell them to use their money to do good. Paul writes. They should give happily to those in need. Always being ready to share with others, whatever God has given them. It's continued on the next page. By doing this, they will be storing up real treasure for themselves in heaven. It is the only safe investment for eternity. Okay? Stock market may crash. Aternity won't okay. There are eternal rewards. Jesus promises that there will be eternal rewards for those who give generously. Now these are the eight scriptures and I could give you dozens more, but I've really tried to summarize it with these eight different ways. These eight things you get, when you give, see there's, there's this weird lie going around.

0 (24m 18s):

And it comes from a manual Emmanuel con, if you want to trace it back, that that you have to do things a hundred percent selflessly or else you're just selfish,

1 (24m 26s):

But you

0 (24m 27s):

Saw these scriptures. So there's actually promises that we look should look for in ourselves. As we give to others, Proverbs 1125 says whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. If you want to be refreshed, if you want to receive some of these good things from God,

1 (24m 43s):

If you give generously,

0 (24m 49s):

And if you're willing, well, Matt, I haven't been repaid for this. I gave to that person and they hate me now. Okay. I gave a ton of money over here and that church was just a mess and closed its door. Why did I give so much money to that church? Now we all have things like that. Or we have things in our life where, you know, we're like, well, I still feel like I'm not rich. I'm not David weekly. Right? I don't have the Ferrari that I drove behind this morning on my way to church for, I pulled into king Soopers. I'm like, that's like brand new 300,000 vehicle. Right? I don't have that. Right? So you're like, my home doesn't cost that much. And we're like, what? But why don't I get those things? Well, here's the reality is that none of these things are like,

here's the exact return that you will get in this life.

0 (25m 36s):

But these are promises through this life and the next, so, so we're not talking poverty, philology, we're not talking prosperity theology. We're talking about biblical theology, right? There are blessings in this life. And the one to come to those who are

1 (25m 47s):

Generous. And

0 (25m 49s):

We know that we won't get everything repaid. Exactly. Like we want it because Jesus didn't see God so loved us that he gave, right. He was the most generous person ever. He gave his own son. He came down and Jesus living among us, gave himself. He served people. He loved people. He performed miracles when he was exhausted and needed to be refreshed. People crowded him and followed him onto the other side of the lake. And he had to heal a whole bunch of people and serve them and feed them. And he did it all generously. And yet he went to the cross and gave his blood. He didn't have a crown, but, but a crown of thorns. And if Jesus was up there on the cross, giving everything, not receiving the rich benefits that he, we, we expect, right?

0 (26m 31s):

W

1 (26m 31s):

What, where's his goodness that he should get. But if Jesus

0 (26m 34s):

Did that and then died and was laid in the tomb and on the third day, rose from the dead and then ascended into heaven, 40 days later, where he is seated on a

1 (26m 44s):

Throne,

0 (26m 46s):

See Jesus, this teaches us that yes, there will be times where we don't get the exact blessing. The one in this life

1 (26m 53s):

That we don't get rich. Okay. But Jesus proves to us by

0 (26m 56s):

His resurrection, from the dead and Ascension to heaven that there are eternal rewards for us. Okay? So that's why we have this biblical theology here. And we say, it's worth it to refresh others.

1 (27m 8s):

Jesus knew it was worth it. So that's why we need to give generously. Now I know for some of you, this is really hard. If you're

0 (27m 18s):

Almost half of our nation, you don't give anything. Christians are better. Don't worry,

1 (27m 23s):

But not much. Okay. Percentage

0 (27m 26s):

Wise, Christians give less today than Christians did in the great depression. We got a lot of work to do, but let me tell you this. You've got to start somewhere. And I'm telling you this as someone who really struggled to start giving, I'm gonna be honest with you guys. I will discipling a guy in college. I had grown a whole bunch of my faith. I'd memorize a whole bunch of scriptures. I had learned all sorts of theology. And I was meeting with a guy who was a year behind me in college. And I was teaching him every week. I was discipling him, helping him follow Jesus. And one day he said, Matt, what about tithing? I can teach you about it, but okay. That point I gave nothing. I was like, I'm a college student. I'm broke all the time on eating like tortillas with hotdogs, cheese, you guys eating those.

0 (28m 11s):

That was like every day for me. Right? A little American cheese and a hot dog and a tortilla. Right? The color Camille. Okay. That's what I ate. Like every day I was broke, even though I worked like, I, I needed to pay rent. Right. I needed to. So I wasn't giving anything, not a dime. And this younger guy who said, well, Matt, you should really be giving. I was like, no, no, no. I said, how about next week? You come back and you teach me about giving. And he did, he did come back. He had some scriptures for me and I realized, wow, I am not following Jesus. Like I should to my generosity because I had a closed hand. And it took me, you know, I wish I could say that that day I became a tither and I've been to Tyler ever since.

0 (28m 51s):

Okay. It took me a little while to get the ball rolling. But Melissa and I have made the commitment, you know, since we've been married, we've been tightening. And we, we try to increase that and we try to give even to other organizations. And we're certainly on a perfect, some of you are like, I give way more than you amount. I'm sure you do. Okay, good praise God. But the point is you have to start somewhere. You have to

take some steps. If you ever want to become a generous person

1 (29m 15s):

And generous people,

0 (29m 16s):

As the scriptures told us today, we'll pray.

1 (29m 20s):

Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed because God fills open hands.

0 (29m 26s):

So it's time to maybe lose, loosen your grip,

1 (29m 30s):

Let go and take a step of faith because that's what it is, right? It's a step of faith. I'm trusting God that he will refresh me as I refresh others.

0 (29m 39s):

So I wanna encourage you to take that step

1 (29m 42s):

Of faith. And I think

0 (29m 44s):

I share this story a few years ago, but, but it's so good. I wanted to share it again. It's from a pastor. He's a pastor now named Darren Whitehead. And he talks about when he was in his early twenties, he was working at a radio program, a Christian radio program. He was making like no money, but they gave him a company car, which was awesome. So he's like, okay, because I have a company car, I'm going to sell my own car and then I can have some more money. Right. But that's brilliant move. Okay. That's like Dave Ramsey right there. Okay. You got the company car. You don't need your own car. So he put it up on the classifieds because that's what he used to do. I don't know if you remember those things. Mm classified. He was trying to sell his car. And week after week went by and nothing, no interest couldn't sell his vehicle.

0 (30m 29s):

So he prayed to God. One day he said, God, please help me sell them car. And he heard God's voice hit him. And what are you going to do with

1 (30m 38s):

It? And

0 (30m 41s):

Darren was like, well, I'm going to spend it right. That's what we do. We get money. And we spend money. We get more money. We spend more money, right? He's like, I'm gonna spend it. And then he felt God, speak to him and said, no, no, no,

1 (30m 53s):

You need to be generous.

0 (30m 54s):

And he remembered at that moment, a guy that he worked with a coworker who had a few young kids and his wife had some health issues was really struggling financially.

1 (31m 3s):

And he said, okay, God,

0 (31m 5s):

If you sell my car, I will give an, a number popped into his head. And he said, it was like two, three times bigger than any amount he'd ever given in his life. He's like, where did that come from? God, I'll give that. If you help me sell my car

1 (31m 18s):

The very next day, the car sold. Right? So he goes to the bank,

0 (31m 21s):

Cashes, the check gets a whole wad of cash, puts it in an envelope, wait until the middle of the night and drives over parks a little bit away. And he kind of sneaks up to this neighbor's mailbox and puts the envelope

1 (31m 33s):

And scurries back to his car.

0 (31m 36s):

The next day, when he comes into the office, there's a whole crowd of people around this coworker. He said, Darren, come over here. I got to show you this and had the whole envelope filled

1 (31m 47s):

With cash. And the guy said, God gave me this money.

0 (31m 54s):

And Darren was thinking, no, he didn't know. And then he realized that he had gotten to take part in a miracle

1 (32m 2s):

Cause he had open hands. So I want to encourage you guys. God feels open hands. And some of you guys you're, you're

0 (32m 12s):

Waiting. You're ready. You want to be refreshed? You're you're thinking, okay. W when is it going to be my turn? When am I going to get my blessings? God. But the reality is you've been clinging to your money and your stuff and your time. So tightly as if like a strong wind would just blow it out. What God is telling us today is that he feels open hands. It's time to be generous

1 (32m 32s):

And to give. So I wanna encourage you to take your step of faith today.

0 (32m 37s):

As we have the band come up right now, I want you to think and pray about what your next step is. I want to give you a few steps because everybody needs to take a step today. That's what we're about here. Helping people follow Jesus. So what's your next step in following Jesus for some of you, if you're in that half of our nation, that has never given you need to give, okay. Or doesn't give regularly, okay, you need to give, and we have something here called the benevolence fund. Our benevolence fund, a hundred percent comes in a hundred percent, goes out. We don't keep a dime of our benevolence fund. We're allowed to bless a ton of people. And we have given away more in the last year and a half than we had in the four years previously. Okay. We've we've given away a ton lately with this benevolence fund. So if you're like here and you're like, I don't, I don't even know if I believe in Jesus. I don't know about this church.

0 (33m 18s):

You can give to our benevolence fund if you don't want to give, give somewhere else too. I don't care. But I want you to give a gift today, ask God what amount and give that, okay. And you can ask your spouse if you need to talk with her and whoever has the higher amount, give that one. Okay. I want you to give something to me. So that's maybe a first step is to just give something the benevolence fund. It will go to someone in need. If, if you've already done that, you're like, well, I've already given some, maybe your step here in our church is we have something called the generosity team. And we encourage people to become regular givers. That general generosity becomes part of their life, that they can experience the refreshing of God regularly in a knife. So we encourage you on a generosity team to give \$25 a week or a hundred dollars a month.

0 (33m 60s):

It's a pretty easy step that I think we all can take. So join our generosity team. That's the second step. Third step is to become a tither and tithe means 10th. You're taking a percentage of your income and you're saying, God, I trust you with this. Some of you need it to make that commitment now to become a tither in our church. And some of you you've already done that. You're like, I've been tied them for years. You need to take the next step with a major gift of generosity. Maybe it's to increase that percentage. Maybe it's just a one-time gift. If you want. We only owe \$14,000 on our roof. That's pretty amazing, right? You guys have been generous. We've been talking about it. We w you know, our roof had structural damage.

0 (34m 41s):

We had to fix it immediately. So we had to take out a line of credit. It was almost a quarter million dollars. And right now we only have 14,000. I really would love to pay this off before we start our next fiscal year, October 1st, okay. We fixed the roof. So nobody's going to die in this building, praise God, but we still owed \$14,000. So maybe you could wipe that off scene. Single-handedly maybe you need to write that check, or maybe you need to write a check for 500 or a thousand today, because that's your step to above and beyond. It's an offering to the Lord. So I want you to take a moment. We're going to have the band play for a second, just silently. And I want you with you and God it's between you and God. So what you want to give and give generously because God filled open hands.

0 (35m 24s):

Let's pray, Lord God, I pray that you direct our hearts to be more generous, Lord, God, we need a refreshing. It's been an exhausting year and a half for some of us. It goes back even longer than that, Lord God. So I pray that you would us challenge us in this moment to open up our hands, to stop cleaning to the things we have and to give generously, put it on our hearts. Lord, how much we should give in this moment. And if you want to give right now, you can go to [rice, denver.com/give](https://denver.com/give), and there's wooden boxes.

0 (36m 16s):

There's one on this door, too, on this doors going out that you can drop off some cash or check, encourage you to give right now, Lord, God, I pray that you'd make us more generous, that we would reflect your heart. You gave your own son and refresh us because we need it.

0 (36m 57s):

Lord, God help us respond to you and worship through our giving and through our singing. Amen. Would you please stand as we sing together? Here's here's an old song, but I think you guys know it.

3 (37m 20s):

And she sees us pay heated hall. Oh. To him. My sin had lifted crims insane. E wash. Did. Why? Seeing that again? Jesus pay. Oh. To him. My sin had left duke Crimmins in his stay. He wash did why?

0 (38m 2s):

Lord God, we come before you, you gave it all. So we're opening up our hands. Fill us again, refresh us.

Amen.