

0 (1s):

I have a question for you. Would you rather have 1 million cash today or I give you a penny, but it's a special penny that multiplies and every day you have this penny. It doubles the amount from the day before. So which would you rather have? Who in here would rather have a million dollars? Raise your hand. Go with the a million dollars. I see some hands in the back. Yeah, give me the million now. A million in the hand now is better than a penny. Yeah. Ever. Okay. Who in here wants the multiplying penny? Raise your hand. Okay, you chose wisely because this penny is worth, guess how much tomorrow?

0 (44s):

2 cents. Woo. And the next day, 4 cents and then 8 cent. Man, you guys made a bad choice Uhoh. But do you know what happens if you keep multiplying it on day 15? Or I'm sorry, on day 14, it's still only worth \$81. Really bad choice. Okay, halfway through the month, if you had this penny for, for one month, even at day 25, it's only worth \$167,000. You would be 27 days in and this penny would still be worth less than your million dollars. But then be patient for the next day, right? Because on day 28, it's worth 1.3 million.

0 (1m 26s):

By day 31 after one month, this one single penny is worth 10 million. More than 10 times the amount of the cash that I offered to you. Does anybody wanna revise their answer and go with the the one multiplying penny? See, multiplication is incredible. When something grows like that, multiplying, growing exponentially, it has an enormous impact. That's why multiplication is so important. So today this message is going to teach you how to multiply your blessings. Who wants their blessings in their lives multiplied God pouring out blessings in your life? Who wants that? Like if you're online, okay, I want you to see some pennies in the comment section. You're like, I want that multiplication of the blessings in my life.

0 (2m 9s):

What we're gonna learn today is how to multiply your blessings because God does teach us in his word very specifically how to multiply your blessings and to do that, to multiply blessings. Our big idea today is you do it by sewing generously, multiply blessings by sewing generously. So you're like, oh my gosh, are you talking about giving? Yes. Your favorite day of the year when Matt talks about giving, right? Oh my gosh, pastors are always talking about giving money. Okay? I want to multiply your blessings. I am not a prosperity preacher. I'm not telling you if you give your money that I will take your \$3,000 cash that everybody's gonna get. Give me today and I will bless it and pray over it and cry tears over it and then you'll be healed and have everything you want and be rich.

0 (2m 51s):

Okay? I'm not saying that, but what I am telling you is that God clearly says in his word that when you so generously, when you are generous with what he's given you, then he blesses you even more generously and he multiplies those blessings again and again and again. And that's what I want for you. I was real generous this morning. I, I gave away my wallet \$5,000 cash. I gave away my phone to this poor man on the street and I felt so happy, especially when you put the gun away. You like that? Okay. That was a joke in

case you didn't pick that up, that was a joke. I did not get mugged this morning.

0 (3m 31s):

But I make that joke because some of you, the only way that you'd even pry the penny out of your cold fingers is if somebody had a gun in your face. Okay? That's the only time you're giving. So for some of you, you need to hear this message. I also make that joke cuz some of you are like, oh my gosh, pastor's talking about giving. He's trying to rob me. Okay? I'm not, this message is not about what I want from you, it's what I want for you. It's not what I can get from you, but what God can give to you. And that's why we talk about generosity. It's one of the most important things to talk about as a church because it's one of the clearest ways that we can and must grow in our faith, especially if we want God to multiply our blessings.

0 (4m 14s):

So today we are going to look at what God says in his word in second Corinthians chapter nine. We're gonna start in verse six today. If you have a Bible, open it up. If you have your smartphone, open that up. If you have the U version Bible app downloaded on your phone, if you don't download it right now, and you on the bottom right hand corner it says of more, you click that you find the event and you find a right church. Denver, you can save the scripture and the notes today because we are gonna learn our, our big idea. I already gave it to you guys that you know to, to multiply blessings so generously. I'm gonna teach you guys that today. But also four points about how God does multiply our blessings, how God is generous to us when we open up our wallets, open up our hands and then we can receive what God has for us.

0 (4m 56s):

So the first thing we're gonna do, I is read verse six, as we learn in here the law of the harvest, how harvests work. So in verse six of second Corinthians, chapter nine, we read this, remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. There it is the law of the harvest. You sow sparingly, you'll reap sparingly. If you so generously, you'll reap generously. So if you want to multiply your blessings in your life, you need to sow generously. And in case you don't know, sowing and reaping has to do with growing plants.

0 (5m 37s):

Okay? Did you guys know this? I know a lot of us city folk are in here, but if you take a seed and you put it in the ground and put this stuff called dirt over it and then pour water on top of that and you let it have some time and it could grow into a plant, that's where plants come from in case you didn't know. And then the plant, eventually, if it grows, it will bear fruit. Whatever that fruit is. Maybe it's a pomegranate that you grow a pomegranate tree and you want to grow that. Whatever you do, you plant the seed and then eventually it grows and matures and bears its own fruit. And then you collect the fruit or you collect the corn, you collect the wheat. And when you do that, that's called reaping. So when we say things like, you reap what you sow, that's a pretty common phrase.

0 (6m 17s):

You guys have heard that before, right? It's a biblical concept. It's a world concept. We all understand it. Anybody who has eyes to see can see that if you plant something, if you sow something, you will reap something that you plant. We say it about other things in the world and even in the Bible, Paul uses it elsewhere. He says, you reap what you sow. So in ways, if you're kind to people, if you sow kindness, you'll often reap kindness in return. People are nice to you. If you're mean and rude to people, you'll reap meanness and rudeness in return. Okay? You kind of, we we say that it's kinda, you reap what you sow. It certainly is true when it comes to plants, okay? You plant a pomegranate seed and you get a pomegranate tree out of it, you reap what you sow. You don't plant a pomegranate seed and get a banana tree, okay?

0 (7m 0s):

Do bananas growing tree. We we, we, your city folk don't even know, right? Somebody's like, yes, it's a funny looking tree actually. So you reap what you sow. What's even more interesting in the way that God has set up the world. This is what God says in his word again and again, that when you sow generously with your money, with what you've been given, and I believe it, it's broader than that, but, but your money is one of the clearest examples when you sow with your money, the way God has set up the world is that you reap blessings. So when you're generous with what you have, God is generous in return, you reap what you sow. That's the law of the harvest. That's how it works. So some of you are like, wait, I don't want to give my money.

0 (7m 44s):

Ah, you're normal, okay? Because we wanna keep our money. But I want you to think about the farmer who's worried. He sees the banks collapsing, he sees inflation rising. He sees layoffs happening. He's like, I am worried I need to protect what I have. So all the seed I have, I'm going to keep in my barn. It's, it's about planting time right now. Okay? It's coming up depending on where you are in the country, people are planting right now some seeds. But this farmer is worried about the future. He needs to protect what he has, take care of his family. He's like you guys. So he's gonna keep all his seed in the barn this year. He's real smart. He's wise, he's holding onto all of it, making sure it's secure. He's not gonna lose any of his seed. It's well taken care of.

0 (8m 23s):

Well, you know, saved up for later. So, so what's gonna happen at harvest time? How much will that farmer harvest? Nothing. It's ridiculous, right? It's absurd to think of a farmer who doesn't sow his seed because if you wanna harvest, you have to reap what you sow. It is ridiculous to think of a farmer just storing up a seed for himself. And yet that's what you all do with your money. You keep it to yourself, you put it in a bank account. And we all have seen that even bank accounts aren't very secure right now. Right? Nothing is, nothing is. So we need to learn to be generous because in the way God has set up the world, it's actually by our generosity, by opening up our hands to give that God wants to return by giving us something.

0 (9m 10s):

You reap what you sow. If you so generously, you'll reap generously. So yes, I know some of you are thinking, and I was thinking cuz we planned this a long time ago and we're looking, I, I'm looking at it thinking, I'm like, oh my gosh, this is the worst time to plan a message on giving like banks collapsing inflation, layoffs, economy. Oh my gosh, are we heading into recession? So in one sense I'm like, this is the worst time to talk about giving, isn't it? But then as I thought about it more, I'm like, actually this is probably the best time because now it's gonna be hard and it's actually going to test your faith because that's what giving ultimately comes down to. It's a matter of faith. Do you trust God when you're generous with what he's given you?

0 (9m 51s):

Do you trust him? Giving ultimately comes down to a matter of your heart. They say that the last thing to get saved in a person's life is their wallet. I think it's true because it's like, oh God, I trust you with my whole heart. I love the Lord your God with all your heart souls my strength. I'll surrender. I'll go in the water of baptism. I'll do whatever you want me to do, but don't touch my money because it's a matter of faith to trust him with those thanks. And so what we want to learn today, and I want to challenge you guys with, and I'm gonna challenge everyone here, is to take a step of faith with their giving. That's what this message is gonna be. The application I'm telling you guys upfront, because I'm gonna be pushing you at the end. I want everyone to take a step of faith in their giving.

0 (10m 31s):

It might be the very first time they've ever given away even a penny in your life. That's a step of faith for you. Some people need to take a step that's even bigger than that to become a ti or to be even more generous than that. But whatever it is, I think God is testing your faith and he wants to challenge you to take one step forward today with your faith. So we're gonna learn four ways today that God is generous with us, that he blesses us in this passage of scripture and it's all from God's word. So if you're watching online, you're gonna want to hear this. I know some of you already have, shut off this, okay? Don't turn off the stream, don't leave the auditorium because God wants to teach you today four ways that he wants to be generous with you and to multiply your blessings. So you guys ready for the four ways?

0 (11m 13s):

Number one, if you're taking notes, God loves the generous. That's the first thing. And that he offers to those who are generous is his love. Some of you're thinking, well, doesn't God love everybody? Isn't God like have unconditional love for people? Yes, but he has a special love, a special favor for those who are generous. That's what the scripture says here. Let's keep reading in Saint Corinthians, chapter nine, verse seven says, each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give not reluctantly or under compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. God loves a cheerful, you read that too, right? He loves a cheerful giver.

0 (11m 53s):

The word love there in case you're wondering is the Greek word agape, unconditional love. Yes, he unconditionally loves every single person. No matter how awful and a sinner you are, I don't care what you did last night, neither does God. He loves you. Okay? Somebody needed to hear that today. But he has special favor for those who are generous. That's what he says here. There's special love and, and the way I think about it is the way that a father loves his child. Now I have parents, I have a dad, and now I'm a dad. I got three kids. And let me tell you, I love my kids unconditionally. It doesn't matter what they do or would ever do. I don't care what they say to me or do to me. I will love them unconditionally till the day I die and beyond. Okay? I'm gonna love my kids no matter what, but there's sometimes where I love 'em like extra.

0 (12m 35s):

No, I'm serious, right? Valentine's Day when all three of my kids came and gave me a card that they had made and they drew a little picture in there and they kind of signed their names the best they could. McKinley actually wrote me a little note, man, I love my kids, right? There's like a special favor, a special smile, a part of a heart when a father sees his child giving a gift, right? And that's, I believe the favor and love that is talked about here in the scriptures. When pe, when people are generous, God loves us unconditionally. Like that will never change. Doesn't matter what you do. But when you are generous, he's like, wow, look at my kids. I love these kids. Look at 'em. He smiles at us.

0 (13m 15s):

He says, well done. And that's what I want to hear. Some of you are like, we, we all long for our parents to give us that special up, don't we? You're like, we, we love it When our parents give us words of affirmation, I don't care if you're an old man, you want your your dad to look at you and and say, good job. We all do. When my parents call me up and they're like, wow, you did a great job in your sermon last week. Like, it's better than what any of you guys say. Sorry. But that's how it is, isn't it? Some of you're like, no, I don't care. I don't like my dad. I'm like, yeah, that's why you'd like it even more if your dad calls you up and say, I love you and I'm so proud of you. Like that's a powerful thing to have the love of a parent. It's like, yeah, I know you love me, but, but that special word, that special smile, that special sign. And that's what God offers to those who are willing to be generous.

0 (13m 57s):

So the first way that God will bless you is that you'll know you stand in his favor with him. And that's a great feeling. And I want that for you. I want God to say to me, well done. Get good and faithful servant. Not okay. I guess you barely did enough, right? You were stinged, you held all that money back, thought you needed it, and to protect your money and just hit all your money in a barn. Good for you. Like I don't want God to say that to me. I want him to be like, wow, you were generous with what I gave you. Good job. I want that love. That's what God offers. Did you notice in this verse sometimes I don't like saying and I'm, but I'm gonna teach you. This is the truth. It says each of you should give what you've decided in your heart to give.

0 (14m 36s):

Okay? I would love to be like, you guys all owe \$3,000 today. Let's pay for this balcony getting open up, get our classrooms fixed up. Okay? We need that for the budget. Give 3000. That's what you owe. I'm gonna be holding you here until you pay up, right? Wouldn't that be nice? Wouldn't it be nice if it was like a specific amount here that you guys owe? It's like, no, no, no. It's between you and God. Each of you, it's an individual thing. It's how you stand before God. So you can't look around and be like, well there's some rich people in our church. We're, we're in Central Park. I see their houses, right? They're giving, I don't have to, that ain't how it works. And it is true that they are giving more than you, okay? It is true. And I'm not just saying that people with the big houses, sometimes the people with the biggest houses are the stingiest, okay?

0 (15m 19s):

I'm saying that there are certain people on, on average in a church that 20% of the people pay about 60% of the bills. It's commonalities in our church too. It's true. 20% of the people here that you, you see around, you are paying most of what happens in our church. It's true, but it's between you and God. Each of you must decide you have to stand before God and give count. You can't be like, well the lights are on, so somebody must have paid like we have donuts out there. Like something good must have happened. Like pastor has some new white shoes, like somebody must be giving, okay? But it's between you and God, it's between you how much you are gonna give and, and you have to stand before God and, and are you generous?

0 (16m 4s):

Is he looking on you with favor, with love, with a smile? Can't you say let somebody else do it? And and I'm telling you guys this because statistics are really bad for Christians and giving, if you look like nationally with, with the giving here, let me pull up the statistics that if you look nationwide, regular churchgoers, so these are people who go to church regularly. They're members that 21% of regular churchgoers do not give a single penny ever. 21%, that's one outta five. I'm looking at you right now. One outta five of you don't give anything.

0 (16m 43s):

71% of Christians regular churchgoers give less than 2% of their income. So that means there's about 8% left of regular churchgoing Christians who tithe, who give 10% or more of their income away 10%. And that tithe is what God asked throughout the Bible. What that tells me is each one of us is gonna be held to count to this. And if we're wondering why we don't have the blessings we want, maybe it's because we're not giving. If you're like, does God even like me? Like yes, he loves you, he likes you, but he'd like you even more if you gave, okay? He gives special favor on you when you're generous. That's what it says here and, and it says to not give reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.

0 (17m 30s):

Did you notice that? So I, I know I'm guilting you right now, but by the end of this message I'm gonna make you feel really cheerful and happy so that you give, okay? No, no, no. Why does that matter? Well, it matters

in the same way that any of us want to receive love. If my kids walked in on Valentine's Day with those cards and they're like, here you go dad. Mom made me make a, I hate it. Ugh. I would've rather been doing anything else than making you a card dad. But I guess I have to give you an obligatory Valentine's Day card. How do you think I'd feel? Not quite as loving, right? Let's be honest, I'd be like, Hmm, great. I still love you, but hmm, I'm not sure about this one right now.

0 (18m 11s):

What if when Melissa and I had been dating, I got down on one knee and I said, I have worked my butt off these last three months because I have to save up for three months of my paycheck to get you this ring. I don't like it, but it's obligatory. I guess I have to, will you marry me? Yeah, no, that's probably the answer to that, right? Nobody wants to receive that. Like when you give a gift, you want it to be done cheerfully. Like I want to give this to you. God wants us to give generously. Like that's the heart that he wants that heart of giving. Now with my kids, okay, I bought those cards, I bought the markers they used for the cards.

0 (18m 53s):

It, you know, God gives us everything. He's not expecting like, oh you gotta, you gotta pay back a million dollars and let you get to the million threshold. You are no good. Like he doesn't care. He just wants you to give. He wants you to have a generous heart because he sees that and he loves that and he wants to pour up blessings on you. So the first thing we learn here is that the first thing that God gives to those who so generously is his love. God gives love to those who so generously. And the second thing is that God provides for the generous, God provides for the generous. Some of us are already thinking like, well I'm worried because man, rent is high right now.

0 (19m 33s):

Inflation has made my utilities go crazy. Excel energy. Are you kidding me? Okay. Amen. Right. We're we're looking at these things like I don't know if I can afford this. I don't know if I can do this, but God promises, he promises to provide for his children if we're willing to be generous. So God provides for the generous, we see this in verse eight and and it's all over the scriptures, but here in verse eight it says, and God, so if you give cheerfully and God is able to bless you abundantly. So that in all things at all times having all that you need, you will abound in every good work having all that you need. Did you read that? Having all that you need, God will provide everything you need.

0 (20m 16s):

This is his promise to you. This is why giving is about faith. Cuz his promise is, I will provide for your needs and we have to take in step of faith and say, okay, I believe your promise that you'll provide what I need. Now caveats, he doesn't provide all your greeds, he provides all your needs. I'm seriously all your needs and this is, this is the way that that God works. Okay? You don't need a new pair of sneakers, right? Okay, we don't. But God provides what we need. In fact, in first Timothy six he says, if you have food and clothing, we'll be content with that. Food and clothing. Do you have that? You have what you need. If you don't come talk to us

and we will help you.

0 (20m 58s):

God will bless you today to provide your needs through our church. In fact, if you're here and you have a need and you're over 18, I have to put that in there. If you're over 18, there is a basket full of cash in the back of this auditorium. Take as much as you need, no questions ask. And if you need more than that, come talk to us. Or if you're under 18 and you have a need, come talk to us and we'll help you out too. We really will. There's somebody that came in for service and they're like, I haven't eaten in a few days. We have food for you right now and we'll get you some more until you get your next paycheck. Like we will do that for you as a church and we'll be the ones that God provides through. We're happy to do that. If you have a need, God will provide it for you. He has got a safety net for you, okay? God is the safety net. He'll provide your needs and that's why we need to trust him to give generously.

0 (21m 42s):

You can't outgive God and Frank what once said that no one has ever become poor by giving because God provides for the generous. It's what he does, he provides for the generous. Now I think this is really important for us to understand because most people that I talk to want to be generous. I've never met somebody who's like, I just wanna be stingy or the rest of my life, I'm sure they're out there. Maybe I just haven't met 'em. Like I haven't met Scrooge Ebenezer like, but most people are like, yeah, I wanna be generous win. And there's always a win. I'll be generous when I start making x amount of dollars a month once my paycheck gets above that amount.

0 (22m 26s):

Some people are like, I'll be generous once I pay off my student loans. Some people say I'll, I'll be generous once I get married cuz then we'll have two incomes and it'll be a little easier. I'll be generous once I move into my new place and don't have this crazy high rent, I'll, I'll be generous when I have kids. I'll be generous when, when I get my kids out of the house, I'll be generous when I pay off my kids' college, I'll, I'll be generous. Once I invest fully in my 401k and, and then I have a nice little nest egg, then I'll be generous. That's what most people say. But if we're talking about sewing, it means the whole time, if you wanna have a harvest, you gotta keep sewing the seed, keep doing it again and again and again. Because the reality is, is that most people never get to that point that they feel that they have enough.

0 (23m 9s):

But if they start giving, it's amazing that God provides more than enough abundantly, he provides more than enough. And I want you to think about it cuz if a lot of you are in that state, you're like, well I don't know, not me. My budget's too tight. Like I got too many bills, I got all this stuff. Okay, what if you knew that you were about to have a relative die and this relative set up a trust for you so that every single month your rent would be paid for, that you would have your utilities paid for. That'd be a real nice one right now that you would have money to eat on. And all of that is taken care of for the of your life. That trust will keep sending you that

\$3,000 check every month.

0 (23m 49s):

Maybe it's more for you, I don't know. Rent's pretty high in Denver right now. Okay? You're getting that check no matter what. If you knew that check was coming in the mail every month, would you be generous then your needs are taken care of. I think most of us who are saying, I'll, I'll give in, would say Yes, I, I would start giving then. Well let me tell you, God is promising to provide for you to provide for all your needs. You already have the promise. So start giving, start giving generously. You know, I, I did say that, that this is a matter of faith and it, it truly is because if you don't trust God with your money, you don't trust God.

0 (24m 30s):

You don't, you're like, I'm not too sure about that promise, like I'll surrender my time. But the money, that's the last thing that people hold onto and that's why I'm challenging you to take a step of faith with your giving to open up and to give. So the second way that that God provides or that God gives to the, the generous is that he provides for the generous. The third thing is that yes, God blesses the generous. Look back at verse eight with me. We read and God is able to bless you. That's his word. God is able to bless you abundantly, multiply blessings so that in all things at all times having all that you need, you will abound in every good work as it is written.

0 (25m 13s):

He says in verse nine, they have freely scattered their gifts to the poor and their righteousness endures forever. This is a quote from the Psalms. So Paul's like, if you don't trust my scripture, let's look at some other scriptures. If you're sowing generously to those who are in need, if you're, you're giving generously, God will give you more seed. You're scattering their gifts, scattering their seeds to the soil and the harvest will be righteousness that endures forever. God does that for us. And if you didn't get enough scripture here, let me show you a few other ones. Malachi three 10, God says, I am the Lord all powerful in case you forgot and I challenge you to put me to the test. Did you know this is the only place in the entire Bible God says to test him.

0 (25m 56s):

In fact he says elsewhere, do not put the Lord your God to the test. But when it comes to giving, he says, test me. And in verse 10, if you continue on, it says, bring the entire 10% the tithe into the storehouse so there will be food in my house. Then I will open the windows of heaven and flood you with blessing. After blessing, blessings multiplied. I was like, test me. See if I can stay up to my part of the bargain. Right? You are generous and I will bless you and I'll multiply your blessings to you. If that's not enough, let's look at what Jesus said about this, okay? Acts 20:35, you should remember the words the Lord Jesus, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

0 (26m 38s):

There's more blessing, there's more joy, there's more that God gives to those who give rather than just those who try to receive for themselves. Now these blessings show up in all sorts of different ways. I'm not saying you're gonna be rich, at least financially, maybe that might be the blessing God gives you, but I know he will give you blessings that's in his word He provides for you and he blesses you. I shared this story last year, but I'll share it again that I was actually terrible at giving before I got married. Like I was the kind of guy that was like, well you round up, you know when you're paying for something like round up to the nearest dollar to provide for kids that need a new skateboard, right? Whatever the thing is is like, I don't wanna give that like no way.

0 (27m 19s):

You're taking my 43 cents. Okay? I, I didn't even give that way like I was stingy. But when we got married we made the commitment to start tithing and that was, that was hard. That was scary. I was in seminary, Melissa was the only one working. I guess I was waiting tables but that may paid nothing, right? So, so I'm, we had like no money but we're like, we're gonna commit to tithing and we made that commitment and we have kept that through our marriage and I'm saying that it's hard. I'm not and and it got really hard when we moved back to Denver. So we were in Littleton for a while in seminary and we knew we were gonna be poor, right? And then we went to Nebraska and it's fine cause everything's cheap over there. We moved back to Denver and we're like, oh, okay great. We, we can live on this. We, we can budget our income and man it's expensive to live in Denver.

0 (28m 1s):

Our rent was atrocious. We're trying to live and we had McKinley, our first kid and I remember that year as we were coming into Christmas, our first child's first Christmas, that's when most parents go way overboard, right? But we were like uhoh, we didn't budget for Christmas presents. Like where is this money gonna come from? And I remember like, well maybe we like could skip eating for a week or something, right? Like we're trying to figure this out but we're gonna trust God and we're gonna continue to tithe, we're gonna continue to give generously. And I remember we lived at this, this town home right by the church here for a year and our neighbor came over one day with an envelope with a thousand dollars cash in it, thousand dollars cash.

0 (28m 45s):

She said, I've been outta church for a while and I wanted a tithe, this is for you. And we're like, I mean that was way more than we needed to get Christmas presents for McKinley that year, right? But God blessed us and I believe that he blesses those who are willing to so generously. And if you wanna experience blessings like that and so many more, you've got to so generously you've gotta have open hands to receive what God has for you. Stop holding it so tight. Stop storing all your seed in the barns so generously and God will bless you generously. So that's the third thing that God blesses those who are generous. And the fourth thing is that God multiplies the impact of the generous.

0 (29m 26s):

It's gonna increase in the way we are blessed. It's abundantly, but also increases the ability to be even more generous in the future. This is cool if you keep reading in verse 10, it says, now he God who supplies seed to the sower and bred for food so God provides the basics, will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. So God, if you sow your seeds will give you more seeds and then your harvest will be enlarged, it will be even bigger. Do you guys pick up on that? You sow he'll give you more seed and he'll increase your harvest. It's multiplying. So that means the next time you can be more generous and more generous.

0 (30m 8s):

And I've seen this, I've seen this again and again and, and it's the way that makes sense when you're talking about fruit. Okay? Remember the harvest analogy that we were talking about at the beginning? This is a pomegranate here, it's kind of an old one cuz they're outta season. But if you cut open this pomegranate on average a pomegranate has, let me look at the numbers, have about 600 seeds inside of it. 600 seeds. So you open up that and and you get about 600 seeds out of there and say, okay, I'm gonna tithe. Right? So how much is that anybody? 60. I wanna teach you a real, real good secret that God built in. He just moved the decimal 0.1 point over if you want a tithe, okay, if you have 600, boom, take out a zero.

0 (30m 51s):

Boom. You got 60 man, God made it so easy for you to tithe so you got 60. So 60 you give back to God that you're gonna sow and you get to eat 540 seeds or do whatever you want with it, right? So you take that 60 and what's really cool about the 60 is not that God's just taken it away and it's gone. You're sowing it. That's the whole analogy, right? You sow your seed. So what do you do when you sow a seed? What happens if you sow 60 seeds? How many trees can grow out of it? Man, you guys are quick this morning. How many trees could grow outta 60 seeds? 60, right? Okay, thank you. 60 trees are growing and you water these trees and they grow up to the point where they're starting to bear fruit.

0 (31m 33s):

The average tree, as Sawyer talked about last week, could have a hundred to 150 fruit growing on one tree. So now you take down, let's, let's average it 125 fruit. You take those down and you cut them open and you get all the seeds out of them. And you could still at that point from 600 trees, do you know how many seeds you'd have? 60 trees. 125. It's 4.5 million seeds. Just one round of harvest, right? So even if you keep for yourself, you're like, okay, well I'll keep these 450,000 seeds to myself. No, no, no.

0 (32m 12s):

Okay, you get to tie that, right? You tie the 450,000 seeds, you keep 4 million for yourself. Like God blesses people and multiplies their blessings so that they can have an even bigger impact. This is how God works. And I have seen it. Some people are like, I'll give win, right? That's what everybody says, I'll give win. But the people who start just giving, when they just have a little bit, they're like, I'm gonna give this tithe. It's gonna be hard, but I'm gonna give right now. And it's gonna, and they keep doing it and they keep doing it over a

lifetime. I have seen people and there are some people in our church, people I know personally that have been able to give and they bought an entire church to be built in another country that have started foundations and orphanages.

0 (32m 54s):

Why not? Because they had all this money that they'd collected for so long in their barn, but they had been giving again and again and again. And God sees those people and he's like, I wanna give you more cuz you're so generous with what I've given you. That's why Jesus says that those who are faithful with a little will be given more. And when we're faithful and generous with the little we have, God will make it grow and it will multiply. And you will be amazed by the end of your life how generous you can be. But in order to get there, you gotta start sewing generously, start sewing faithfully again and again and again. So what is your next step when it comes to generosity?

0 (33m 35s):

What's your next step? I want you to think about it as we watch this video from someone in our church, Alex Hodgkin.

2 (33m 46s):

I'm Alex Hodgkin. I've been going to arise church for about four and a half years. I've been actively tithing for I think probably a little over a year and a half. My reasons for tithing and giving to the church are related to my own development and walk with Christ. You know, the way I view it is, you know, the money is god's. It's all god's, it's all God's money. It's me giving up a little bit of control and allowing God to assert his will in my life. I think it's based on fear and the need to control and the importance of money in our lives and in our society and the, the, the role that wealth and status has played in, in, in, in the current times.

2 (34m 30s):

And, and I think this is a part of the process of God saying, Hey listen, I got you and show me that you know that and that you demonstrate faith in me. And, and so for me it really is just a part of that process of opening up that conscious connection and communication with him and showing him that I really do trust and love him. And I find that when I do that there's a, there's a beautiful, beautiful process that unfolds that he shows me He's got my back as well. You need to give joyfully. So if you feel like you're compelled, you're under pressure, I encourage you not to do it. It's gotta be something that develops within you and becomes something that you're open to and that you want to do.

2 (35m 10s):

And that it's a, it's a next step for you in your own process. And I would also just say when you think about this, this sort of thing in the scheme of things, we're in like a tiny little sliver of time when you look at the eternity that will be walking with him and in this tiny little sliver of time, can you give away this tiny little sliver of control to him knowing that he's got your back for eternity? And I think that, that, that helped me.

0 (35m 42s):

Thanks Alex. So what's your next step in giving? We believe that we are a generous church. That's one of our core values. Generous living. That we gladly give our time, talents and treasures to serve God in one another. So what's your next step in giving? If you reach under your seat right now, you should have one of these generosity cards. If you're online, you can follow follow the QR code that's gonna be on the screen behind me. We did this last year for the first time and we're doing it again. Our generosity challenge. And I know some of you're like, oh, I did it last year, I don't need to do it. No, that's not what I said. I, I'm challenging every person to take their next step of generosity. So even if you filled out one of these cards last year and you've been faithful Tyler, maybe for this last year, I want you to take your next step of giving what whatever it is, what's the next step?

0 (36m 26s):

So that you could grow a heart of generosity so that you can receive God's multiplied blessings in your life. And I'm gonna give you a minute to think about it, to pray about it, to fill this out and we'll collect it. And if you look on here, it has asks for your name and email. And the reason we do that is because we wanna share the exciting things. This is a challenge because God told us to test him in this. Okay, that's what it said in Malachi three 10. Test me in this and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out blessings on you. So if that's the truth, we want to test God and we're gonna challenge you guys to give over the next 90 days, test him for three months and see if God won't give you blessings. Now I don't know what those blessings are, but we have seen amazing things that God does even in these 90 days.

0 (37m 8s):

I can't promise you that you'll have exactly what you want, that's not how it works. But you will receive some blessings. And what I want you to do, we'll set you on this email thing. It's all gonna be anonymous. Like don't worry, nobody's gonna see your name. But if somebody has a blessing, they'll reach out to me. You can send me an email and we will forward it anonymously to everybody else. And it's really cool to hear how God is moving in people's lives. And because that, I wanted to share a couple from last year and then I, I received another one just recently. So here's a couple of the stories of of people that they experienced last year. People in our church as they began to give, it's the first one they said during your message on giving, I felt convicted. Since joining a Rise church, I had never shown generosity by giving money.

0 (37m 49s):

Today after the service, I felt the Holy Spirit moving me, telling me to start giving. So I signed up for the generosity challenge. Only moments after signing up for the challenge this morning, I received a message from a family member revealing that something I had been praying for for a long time finally was answered, prayer got answered, a blessing owed. Here's another story. Somebody said, Hey Matt, wanted to share my blessing with you. I've been in a new sales job since last September. I've worked with many clients, but for one reason or another my deals kept falling through. I had six deals under contract that all eventually fell out.

Then you mentioned the giving challenge and I committed in writing to tithing on all my commissions.

0 (38m 31s):

Two weeks later I made my first sale. Monday I made my second and I have have five other clients under contract and I'm working with multiple other new clients. It almost felt like there was some block standing in my way. And now that I committed to giving back, I almost have more business than I can handle. I can't attribute it to anything other than God making changes in my life. Isn't that a cool story? And that's just a couple. We had a bunch more last year and I'm excited to hear more this year. This generosity challenge. And this is one that came unsolicited. Like I'm asking you guys to send me, tell me about the blessings you receive over the next 90 days. But I got this one just a little while back. Somebody emailed me and they said, Hey, we just filed our taxes and I had never given tithes before 2022.

0 (39m 15s):

That's kinda what you see when you're paying your taxes. Like, oh look how much I gave. And he said, I remember those sermons you would give about how it's a sign of trust and faith or the videos that played about other members at church deciding to tithe as well. He said it was very inspiring and it made a real impression on me. And I feel very proud to give the best and live on the rest. Take it easy. And they sign their name. What's even cooler than that was the subject line said thank you Matt. Never had someone reach out to me unsolicited and say thank you for making me tie for the last year. But they experienced the blessing that comes with being generous with what God has given them. And I want that for you. I want that for you.

0 (39m 54s):

Now I will tell you that I want you to give to our church. We are supported by your giving. And inflation is happening to us too. Utilities cost more than they did last year. Okay? I'm telling you guys that. And I'm also telling you that you guys have been generous. Our giving went up 20% over the last year. Praise God. Praise God. But our attendance group by 50%. So we have a little bit of gap, right? We got a gap. So I do want you to give to our church, but if you don't trust me, if you don't trust our church, give somewhere else. I really don't care. And God doesn't, he wants you to be generous. I want you to be generous. I hope at some point you will trust us with your money.

0 (40m 34s):

We got a great financial advisory team, we got a great board. We, we have some cool things we'll tell you next week with, with some even better ways that we're managing the finances here at the church. But it it wait till you trust us to give here, give somewhere, I don't care where it is. It's your favorite nonprofit. Just give generously. And I think that you're gonna experience these blessings because then you're trusting God. You're giving, you're sowing your seeds and you're just watch as you receive the harvest of blessings from it. And once again, if you have a financial need and you're here today, go to the back, take some cash. If you're over 18, no questions asked, if you have a bigger need or you're under 18, come talk to us and we'll see what we can do to help you. But I want you to receive those blessings. In order to do that. You've got to so

generously.

0 (41m 15s):

So what is your next step in giving? We challenge people if they've never given before. They're like, I'm new to this. A good place to start is a hundred dollars a month, \$25 a week. Okay? That's like one meal eating out now, right? Okay. Trust that to God. Start there. We call that our generosity team. And we have a lot of you who've taken that first step. That's awesome. Just start there. Make it a part of your regular, weekly or monthly life that you're living that way. Some of you have been doing that now. So you've already taken that first step. And maybe the next step is to start tying it to your income, okay? A proportion of your income. And you're gonna say, Hey, I want, I wanna give this percentage of my income A, and you'll work your way up. And maybe for you it's now tithing. You're like, no, I need to tithe. I need to give 10% back to the Lord.

0 (41m 57s):

So take that step. Some of you're like, I've been tithing faithfully for years, so I'm good, right? I can sit back like, no, what's your next step? I don't know what it is, but what is God laying on your heart? Should you raise your percentage? We had somebody last year go from 10% to 15% cause they wanted to trust God even more. And God did bless them generously this last year. So what is your next step? Maybe it's a special gift. Maybe it's some something. I don't know what it is. Maybe it's building a school in Honduras. Okay, I, I don't know. But give your next step of generosity. Melissa and I talked about it this week and we said, Hey, we're tiding faithfully, but what's our next step? What's our next step? And we decided, and that's what we're gonna do. We're committed to it, but it's between me and God. I'm not gonna tell you what it's okay.

0 (42m 39s):

Same way it's between you and God, what you're gonna give. So I want you to take a minute right now, take out this card. What are you going to give generously? Write that down. And then we're gonna have somebody come around and pick up the card. So after you've filled it out, hold it up in the air and somebody will come around and pick up that card from you. Thank you, Jackie.

0 (43m 31s):

If you need to, you can take this home. If you need to do some calculations, if you need to talk to your spouse, that's fine. Bring it back next week and turn it in. If you're online, you can fill out that form if we can. Chelsea's helping out. So when we get a second, we'll put up that QR code again. And what I would say, some of you are like, Matt, I really do want to give, but my spouse isn't a believer, or my spouse just isn't the same place where I am in faith. So they don't want me to give it all. Okay? Go talk to them. Don't just stop there. It's a step of faith. And you're gonna challenge 'em. You're gonna say, Hey, could I give a portion on my income? I made it. Let me tithe it, okay? And if still they're like, no way, this is our income, which is a biblical way of thinking. But you, you say that and then say, okay, well here's one area of my spending.

0 (44m 12s):

I spend this much a month on Starbucks or whatever. And you instead of spending it on that are gonna give it, you're gonna say, Hey, I'm, I'm gonna withhold for myself to sing. Tell your spouse you're gonna do that. And I bet you they'll let you give. And then you'll see them start to experience the blessings of this generosity and they'll be trusting you more and more as you trust God more and more. So that's my challenge to you guys. But I do realize some people need to think about it and pray about it before they turn in their card. So I'm gonna say a, a, a prayer for all of us right here as we take a step of faith. Lord God, you are challenging every single one of us to take a step of faith. For some of us it's so hard because we don't even know where the next paycheck is coming. But you promise to provide. And I pray that you provide abundantly, Lord God, we know that the cattle on a thousand hills are yours, that you are a good and generous loving God.

0 (45m 2s):

So Lord God, I pray that you bless those even today that they would feel the joy of giving. Maybe for the first time they would feel a freedom as they realize, hey, I don't have to trust in money. I can trust in a God who's way bigger than even a banking system who's way bigger than even the F D I C Lord God. We are insured by your you in in faith. And Lord God, I pray that you'd shower blessings over the next 90 days and that we could celebrate together the ways that you are giving and providing and doing abundantly beyond all we ask or imagine. Pray this in Jesus name. Amen. Now, we do this every single week here. And I'm not gonna forget, even though we are doing a giving message, That God is a generous, loving God.

0 (45m 47s):

He loves you so much that he gave his only son, his only son for you. Aren't you glad God didn't just tithe? Aren't you glad that God is generous to give his whole son? And when Jesus walked among us to love us, to serve us, to be generous in his own right with everything he had, he went to the cross and died and shed 100% of his blood for you so that when you trust him in faith, your sins are forgiven. You're given new life now, an eternal life in heaven forever. That's what's available through our generous God. And you know what? You don't have to give to receive that. You don't have to serve, you don't have to do anything. All you have to do is open up your hands to receive from him. Call on the name of the Lord and you will be saved.

0 (46m 29s):

And I want to tell you that, that some of you need to put your faith in Jesus Christ. Today. We had one person, first service on a giving message except Christ for the first time. Praise Jesus. And I hope that there might be someone today who needs to do that as well in this service. So if everybody could close your eyes, and I want to give you a simple prayer that you can pray to receive that gift from God. So if you're already a follower, Jesus, say this prayer out loud to give boldness to somebody around you who needs to pray it for the first time. Please repeat after me. Dear God, I'm a sinner. I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me in faith, I declare

1 (47m 7s):

Jesus's Lord,

0 (47m 9s):

Give me your spirit. Give me eternal life. Help me to follow

1 (47m 16s):

You

0 (47m 18s):

And so generously until I see you face to face. Now with eyes closed, I wanna celebrate with you if you made that decision today. So on the count of three, put your hand high in the air. 1, 2, 3, put your hand in the air. If you made that decision today, hold it up there. Praise God. I see your hand. Let's celebrate with that person who raised it. I see a couple, praise God, Lord, God, we are just so grateful that you are a generous, loving God, that you save us. And when we don't deserve it, that you care about us when we're sinners, and Lord God, we rejoice. Help us to be generous like you are, that we could become your children, your sons, and your daughters to be generous and loving in a world that is stingy and mean.

0 (47m 60s):

Lord God, help us to shine a light into the darkness as we step out to so generously every day. Pray this in Jesus name. Amen.