

0 (0s):

Alright, welcome everyone. Yes, we are continuing our Dollars and Cents series today and My name is Matt Wolf. I'm so glad that you guys are here today. It is gonna be a good Sunday. Welcome to Rise Church Denver. We are all about helping people follow Jesus. We wanna help you follow Jesus and for you in turn to help others follow Jesus. Because following Jesus is the path to the fullest life and the only path to eternal life following Jesus includes following with your finances. So that's what we're gonna be talking about today. but I did wanna remind you before we jump into our message today, that in two weeks it's gonna be Easter. Okay? Wow. It's coming up quick and I'm excited. Easter is a huge day for us as a church. We see our highest attendance of the year and we're expecting record numbers this year.

0 (40s):

But that means you guys are gonna need to invite your friends. And. we have four options for you to choose from this year that you can invite your friends to our 8, 9, 20, 10, 40 or noon service, four different service times. So everyone should be able to come. So I want you to think right now, who's that 1, 2, 3 people that you were gonna use this card that was on your seats to invite. If you're online you can go to rise Denver dot com slash easter. We have a whole bunch of digital media that you can share through text message or on social media. So I want you to think about who's, who am I gonna give this card to? Because this could be someone whose life is transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ. So this is an incredible opportunity. People are willing to go on Easter Sunday, even when they wouldn't go any other time of the year.

0 (1m 22s):

So who's that person you're inviting? They're in your head. Good. You're gonna invite 'em this week. Okay, great. We are going to continue our dollars and cents series today because, and today's message is Learning Contentment. I know we talked about contentment last week, but I don't think anybody has figured it all out this week. Have you? If you're like me, you still got a ways to go when it comes to Contentment and really this is the cure to our financial issues. If we could figure out this one thing, then you would be okay no matter what your financial circumstance. So we're gonna learn contentment today and I know all of us need to practice contentment 'cause we all say the same thing when we open up our closets, don't we?

0 (2m 3s):

I have nothing to wear. Have you ever said that thought? That doesn't matter how much is in there, you still got nothing to wear. What about when you open up the fridge, there's nothing to eat. Okay, we say this and for I would guess nearly all of us, that ain't true. And yet we say it right? Because we have this problem inside of us that we need fixing. And it's because we're discontent And. we need to learn contentment. And that's what today's message is going to be about. How can we develop this? How can we learn this contentment, this peace, this happiness that no matter what our circumstance financially we're okay? That's what we all need if we want to find financial freedom. So that's available to you.

0 (2m 43s):

And I know in this church, I know based on the area that we are, we have some people that are really

struggling financially. We talk to some of you, we try to help you all. We, we know that you're barely making it and sometimes you're like, I don't even know if I can pay my bills this month. We have those people in our church. We also have people in our church that are, are worth multiple millions of dollars and everything in between. I don't think we have any billionaires. If we do, let's talk after the service, let's do lunch. You're buying, okay? But yeah, we have people all over the spectrum, right? In our church, financially and So, we all can use this because no matter how much you make, no matter how, what your net worth is, we can still struggle financially. There can be a burden and a stress and anxiety that comes with a little or a lot.

0 (3m 28s):

And this series, I hope, is teaching you not just wisdom and to have that dollars and cents, but also that you can find financial freedom. That's really what I want for you and what God wants for you. You can have financial freedom. And last week in our series we learned that every single one of us struggles financially because we all have a disease. We have a disease. I called it the the love of money. That's what the New Testament calls it. But you might call it coveting, you might call it greed or just discontent because we all crave for more, for better. Or if I just had that much then I'd be okay. 'cause some people do it not because they're adding more and more stuff. They do it because their bank account getting bigger and bigger and bigger and it's still not enough for them to feel secure.

0 (4m 9s):

We all have that disease, every single one of us, myself included. And that disease actually can destroy us as we learned last week. And yet there's a cure. Last week we learned what the cure is. You remember what it is? Contentment in Christ is the cure. If we realize that Jesus can be with us that he can go with before us, like as we sang this morning, like no matter what happens, he's there for us. He's never gonna leave us, never gonna forsake us. He's always there to help us. If we know that truth and really get it in our hearts, we're actually gonna be okay all the time. Some of you heard that and yet we're still struggling, aren't we? We see those ads on social media and we're like, oh, but I could use another, right?

0 (4m 50s):

Don't we? Don't we all say that? Because here's the thing, contentment isn't just like a one-time truth and you're transformed. Instead. It's something we actually have to learn in our lives. So that's what today's message is about. Learning Contentment. Today's message I, I'm gonna start out with one passage, but we're gonna be all over the Bible like we have been in this series. And because of that I want you to take some notes. So, if you have a smartphone, go ahead and get it out right now. And, you can find the YouVersion Bible app, download that If, you don't have it. Find our Arise Church Denver event. And. you can see all the scripture we're gonna cover this week. And also take some notes right there on your phone, save them there on your phone.

0 (5m 31s):

And our main passage, If you wanna open with me is Philippians chapter four, verse 12. We looked at this

last week, but I want you to really get this. So in Philippians chapter four, the apostle Paul writes this. He says, I know what it is to be in need. He's been at that place where he's struggling financially trying to figure out how he's gonna eat his next meal. And I know what it is to have plenty. He's been at the point where he was wealthy, that he had everything. And then he says, I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

0 (6m 12s):

And what I want really want you to see with this is that he had to learn it. Did you see that? He learned Contentment. It wasn't just something he had, he had to learn it. And he tells us, of course, the cure in verse 13. How does he have that contentment? No matter the circumstance? He says, I can do all this through him. Christ who gives me strength, Jesus is the answer. Contentment in Christ is the cure. So if that's the cure, we need to learn from Jesus and his word, how to have that contentment. So that's what today's message is about. And I do want to emphasize this, that you can learn it every single one of you. Even if you're here and you're like, Matt, I'm just an ambitious person. I wanna make more.

0 (6m 52s):

I wanna have more just in my blood. No, no. You can learn contentment too. Some of you are like Matt, it's just like ingrained for generations in my family. but I don't care if your daddy was a stockbroker and your mama was a hoarder. Like you could still learn contentment for yourself. We can And, we must as followers of Jesus because that is the way to true financial freedom, no matter the circumstance. Contentment. So to learn Contentment, we are gonna learn five truths, maybe five practices, things that you can put into practice. And as you start doing these things, learning these things, you will learn Contentment. So our big idea is to learn contentment. And since there's five points, I wanted to help you guys out.

0 (7m 33s):

I always wanna help you out. I love you. So I came up with an acrostic, five points with the word learn. Okay, you got this man, I really did my work for you guys this week. You can thank me later. L-E-A-R-R-L-E-A-R-N are gonna be our five points today. And with each of those letters is going to teach us a different way that we can learn contentment through God's word. So the first one, the L is to learn to distinguish needs from wants. If you're like Matt, you're cheating. The first word is the word from that you're trying to get the, I know I'm cheating, but just hang in there with me. So, we need to learn to distinguish needs from wants. This is the first practice that you must master.

0 (8m 14s):

If, you want contentment in your life. If, you want peace. If you want happiness. If, you don't just wanna always be craving after more and better. And the next thing you have to learn to distinguish needs from wants. That's what Paul himself teaches us in one Timothy chapter six, verse eight. He says, but if we have food and clothing, we will will be content with that. How much do you need? Oh, not very much, right? Food and clothing. I think in our winter climate, you might need to add a warm place to stay in the night. You know

this was in the Mediterranean when you wrote this. Okay, maybe it's a little bit different in our climate there might be three needs you have, but that's not a very long list, is it?

0 (8m 57s):

So I would say this. Who in here has clothing? Raise your hand. If. you don't. I think the safety team would've stopped you on your way in. Okay, who in here has food to eat? Raise your hand. If. you don't head out to the cafe right now? We have some food for you. We'll feed you. I, I know those are basic necessities. The scriptures don't actually say If, you don't have food, If, you don't have clothing. Be content. It doesn't say that. Like we, we have some basic needs that we need and if we don't have that, that's, that's rough. It's hard. So, we do need those basic things. And I would say if you're like, I'm struggling with this on the regular mat, okay, we want to help you today. In the back of the auditorium we have a basket filled with cash and If, you have a need. You can go and take that cash, no questions asked.

0 (9m 37s):

And If, you have a bigger need than that. Come talk to us. We wanna help you. Maybe we are God's answer to prayer for you, So. we can help you with those basic needs. but I think I saw a lot of hands in here, right? So, we need to learn to distinguish between those needs, those basics and our wants, which is everything else because we got a lot of those too. And once you learn to distinguish that, then when you're feeling like, ah, I just need this thing, you should ask yourself, do I really need it? That's a simple basic question you need to ask yourself. Do I need this? Parents, don't you have this conversation with your kids a lot? Okay, if you're not a parent, you're, you're gonna have that at some point when you're a parent. Like your kids are always like, I need it.

0 (10m 19s):

And like, no you don't. You don't. You've been fine all these years. Without it, you're gonna do okay. You don't need it. There's, it's amazing how many things that we in our society today say our needs. A smartphone is not a need. I remember having the dumb phone corded to the wall to call my friends. You guys remember those days we survived. Sometimes it was dangerous. Like I'll meet you at the corner And, you know, but we did it. Here's some other things that aren't need having a vehicle. Did you know that sometimes like, no, I need transportation. Yeah, you need transportation. Not a car. I learned this when I met Pastor Sam. Since I have known Pastor Sam, he has not owned a vehicle. Yeah, okay.

0 (10m 59s):

And I was like, well I, I guess he can do it. There's a thing called Uber nowadays ride share. Okay? He also can get an electric scooter like that. Like they're everywhere in this city. Or he just has a lot of friends who drive him around. And if you're his friends you're like, amen. So, so here's the thing, like you don't need what you think you need And. we need to be honest with ourselves and distinguished needs from wants. Now it's not wrong to have wants. It's not a sin and it's not a sin to have those wants and to spend our money to buy those wants if we have the money to buy it. Where we get into a lot of financial problems is when we buy

things we don't need with money.

0 (11m 40s):

We don't have to impress people we don't even care about. That's when we get into trouble. But If, you just ask that simple question, do I need it or do I want it? Because then if I need it, yes, I'll get it. If I want it, well I'll have to see if I can afford it. Maybe I'll do it. Do it fits in my budget, great. If not, move on. And I really want you to be serious about this question. If, you wanna develop contentment. Do I need it or do I want it? And I would say this, If you have needs. Do you know what you're supposed to do? Ask in James chapter four, verse two, James says, you covet. That's that. That sin inside of our hearts, that desire, that greed for more and other people's stuff, you covet but you cannot get what you want.

0 (12m 22s):

So you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. You have not 'cause you ask not have you spent time seriously asking God for something If you need it If, you really need it. For every minute you spend worrying on it, you should spend at least that much time praying about it. You'd be amazed. God wants to provide for your needs. Have you even talked to him about it? Seriously. I mean Jesus said the same thing in Matthew chapter six, verse 31. He says, so do not worry saying what shall we eat? That's a need. What shall we drink? That's a need or what shall we wear? Another need for the pagans run after all these things.

0 (13m 2s):

And your heavenly Father knows that you need them. In verse 33 he says, but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. You have some needs. Ask God. And like I said, maybe we're your answer to prayer today, If, you really have some big needs. There are needs. Let's ask God for it. But if they're just wants, sure you can ask God for 'em. Sometimes he provides, he's good. And that actually leads us to our second point. So the first one is to learn to distinguish needs from wants. The second thing is to enjoy what God has already given you. That's our E. Did you know that God wants you to enjoy stuff? I know I taught on this a couple weeks ago, but I need to teach you on it again because God wants you to enjoy the stuff he's given you.

0 (13m 46s):

Some of you need to memorize this next verse 'cause you think God is just a killjoy, doesn't want you to have any fun. Wrong one Timothy 5, 6 17 says, God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. He has given us all sorts of stuff that you already have for your enjoyment and If. you could just enjoy what you already have. It's gonna help you learn contentment. I want you to think about it. Do you have any clothes in your closet that you haven't taken out for a ride in a while? Okay, enjoy 'em. Do you have that hobby that you bought a bunch of stuff for a few years ago and haven't touched the stuff since? Get it out and do that hobby and enjoy it.

0 (14m 27s):

Do you have an instrument? A lot of people have an instrument that you've never really played. Get it out. Play it and enjoy it. We all have more than we need or I would say nearly all of us have more than we need. So enjoy the stuff you already have. I want you to think right now of one thing you have in your house that you haven't enjoyed in a while. Got something in mind, take it out today, enjoy it. Here's the other thing you're like, well Matt, I actually don't have very much. Do you know what all of us have about a billion ways to have fun with that are free on social media. Last week I just put up a poll. I said, Hey, what are some things you guys do for free for fun?

0 (15m 10s):

And people came up with this huge list of stuff like, you can go on hikes in Colorado, we live in God's country. Did you know that? Okay, you can go on walks like there's tons of things you can enjoy without spending a dollar. And that whole list I compiled and I put up on our resource page. We have a resource page for this series called the rise Denver dot com slash money. There's a bunch of resources up there, but one of 'em is a list of things that you guys came up with of free stuff that you can do. I even found two articles of free stuff to do in Denver. There's a whole bunch of stuff. People have already compiled the list. Here's free days at the zoo, free days at the museum. You can go check out this place, go to the mint. Like, like, oh I hadn't even thought of that. Okay, I'm giving you a whole list. Just go to that website. And on top of that, I think one of the exercises you should do, If, you wanna learn contentment, is to write down a list of the things you can do for free that you enjoy.

0 (15m 58s):

Sit down with your spouse, with your kids. Let's come up with a big list, brainstorm, put everything on the list and the next time you're bored or not having fun or you're broke, you pull out that list. And, you just do one of them. That's a pretty simple thing, right? God wants you to enjoy the things he's given you, including not just our needs but our wants. God has given us so much, why don't we just take time to enjoy it And and I would say this like it's spring cleaning time. If, you have something in your house that you neither need nor enjoy. Get rid of it. Okay? You can sell it, make some money and then you can pay off your debts. Like that's a pretty simple trick right there. Okay, so, so this is the, the L is to to learn, to distinguish needs from wants.

0 (16m 40s):

The E is to enjoy what God has already given you. The A now is to admire without having to acquire, admire without having to acquire. That's our A. If we can pull that up. Admire without having to acquire. Did you know there are lots of things around us, And, we don't have to have them for ourselves to enjoy them. But yet our, our coveting, greedy, greedy hearts are always like, nah, I need that for myself. This is what you do. You go on vacation, you stay at that place and you're like, oh but it wouldd be cool to have a house here. That'd be nice. Ooh, it'd be a vacation all the time, right?

0 (17m 20s):

Like maybe let's just get our second house, get the beach house, get the, get the condo up in Aspen like oh that'd be so great. But now you own it and then you have to take care of it or pay someone to take care of it. Then you gotta pay taxes on it, then you gotta clean it. Okay? And then you have to make sure nobody steals it. Like all these things that are now you, you're multiplying your worries for something that you're not gonna use all the time. But you can admire something without having to acquire it. I really mean this. We live in a great society where you can rent anything you want, anything. Like it's crazy what you can rent in our world today. Rent it. And I think if, you do the calculations, you're like, yeah, I could get that second home or, or I could just rent a hotel for two weeks every single year for the rest of my life and I would still save money.

0 (18m 9s):

And then after a few years I could just go somewhere else when that place gets a little old and then the next place like, and I'll save money in the long run. It's amazing how we can do it. If, you just did a little simple math with it, but what, what really we need to learn is that skill admire without having to acquire. Do you know what else you can do? Borrow it. You know, do you know somebody who has a boat, has a cabin? Borrow it. Ask them really nicely. That's why you need to have make some friends guys just borrow it like you don't need that snowmobile but you can borrow it and enjoy it, right? Some things you need to just learn how to admire from a distance too. Like it, it's great to look at somebody else's home and like, oh that's amazing.

0 (18m 49s):

But then when you're like, I need that, like that's when it's gonna get into your heart and wreck you. That's why some of you need to stop watching HGTV. Okay? Because you need that. You need that 60,000 kitchen remodel. No You don't. You can admire it. Wow, that's an amazing kitchen. But mine works just fine. Like I can cook the food all I need right now. We can admire these things without having to acquire 'em. If, you have the money, it fits in your budget, fine do it. But, but if we can just learn to admire without having to acquire, it's really gonna help us learn contentment all the time. Admire without having to acquire. And, and this really goes to the scripture like this is one of the top 10 rules of God, right? 'cause 'cause the problem starts in our heart. Jesus taught us.

0 (19m 29s):

And and in Exodus chapter 20 verse 17, it says, you shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not cover your neighbor's wife or his male or female servant or his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor. You see their nice house. Just admire it. You don't have to acquire it. We've gotta stop the sin at the source, which is our heart. So learn to admire without having to acquire. That's our A, our R is to realize it's all temporary is one of the most important things. If, you wanna learn content, contentment, realize it's all temporary. Everything is temporary. You're not gonna get to keep it forever. No matter how much money you manage to put in your account and invest, you're not gonna get to take it with you no matter how much stuff you have.

0 (20m 16s):

It won't last forever. It's temporary. Jesus taught us this in Matthew chapter six, verse 19 of Matthew chapter six. Jesus said, stop collecting treasures for your own benefit on earth. Where moth and rust eat them and where thieves break in and steal them. You have all this stuff and it's going to eventually be destroyed. Everything we have, this is what we do. We buy too much stuff and then we have to pay for some place to store it. You ever done this? And then you're like, oh my gosh. But like the climate in Colorado, like now you gotta get a climate controlled place to keep all your stuff.

0 (20m 59s):

And I promise you that no matter how much you collect, how much stuff you store up, nobody will care about it as much as you when you're gone, they won't. In fact, they're gonna whine and complain as they clean up your place when you're dead. I hear some amens 'cause you've done it. I remember climbing in my great grandma's attic in the middle of summer in New Hampshire. It was hot. They threw the kid up there and it was disgusting, filled with dust. We found a piece of cake from her wedding. Like it was like what is this? Why do we still have this? But nobody cares about your stuff as much as you do. And it's gonna like, people are gonna throw it away, sell it, wanna get rid of it. Maybe one generation will keep on it because they feel guilty, but, but nobody's gonna want your stuff as much as you do.

0 (21m 39s):

And yet we keep collecting more and more and more. You've gotta realize it's temporary, all of it. Everything is temporary and you're definitely not gonna get to take it with you. You're not. You will die and it'll be passed on to somebody else or thrown out by somebody else. You don't get to take it with you. So we've got to learn. It's just temporary, everything. So here's the other thing, If, you haven't realized this. You really want that new outfit in three years. It's gonna be outta style. That brand new phone. Oh, I can't wait till I get it in two years it will be obsolete.

0 (22m 19s):

Save up for that really expensive computer. I need it five years. It's a hunk of junk that won't work anymore. It's too slow. All our stuff is like this. You buy that brand new car and it depreciates in value right as you drive it off a lot. And then you gotta maintain it and keep it and someone dings the side of it. And, you get mad, okay? It's temporary. It all is even your home. It's like your your biggest asset Maybe you have, you buy your home and then you immediately have to start maintaining it. And it's expensive. An hvac, a new water heater, oh my gosh, the paint's bad now I gotta fix that immediately. It's an old house. Everything we have is temporary And. we need to treat it as such with an open hand.

0 (22m 60s):

We can have it, but it's just temporary. It's not mine to keep unless there's one exception. Did you know this? There's one exception. There's one exception. You can't keep anything in this life. Nothing is temp, is is permanent, it's all temporary except for this thing. And that's our fifth point. Our N not If. you give it away. If, you hold onto it, it's temporary. You're not gonna get to keep it. Not If, you give it away If. you have an open

hand and you're willing to share, be generous, let other people borrow. Then actually you'll get to keep something forever. That's what Paul teaches us in one Timothy chapter six, verse 18.

0 (23m 41s):

He says this, command them that's us. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds and to be generous and willing to share why he tells us in this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age. So. that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. If, you wanna lose something, hold onto it. If. you wanna keep something forever let go. And they're as treasures even greater than the thing you give away. We should be the most generous people on the face of the planet willing to share everything. 'cause it's just temporary anyways. It's not ours.

0 (24m 21s):

It's God's So. we should be willing to share, to be generous. And when we have that open hand, we'll actually get to have treasures in heaven forever. That will never fade away, that moth and rust cannot destroy. Only if we're willing to share. That's what God blesses for eternity. And if you're generous in this life, it's actually going to help heal your heart from that greed, that disease that's destroying you. Being generous is one of the best ways to heal your heart that way. In Proverbs 21, verse 26, we read, some people are always greedy for more, but the godly love to give If.

0 (25m 1s):

you want out of that greedy lifestyle and you're just sick of it like it's destroying me and others. You've got to be generous. You've gotta be willing to give and let go. And I would say this too, we live in a very consumeristic age. It's always about more stuff. There's ads everywhere all the time. And if you're a parent, you really need to teach your kids to live a different way. I, I was really impressed by one family in our church and I know there's a lot of families in our church doing this really well, but there's a little boy and he was here in the first service, Mason Smith, he's five years old. And several weeks back he came up to me and handed me a wad of cash. And I was like, oh, what is this? Like, okay, what what is this? And his mom was like, well, we've been trying to teach financial literacy to our kids and in addition to that, we're giving them money as their allowance So that they are learning to give save live.

0 (25m 50s):

Remember that We learned that last week. Give save, live. We're teaching them that And, we got envelopes, And, you can get these free envelopes from the bank. They're the nice ones, And, you can get 'em and the, and the kids can put in what they want in the give envelope, in the save envelope, in in the spend envelope to live on. And so he wanted to give to the church. So here's the money. So I took him over And, we found the white boxes and together we put that money in. And I found out later that he had gone to Pastor Sam the week before that. So I'm the second favorite Pastor, but that's okay. That's okay. I can get over that one. But, but this, this family's teaching their kids and If, you wanna learn more about that? I ask 'em a bunch more questions about it and I wrote that up and put it on our resource page as well. So if you're a parent, you're

like, I wanna teach my kids how to be generous to not be sucked into this consumeristic world.

0 (26m 32s):

Go on a rise in commission money and find that article that we wrote up So, that that's the way you've gotta teach. Because if we are generous, if we're willing to give, if we have open hands, it's actually gonna heal our hearts and free us from that greed and that coveting that's in there, it's gonna help us learn contentment. And, and, and with that generosity too, let me tell you this, there's something really cool. Not only does it store up treasures in heaven, not only does it heal your heart from greed, but it also is something that God blesses now in this life, God blesses the generous. Lemme show you in a few places in the scripture in Proverbs 22 verse nine. We read those who give freely will be blessed in case you're wondering where I'm getting this idea from.

0 (27m 15s):

Boom, it's right there. Those who give freely will be blessed. There's blessings from God or, or in Proverbs 11, verse 24 and 25, those who give generously receive more. But those who are stingy with what is appropriate will grow. Needy, generous persons will prosper. Those who refresh others will be refreshed. God offers blessing and refreshment for those who are willing to give and share and refresh others. And it's not just the Old Testament. Paul says in second Corinthians chapter nine verse six, remember this, whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly, but whoever sows generously will reap generously. There is a way that God has set up our world that if we are willing to be generous, he's generous in return.

0 (28m 2s):

I am not a prosperity gospel preacher. I'm not saying that If, you give money If you give a thousand dollars right now if you're watching online, like I'm not gonna say that, that you're gonna get \$10,000 in return like that. That's not what I'm saying. These promises are not always financial. Sometimes there's some financial implications to this. But it's not saying you give money and you're gonna get rich. That's not in the scriptures, that's not in the Bible. What the Bible does tell us is that when we are generous, God blesses us. Could be financially, but it could be answers to prayer. It could be a happiness and a joy in our hearts that that just makes us feel so much better when we're generous than when we hold it all to ourselves. Like it can be a way out of depression for some people.

0 (28m 43s):

Like there are incredible blessings and I don't know what they are for you, but God has in store if you're willing to be generous. One woman in our church emailed me and she said, Hey Matt, I I remember the first time I learned about generosity, she was running a business and it was really struggling. So she was listening to the radio one day and the pastor on the radio was like, what you need to do if you're struggling financially, spend more time with God and started giving money away. So, so this woman listened to that and was like, well, I better try it. So she started praying a little bit longer and felt like God put on her heart to give a certain amount of money away. She said her husband had always been the one who gave and she

realized she hadn't. So she decided to be generous as well.

0 (29m 24s):

And as soon as she did that, by the end of the month, she finally had enough money to not only pay her bills, but pay herself as well. And business took off. This is what happens. You can experience the blessings of God when we have an open hand to give. This is one of the best ways, not only to cure contentment, but man, we're creating a generous world. We're showing the world how generous our God is with us. This is an amazing thing. There are blessings in store now for those who are generous now. So that's why I'm gonna tell you not if, you give it away. That's our end, right? You can't keep anything unless not if you give it away. Robert Morris is a pastor in Texas and he wrote a book and he tells a, a story of generosity from, from a guy in their church.

0 (30m 10s):

And, and when he knew him, he was a very generous man in their church. And he asked him one day, this man in the church, like, why are you so generous? And he's like, well, I wasn't always, I had to learn it to be generous. And he says, you know, back in the day before I was starting my business or when I just started my business, I was not doing well. I was living like anybody else, And. we actually had this tiny little home in a track by the airport, by DFW airport and the planes would fly over all the time and it was super loud, but we could afford it, right? And he said that his pastor, that one Sunday was asking for money, a a three year commitment for a giving campaign. And, and this man went outside in his backyard as the planes are flying overhead. And he's like, well God, how much am I supposed to give?

0 (30m 50s):

And he heard God say to him, \$50,000 and he's, yeah, it was woe for him too. He is like, you gotta be kidding me, God. He literally laughed out loud. He's like that, we can't afford to do that. That's way more than we've ever given ever. But God says, I'm not kidding. So he's like, okay God, I'll do it. But as he's still looking, looking up in the sky, he felt God say, what do you think? I'm gonna just drop it outta the sky. Go in there and figure out how to do it with your budget. So he went inside that day, sat down at his computer and figured out how he could cut not only some luxuries from his budget, but some things that other people thought of as necessities. It was tight, but he's like, we're gonna do it So that in, in 36 months we can give enough money So that we're give \$30,000 or \$50,000.

0 (31m 35s):

So they wrote that first check and he said within a matter of months God had blessed them. So not only did those needs come back, but also the luxuries in the budget his business started to take off. But even more amazing was at the end of those 36 months when they had given their final check to pay for \$50,000, the very next evening he and his wife were sitting down when they heard a knock at the door, they go to open the door and there's a gentleman there and he says, Hey, I represent the airport and because of the the plane traffic overhead, it's been so loud, we know it's hurt, property values including yours, and a judge has

ordered us to pay everybody for this damage to their value of their homes.

0 (32m 18s):

And they said we had to draw, like the judge made us draw a circle from the airport. And your home fits at the very edge of that circle. In fact, your next door neighbor doesn't fit within the parameters of this. They're like, wow, that's, that's pretty amazing. Well how much? And the guy says, well, you'll receive later the end of the week, your check for \$50,000. So the man goes into his backyard, looks up again at the sky with the planes flying overhead, says, thank you God. And God says, and I can drop it outta the sky if I want. See, God is generous with us when we are willing to be open-handed. And there's nothing to teach you contentment quickly. You can't learn it more quickly than when you're willing to give it away.

0 (33m 0s):

You'll be amazed. And I want you to learn this too, from a man in our church who watches us and joins us online every week, he and his wife. So let's hear this video from Danio.

1 (33m 14s):

Hey My name is Dania Roman. my wife Sienna and I live in Lambertville, New Jersey. We were introduced to Arise Denver in 2022 by my friend Mitchell Keller. And it's been a blessing that we look forward to streaming every Sunday. A few years ago, Sienna and I were inspired to take a leap of faith to pivot from our corporate jobs and into trying our hand with entrepreneurship. While we always donated a portion of our income to our church and charities, giving financially was never something we really prioritized. But after our friends began pointing us to scripture and sharing inspiring stories of other unbelievers who committed to giving generously and then kind of seeing how God honors tithing with even more abundance, we were inspired to do the same, to kind of watch what the Lord would do in our business.

1 (34m 7s):

From day one, upon starting our first business, we set our giving target for the year and really committed to it. No matter how unpredictable or uncertain this entrepreneurial adventure became for us, we, we stuck to what we committed to as a type A finance guy who, you know, loves plans and control. This felt incredibly unnatural and uncomfortable, but we soon started to realize that maybe that was the point. By giving a fixed percentage of what we made every quarter back to God and his people, even in times where we didn't feel like we had it to give, it really kept our hearts in this humble posture to trust in his provision and ultimately his abundance.

1 (34m 56s):

While we were faced with our fair share of what did we just do, moments in his divine timing, God ultimately provided looking back and trying to track numbers. I, I have a hard time quantifying how all of this stuff was even possible given the limited amount of money we were pulling in. It honestly feels like a real life example of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount Miracle where he fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. Truthfully,

allowing God to work in our business has been like watching a miracle unfold. At the end of the day, we've learned to lean into this mantra in our household, which kind of represents how we view God and his partnership with our business.

1 (35m 38s):

And it's simply the phrase God's got it. That's what we tell ourselves and pray over what in the midst of challenges and and overwhelming pressures. Because we fully believe that the results of our hard work in the end are God's domain. The impact that we hope to make in life through our businesses can only be attained with God in our corner. Taking the initial step to prioritize giving was the catalyst for the spiritual growth that led us here over the past couple years. And that that's something I genuinely believe making the decision to a prioritize tithing has honestly been one of the most liberating decisions I've ever made in my life.

1 (36m 20s):

And it continues to abundantly bless us as you can expect, we're not stopping. We've set a goal in 2024 to give double the amount we gave last year. And, you know, we pray every day for God's continual provision and partnership to make this happen because in the end, God's got it. Thanks everyone.

0 (36m 41s):

Thanks Denio. Let's give him a hand. Thank you. If you're watching online, I just loved hearing their story. And if you're online, I loved talking with people online, wherever you are in the country or world, like just fill out a new form, you know, please do that. So I just want to encourage you and challenge you to, to learn contentment. You can do this, you can learn contentment through those five practices we talked about today and to see if you guys are ready to be content. I need a hundred dollars bill. Does anybody have a hundred dollars bill? Oh, here's one Lucas, thank you. Oh yeah, I just need one. Thank you very much. Let's give Lucas a hand. Thank you.

0 (37m 22s):

So God is teaching us to be content with what we have and that includes that generosity component. And we do this because God is generous, right? Our God is incredibly generous that he gives us air to breathe. He gives us a world to live in. He gives us the rocky mountains to look at and hike in. And he gave us his own son, his only begotten son. And Jesus, when he came, he loved, he served, he gave everything he had. He even gave up his life for us. And on the cross, he didn't just tithe, he gave 100% of his blood. He gave his life for us. Our God is generous. And if that's true, And, we have that Jesus in our hearts, we also must be generous as well.

0 (38m 6s):

It's our response to his generosity. And if you're wondering, Matt, why would you take a hundred dollars bill from that kid? You're still thinking about it, aren't you? Well, lemme lemme tell you this, I went to Lucas

before the service and I gave him a hundred dollars bill. Okay? Right? I gave it to him and I said, Hey, at a point in the message I'm gonna say I need a hundred dollars bill and I want you to run up here and give it to me. And he did it right? That's pretty easy for him, right? Why It wasn't his to begin with, right? He knew he was just holding onto it for a little while. He couldn't take it with him. He knew it was mine. So he was willing to give it back.

0 (38m 47s):

And in the same way, every single thing you have is from God. You're not gonna get to keep it forever. So we too must be willing with open hands to be generous with what God has given us. So I am challenging you again today. We talked about this last week. Some of you already committed to this generosity challenge. Some of you have done it for the last two years. But we are going to do it again. And and if you're here in person, underneath your seat, underneath your seat, if you're here in the auditorium, you can pull out one of these cards. It's the 90 day generosity challenge. If you're upstairs, it was on your seat. If you're online, you can follow this QR code And. we are challenging everyone to prayerfully ask God, God, what are you challenging me to do?

0 (39m 32s):

To be more generous to, to, to be more content. Like this is more about what I want for you than what I want from you. And I really mean that And, we do run on your donations, your giving makes everything we do here at this church possible. And yet I believe so much in generosity and what God says in his words that If, you don't want to give to our church, give somewhere else. I really mean this. Give anywhere else. I just want you to start growing in generosity and you're gonna experience what God has for you. The contentment and the blessings that follow. And God challenges us this way in Malachi chapter three. This is the only place in all of scripture where we are told to test God. And it's with this, it says, I am the Lord, all powerful.

0 (40m 13s):

God says, and I challenge you to put me to the test, bring the entire 10% into the storehouse so there will be food in my house. Then I will open it the windows of heaven and flood you with blessing. After blessing. Test me in this. God says, be generous and I'll bless you, So. we have this card, I'm gonna give you a minute to pray through it. Put your name and your email and how much you want to give. Whatever that step of generosity God puts on your heart. For some people we say a good first step is a hundred dollars a month or \$25 a week. We, we feel like most everyone can do that first step. So take that first step of generosity if that's you, if you're already doing that, we want you to become a tither. And specifically what we mean by that is tie your giving to your income.

0 (40m 55s):

What God has given you. Give a percentage back to him. Tithe is 10%. But if you're not ready for that or, or you want more than that, give that whatever it's, but some of you have been tithing and you're like, I'm good. Right? Wrong. Okay, what is God laying on your heart to be more generous So that you can grow in

contentment and blessing. Maybe it's to give above that with a higher percentage or to give with a, a big gift on top of that. Or to, to give to another organization. Whatever it is. We want you to take the next step of generosity for 90 days. Test God in this. And what we're gonna do, we ask for the email address because I actually send out emails over this 90 days to encourage you and to share with you any stories of God's blessings that we experience as a church.

0 (41m 37s):

And it's amazing, even during the first service, I got a text message of a, a blessing story. Isn't that cool? Somebody texted and they said, Hey, last year they, they, they were giving for the first time through our generosity challenge and they felt God give them a certain amount of money, So, that they pledged to give that amount of money they gave it. And on top of that, they feel like God was telling them to volunteer some of their time. So this person started volunteering their time on top of their giving. And at the end of the 90 days, I kid you not, after the 90 days were over, they found out that they were getting paid for the volunteer work. Like they did not plan it. And all of a sudden they got a, a payment for it and, and it was the exact amount that they had given away for the last 90 days.

0 (42m 18s):

Isn't that pretty cool? I was not expecting it, but God just poured out a blessing of generosity on this person when they were willing to be generous. So I got that story this morning and I wanna share more with you and that's why I'm asking for your email address. So now is your time. It's between you and God to think, to pray and to write down and commit to what you're gonna give over the next 90 days. So I'm gonna give you a minute to do that. And we say, it says in the scripture, each of you should decide what you should give, what you have decided in your heart to give not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver. So what step of generosity are you gonna take? Write it on this card. And then up here we have some baskets in the front. I know some of you already dropped this off last week, but If you haven't or you write one today, come on up and drop it in the basket over the next couple minutes.

0 (43m 3s):

We, we give every single week in our service because giving is a part of our worship. We respond to God, we honor him by giving back a portion of what he has given us already with open hands. And I know we've had this message on Learning Contentment, but even as I've talked, some of you have realized that you don't have Jesus in your heart. And let me tell you, God has an enormous blessing for you. And his name is Jesus Christ. He is the contentment cure. He's, he's the one who can give you true joy in your life. He's the one who can save you from your sin, take away your guilt, and give you eternal life forever with him. And it's only available If you receive the gift that he has given you. So some of you need to accept that gift of what Jesus did on the cross, giving his life for you, So, that you could have new life now and eternal life ahead.

0 (43m 49s):

So I'm gonna give you an opportunity to respond with a simple prayer right now. So could everybody close

their eyes? And if you're already a follower, Jesus, say this prayer out loud to give courage to somebody around you who needs to pray this 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 Jesus' Lord, fill me with your spirit. Give me the gift of eternal life. Help me to follow you and find contentment for the rest of my life.

0 (44m 32s):

Now with eyes closed, If, you said that prayer for the first time and meant it. If Jesus today for the first time is your Lord and Savior, we wanna celebrate with you, And. we actually have the gift of a book that we wanna give you right now. So put your hand in the air on the count of 3, 1, 2, 3, put your hand up and one of our ushers will come around and give you one of those books. So. we can encourage you in your steps of your journey. If you're online, go to [rise Denver dot com slash follow](https://rise-denver.com/follow). Lord God, we're so grateful for those who who make a decision to follow you. For all of us, help us grow in contentment. We wanna learn it. We don't want to just be always addicted to the next and to better. We wanna have a contentment in our life that pours out in generosity and sharing to others.

0 (45m 14s):

Would you put it on our heart, Lord God, So, that we could be generous like you are generous with us and I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you so much for listening to the message today. I'm Matt Wolf, lead Pastor at a Arise, Church, Denver. And we're all about helping people follow Jesus And. we wanna help you follow Jesus because of that. If you're newish, even if you're just checking us out online, go down below in the description and fill out that form at [arise Denver dot com slash new](https://rise-denver.com/new). And if this message has impacted you at all, please go to [rise Denver dot com slash give](https://rise-denver.com/give) So that you can give back and help more people find out the message of Jesus Christ.