

137,491	Service
137,491	
9,198,126	
3,952,788	
1,430,723	
146,812	
100,029	
1,596	
366,272	
1,354,852	
856,412	
101,625	
35,866	
8,107,862	
1,090,252	
2,420	
36	
370	
420	(239)
16	
286	
1,25	
16	

BE RICH

> PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS

11 But you, Timothy, are a man of God: so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords, and his greatness so brilliant that no human can approach him. No human eye has seen, nor human ear heard, nor has it entered into the human mind. 12 Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses. 13 And I charge you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you obey this command without wavering. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. 15 For

H

(3) "Generosity"

HIGHLIGHT: 1 Timothy 6:17-19, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 NLT

Below are excerpts from the overall passage for use with the APPLICATION and RESPOND. It will be beneficial for the group to read the whole passage to understand the entire context.

1 Timothy 6 (NLT)

vv. 17-19

17 Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. 18 Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and **generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.** 19 By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

2 Corinthians 9 (NLT)

vv. 6-15

6 Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. 7 You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." 8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. 9 As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever."

10 For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. 11 Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. 12 So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.

13 As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. 14 And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. 15 Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

EXPLAIN

The purpose of this section is to deepen everyone's understanding of the Word.

The inscription on the packet of seeds: "The flowers of your tomorrow are in the seeds of today." It's the law of seedtime and harvest/cause and effect. Seeds come before flowers. And it's what Paul said to Timothy and the Corinthian church.

1 Timothy 6:18c

Paul has already told us our relationship with God defines how we use our money: trust in God and do good with what God has given us (vv.17-18b). In v.18c he "sets the bar" for evaluating our "doing good": **always being ready to share with others in a generous way**. That certainly cuts across the general self-centeredness that has plagued humanity since creation (see *James 3:15-18*). To be freed from this fleshly attitude we need to sink our roots deeply into "the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that by His poverty He could make you rich"

(*2 Corinthians 8:9*). Our God who is so generous with us who are so undeserving expects us to carry on the family tradition. When the world sees our generosity toward **those in need**, they will say, He/she has his/her Father's eyes. The old chorus says it well: "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me... O, thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 The Corinthians' eagerness to share in easing the suffering of the Jerusalem church had inspired other churches to do the same. But time has a way of eating away at enthusiasm. And Paul feels the need to re-invigorate generosity from the Corinthian church, so when he arrives to pick up their gift and take it—along with gifts from other churches—the gift will be a "willing" ("generous" in NIV [word used for "blessing"]) gift. Not a "grudging" gift (vv.1-5). Prepared giving brings blessing; pressured giving becomes bitter giving.

vv.6-7 Paul uses the farmer's life to show how blessing comes. It doesn't come by **planting only a few seeds**. The wise farmer knows, most likely, each kernel of corn he plants will produce one stalk. And on that stalk will grow many ears of corn. And on each ear hundreds of kernels. So he **plants generously** believing in the the goodness and faithfulness of God and His ordered design for our planet (see *Genesis 8:22*). When it comes to our generosity toward the needs of others, Paul follows the model of Jesus. If the farmer can trust God with his livelihood, don't you think you can trust Him with what He has given you to use for His glory? (see *Matthew 6:26, 30*). You've got to **decide in your heart** what is more important to you: the kingdom of self, or the Kingdom of God (see *Matthew 6:33*). **God loves a person who gives cheerfully**. This word is in the same family with Jesus being our propitiation—the satisfaction of God's wrath toward us. We cannot satisfy that need. Only Jesus could do for us what we could not do for ourselves. And He did! Paul calls on us to satisfy the needs of others with the same mercy and kindness that Christ showed us on the cross. And we are to do that promptly and willingly—*cheerfully*. And do it in such a way that brings joy and thanksgiving to those who receive it (see v.12).

vv.8-11 And **God generously provides all that we need.** (Remember what one kernel of corn can produce: hundreds of times as much). It's called surrendering to God's economy (see *John 12:24*). Trusting Him enough to release it to Him. Jesus reminds us "pagans" don't trust God enough to do that (see *Matthew 6:32*). A good question we should all ask ourselves: Am I a disciple of Jesus, or a disciple of the world? The answer to that depends on where we put our trust. Here's the thing about our God: He is faithful. The same **God who provides seed for the farmer which yields bread for his family** is the same God who will make sure you **have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.** And He will do it over and over **so that you can always be generous.** But you have to plant the seed. You have to sow to reap.

vv.12-15 Generosity has great spiritual consequences. God is glorified (**they will express their thanks to God [v.12]**); it proves where our heart is (**we are obedient to the Good News of Christ [v.13]**); those who receive will express their love to God (**they will praise God and pray for you with deep affection [vv.13, 14]**). What may have looked like a money-raising project to us, we now see is in reality a kingdom-building event. One of our greatest needs in regards to giving is the ability to look beyond the gift to what God is going to do with it. Moses raised every objection in the book (some of them legitimate) when God called him to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt (see *Exodus 3*). Then God asked Moses, "What is that in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied. In obedience to God's command, Moses threw that ordinary piece of wood on the ground, "and it turned into a snake" (see *Exodus 4:1-5*).

God is asking us today, What is that in your hand? It may be a small Social Security check; it may be a large dividend check; it may be the deeds to several pieces of property; it may be a few kernels of corn. God says, *Throw it on the ground!* Our first inclination will be to hold to it because it's all we have. And God replies, *Throw it on the ground and let me show you how generous you can be when you let Me do with it what only I can do.*

"The flowers of your tomorrow are in the seeds of today"

APPLY

A

Be comfortable with some silence as people think back to the sermon or reread the text. Answer honestly. You don't have to answer every question.

1. What stuck out to you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?
2. What does it mean to be a cheerful giver?
3. Why doesn't Paul want us to give reluctantly or in response to pressure?
4. Generally, what is your attitude when it comes to helping those in need?
5. Ultimately, where does generosity come from or how does one become generous?

RESPOND

The purpose of this section is to take action with the truths you're learning. Answer honestly. Find someone who will hold you accountable to living out your response to Scripture.

1. 1 Timothy 6:18 says, "Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and **generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.**"

Share a time, recently, you have been "generous to those in need."

Being generous doesn't come natural to selfish, sinful people (of which I am the worst). How can you stay prepared to "share with others"?

2. The 5th-century theologian Maximus of Turin wrote, "Joyful and cheerful then is one who attends to the poor. Quite clearly, he is joyful, because for a few small coins he acquires heavenly treasures for himself; on the contrary, the person who pays taxes is always sad and dejected. Rightly is he sad who is not drawn to payment by love but forced by fear. Christ's debtor then is joyful and Caesar's sad, because love urges the one to payment and punishment constrains the other; the one is invited by rewards, the other compelled by penalties."

How can you earn heavenly treasures this week by being a cheerful and joyful giver?