

Taking pleasure in giving

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[0 : 0 0] Thanks, Adrian. Well, as we continue in the letter of Paul to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, we continue with the topic we started last week, which is the topic of money, which is always an interesting but challenging topic, I think, for all of us.

So here's a new truth that I discovered while studying this passage. And yes, I do, just as you, discover new truths as we work through these letters together. I certainly don't know it all. And it's a great thing to be able to, in my study, have new truths from the Bible every week just hit me.

And this one really hit me like a 10-ton truck. And that is the truth that if you are not taking pleasure in giving your money, then you're doing it wrong. If you're not taking pleasure, if you're not actually enjoying giving, then you're doing it wrong.

And that hit me because I really don't think most Christians take pleasure in giving money. More often than not, we give out of a sense of duty. We know it's the right thing to do. And that's why we do it. But we don't actually enjoy the process.

I can testify. I don't like logging on to internet banking and making payments. My whole body is against the process. My blood pressure rises. My heart rate increases. I try to avoid it as much as possible. I don't like it. We don't like giving money. Generally, we don't like paying bills. I don't think you look forward to paying bills each month.

[1 : 3 9] Oh, yes, I love paying bills. Of course we don't look forward to it. And I think we have the same attitude often when it comes to our giving towards God's work. We don't look forward to it. We don't enjoy it.

But what I realized this week, working through what Paul says about money in 2 Corinthians, and as I said last week, this is the longest extended teaching in the whole Bible about the topic of money.

And what I realized when I was studying it is that that reluctance to give, even that just that hesitation to give is a wrong attitude to have to not enjoy giving money towards God's work is not only bad for us, but it's sinful.

It's actually a sin against God. And let me show you why. So last week, you'll remember, if you were here, we learned from chapter 8 that the Corinthians' willingness to give, the apostle Paul says, was actually a test of their love.

It was an evidence of how much they loved God and loved their neighbors. Because like the Macedonians, which Paul used as an example, their giving to people in the horizontal meant that there was an overflow of love for God in the vertical.

[2 : 5 3] Remember that from last week? And that's how it was a test of love. And that's what God was looking for. giving prompted by joy. That's what God is seeking in his people, not just giving out of a sense of duty.

Because to give reluctantly is actually a sign of greed. If we give reluctantly, what it means is we'd rather keep that to ourselves. That's why we're reluctant. That's why we're not enjoying it.

That's why we don't do it with a smile on our face. Because we'd rather keep that to ourselves, which is actually greed at the base of it. In fact, that is, in fact, the very word Paul uses in verse 5, when he said that he wanted to delay coming to the Corinthians.

So, if you read that passage, if you were listening when Penny read it, Paul says, you know, I don't want to come to you, Corinthians, to collect your gift for the Jerusalem churches right away. I want to delay. I want to send a party over first to help you to get ready for me and some of the Macedonians to come and get it.

And what he says is he wants them to give joyfully, not reluctantly. That's why he wants to delay his coming. He doesn't want them to feel pressure. He doesn't want them to feel, oh, well, because he's here, we better give.

[4 : 05] So, that's why he delays. And the word he uses there for reluctantly is actually the original word greedy. So, it's a weird concept. He's saying, I don't want you to give greedily.

It's possible to give, but still be greedy. It's possible to give money and still do that in a greedy way by doing it reluctantly. When you give without really wanting to, you are giving greedily, and that is not the kind of giving God is looking for.

And so, in verse 7, he says, have a look, 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 giver. In other words, if you do not find pleasure in your giving, God will not find pleasure in your giving. And so, God wants you to enjoy giving, and that is what this passage is in the Bible for, I believe.

2 Corinthians chapter 9 gives you everything you need to become a cheerful giver, the type that God loves and wants of you.

[5 : 17] And so, listen carefully to what this chapter says, because every chapter in the Bible has been placed there and inspired to be written by God for our benefit. And we need everything that's written in the Bible.

Any chapter or passage that wasn't there, if it wasn't in the Bible, we would be missing something. And this is in the Bible, I believe, amongst other things, to help us to become cheerful givers.

And so, firstly, look with me at verse 10 and 11. Now, he who supplies seeds to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion. Let's just consider these verses, because many Christians have heard these verses before and often heard them taught like this.

Oh, you look, look what the Bible says, if you give money, you're going to get more. God promises you, look, look, it says, God will supply the increase to the store of seed.

[6 : 23] If you give of that seed, so, sorted, that's a great reason to give, isn't it? If you give, God promises to give you more. So, that's what these verses are often used to teach, which really is just encouraging a selfish motive for giving, again.

Saying, you know, give because God will give you more. In other words, do it because it's going to benefit your pocket. He will enrich you so that you can be generous. Now, the thing is, while the idea of God giving his money to people in order for them to give more, while that may be true for some people who are particularly good at stewarding God's money, who can manage money very well, and God certainly does see fit to give them more so that they can steward more of his money, that's not actually what this means.

That's not what Paul means here. The seed that God is going to increase to enable you to give cheerfully isn't necessarily your money. That's not just what the seed is that Paul's talking about.

Because, trust me, there are rich people who still do not give cheerfully, who have a lot of seed, but they're not cheerful givers. So, that's not what's going to enable you to give cheerfully.

Remember last week the illustration of the beer and the foam, and that no matter how much foam you have, in other words, no matter how much wealth you have, that's not going to cause it to overflow out of the glass if there's no fizz.

[7 : 48] And the fizz is our joy in God, and irrespective of the amount of foam we have, if we have fizz, it'll overflow. So, that's the idea. It's not the amount of money you have that's going to make you generous.

Often it's the reverse. The more money you have, the less generous you are. And so, what else besides money is the seed that God provides to us, which enables us to fizz up and give cheerfully?

Well, we find out if we simply just read the verse that Paul quotes from Isaiah 55 in its context, which is the passage we started today's service with. And then we see, if we read that, what the most important kind of seed that encourages us to generosity actually is.

So, if you have your finger open in Isaiah 55, turn there. But if you don't, just listen. I'm reading Isaiah 55 from verse 10 to 11.

So, Paul is quoting from Isaiah 55 when he mentions this seed and this bread that God gives. And then he talks about the seed in Corinthians. What is he talking about?

[8 : 51] Well, let's look at the context of Isaiah. It says this, And so, God's word is the seed in Isaiah.

You see, primarily, it's the truth that God's word gives us is what is going to harvest generosity within his people.

And it's going to create cheerful giving. Truth. Us knowing certain truths is what's going to enable us to be cheerful givers. It's through the truth that God enriches us.

And having truth is far greater than having any amount of money. If we have the truth that guides us to the things that God intends and guides us ultimately through the gospel to a new creation, that is much better than any kind of money we have.

But it also, that truth, that same truth that shows us the way to eternity and shows us the way to resurrection and eternal life, that same truth is going to enable us to be cheerful givers now, financially.

[10 : 20] And so, what I want to do this morning is look at three of these truths in this passage that, if you understand them, will make you spiritually rich and will turn you into a cheerful giver.

That's what my goal is now. To list three truths in this passage that will, if you listen to them and take them on board, with God's help, will turn you into a cheerful giver.

So, let's have a look at what they are. Firstly, the first truth. God alone, not money, provides true contentment. God, not money, provides true contentment.

So, look at verse 8. Paul says, 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.

Okay. The language in the NIV, which is what I've read from here, actually, which it sometimes does because it's attempting to use language to be clear. It's not a word-for-word translation like some of the more literal translations are, which makes it more readable.

[11 : 25] And that's why it's still, you know, a good translation. However, in this case, it loses an important word in the original, which is the word contentment. It's translated in that verse as having all that you need.

That phrase in English is just one word in the Greek. It's contentment. Having contentment. You will abound in every good work. And I think that's a poor translation because having all that you need is not the same as being content.

Am I right? Those are two different things. You can have all you need technically and still not be content. You can be rich and still not be content.

And yet, weirdly enough, people still think money can buy them contentment. And that's why they chase money, because they're not actually chasing money. I mean, what's the point of just having money?

What people are chasing money for is because they want to be content. They want to be satisfied. That's what people are chasing. And that's why they chase money, because they're actually looking for contentment.

[12 : 30] But of course, we know, don't we, that contentment is like the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. The closer you get to it, the further away it is. And that's because the reason why, no matter how much you chase contentment or no matter how much money you get to try to be content, it gets further and further away.

The reason is because contentment is not something that this world can give you. Contentment that we actually all seek is something that this world cannot give you.

In fact, all it does is give you the opposite. This world is programmed to make you discontented. Have you ever noticed how good Google is at advertising to you the things that they know that you want?

Have you noticed that? I don't know how it is, but when you're browsing the internet or something and these banners pop up, you go, what? I was only thinking about that in my head. And yet Google knows that I want it.

And it's trying to make you discontent. That's what advertising does. Marketing of products is all about creating needs. I studied business at university.

[13 : 45] And in our marketing program, the lecturer, one of the first things he said was, good advertising is creating needs that weren't there before. That's what he said to us.

And so marketing is all about deliberately making you discontent and then convincing you that spending money on this thing will give you the contentment that it's just taken away.

That's the science of advertising. To keep you discontent and get you spending more and more money. To seek the contentment that you think you can get and then you're made more and more discontent.

Like a hamster running on a wheel. Have you ever watched a hamster running on a wheel? It's the most hilarious thing. They think they're getting somewhere. And yet they're just staying still.

And yet they're putting in all this energy to run and run and run and run. And then they're getting nowhere. You know what? You look out in today's society, today's economy, people are doing the same thing. It's not called the rat race for no reason.

[14 : 43] People are running and running and running. Putting their energy in. Staying up late at night. Waking up early in the morning. Sitting in traffic to get more money. To get contentment. And yet they're still just staying in the same place.

They never achieve what they want. They're like hamsters running on a wheel. But you know what God does for his people? One of the many blessings he gives us is he breaks us out of that rat race.

He breaks us out of the trap of discontentment. Because he is the one who is able to give us the contentment this world can never give us. And I think so many people still, so many Christians still don't realize that about God.

We're running and we're going, God, I'll give you some time this week. When I've sought out the rest of this stuff and we're heading in this direction. He's going, I've got everything you're looking for. I've got everything you need in me, in relationship with me.

Just turn around and focus on what I can give you. And that's what God wants us to know. He can give us the contentment and the pleasures and the joys and the delight.

[15 : 45] That we are looking for everywhere else. Because we were made by him to delight ourselves in him. And find our ultimate satisfaction in him. And that's what Paul means here when he says, God is able to bless you abundantly.

With contentment. So that you will be, so that you will abound in every good work. What he means there is, when you realize your contentment is in God and not the world.

That frees you up to be able to give your money to more important things. Is the money you would otherwise be using to try and find satisfaction for yourself. In products and services this world tries to offer you.

God is able to bless you abundantly with contentment. So that you will abound in every good work. And Paul knows what he's talking about. He's speaking from experience. He did many good works.

Abounded in every good work for the kingdom. And he made many sacrifices. He was in a privileged position to start with. And he threw that all away for the kingdom. How was he able to do that?

[16 : 49] Well he tells us, you don't have to turn there. But in Philippians 4 he shares his secret. And he says it was the secret of being content in every situation. That's what freed him up to be such a powerful member of God's kingdom.

Such a powerful worker for God. Because he discovered the secret to contentment in every situation. Being rich or poor. Being well fed or hungry. And he, in that same chapter in Philippians 4.

He tells us where he got that contentment from. And it was primarily through prayer. And his relationship with the Lord. You know, it's the same chapter where that famous verse.

Do not be anxious about anything. But in every situation with prayer and petition. Present your requests to God. And the peace of God. Which transcends all understanding. Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. And then a few verses later he says.

So I've learnt the secret of being content. It's in his relationship with God. That he found the contentment that this world can't give. And being in a real relationship with God.

[17 : 52] Through Jesus. And what Jesus did to make that possible. By the way, if you're not a Christian. Your creator has made a way for you to have a real daily relationship with him.

And resurrection after you die. And eternal life. In a new perfect creation. Don't pass that up. It's the greatest thing. Which Jesus did by taking your sins on the cross.

And living out that relationship day to day. That is what gives human beings true contentment. And so it gives them the freedom to give of their money joyfully.

Because they realize they don't need their money to be content anymore. And once you realize you can find contentment in something that you don't have to buy. Suddenly it changes the way you look at money.

And your priorities. And how to use your money. And that's the first truth. You need to know this morning if you want to be a cheerful giver. Second truth.

[18 : 53] God provides the money we need to live. And the money we need to give. So look again at Paul's quote from Isaiah. And how he uses it.

If you don't turn to Isaiah. It will be on the screen behind me. Now he who supplies seed to the sower. And bread for food. So this is still Paul in 2 Corinthians. But he's quoting from Isaiah in verse 10.

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food. Will also supply and increase your store of seed. And will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way. So that you can become generous on every occasion.

So we've already seen earlier when we read these. The way God provides for his people to enable them to give. Is by providing truth in his word. But there's another meaning to the verse in Isaiah.

God supplies seed to the sower and bread for food. And that is just the plain meaning. Which is just as true. And it's another truth. That encourages us and helps us to be cheerful givers.

[19 : 50] The simple fact. That God. Is the source. And the provider. Of everything you have and enjoy in life. Materially. And even the ability that you have.

To earn a salary. To buy that stuff. Is from God. He provides the seed and the bread. The food you have on your table.

When you eat. Later tonight. Or tomorrow at supper time. The food you have on your table. Is not there. Because of your job.

Or your salary. Or your government grant. Or our economy. Or the agricultural sector. That food is there. Really. Because God decided to make a seed grow from the ground.

Which sprouted into food. He designed that. He enabled that. And he. Chemically constructed something. That your body needs. Because.

[20 : 48] He is a provider. That's what he does. He creates us deliberately with needs. So he created us to need food. But then he also. In the same creation that he created us.

Gave us all the food we need. He didn't have to create us with needs. He could have created us never to need to eat. But he didn't. Because he wanted to teach us firstly.

That he's our provider. He wanted to display something of his own character to us. And part of his character. Is that he's a provider. But he can't display that part of his character to us. If he didn't make us with things that we needed to be provided to us.

And so the very reason that we are created with needs. Is because God wanted to display a part of his character to us. Which is that he is a provider. And he wants us to believe that.

Now. How that food ended up in your table. Is the study of economics. But it came originally from God. Because he is a provider. And he loves providing for his creatures.

[21 : 48] And he loves his creatures. Trusting him for that provision. Psalm 145 verse 15. The eyes of all look to you. And you give them their food at the proper time. And so God's not going to stop providing for you.

Because you're doing what he wants. And giving. You know. Often people hesitate to give. Because they think at the back of their minds. Well giving is going to put me in a worse position. But you know.

You only have that thought. If you think that you are your provider. Not God. You only think that. That giving is going to put you in a worse position.

If you think it's up to you to look after yourself. And it's your job to make sure that you have what you need. Well it's not. That is God's job. Which is exactly what Jesus said in Matthew 6.

One of my favorite passages in the Bible. He says this. Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap. Or store away in barns. And yet your heavenly father feeds them.

[22 : 49] Are you not much more valuable than they? And then later on he says. So do not worry. Saying. What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink?

Or what shall we wear? For the pagans run after these things. And your heavenly father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom. And his righteousness.

And all these things will be given to you as well. Jesus says. So. I love the illustration he uses of birds. Because if you've ever watched a bird. Birds do what birds do.

What they were made to do. In God's creation. Which is to sing and look pretty. Basically. That's what birds were made to do. And then God makes sure that they have enough.

Not them. When they just do what they were made to do. God looks after them. Have you ever seen a bird putting in overtime at the bird feeder? No. Or have you ever seen a bird too busy.

[23 : 48] To sit and sing in a tree. Because he's got to make sure that his family has enough for the month. No. When birds just do what birds were made to do. Then God is the one who makes sure that they have enough.

Not them. And Jesus says. It should be the same with us. If we're in a relationship with God. When we do. What we were made to do.

Which is not to chase after money. We were made. To glorify God. By. Building his kingdom. And living righteous lives. When we do that.

Seek first his kingdom and righteousness. Then God makes sure we have enough to do that. And Jesus promises that. Then all these other things will be given to you as well. But notice.

In this passage. In Isaiah 55. God gives us not only enough to live on. But enough to give some away as well. So look at that interesting detail in Isaiah 55.

[24 : 47] God causes planet earth. To yield. Both seed for the sower. And bread for the eater. You know. Why didn't Isaiah just say. Or God through Isaiah.

Just say. You know. I give you bread from. From the ground. Why the seed as well. Well the bread is there to sustain you. It's your immediate needs. Your daily bread. But the seed is there for you.

To plant. You don't eat the seed. Unless you're a health freak. Because then apparently it's quite nutritious for you. But seed. The point of seed is not to give you immediate nutrition. The point of seed is to.

Is to plant somewhere else. And the same concept applies to our money. The money that God enables us to have. Month by month. No matter how much or little it is.

Includes both bread for us. Our immediate needs. And seed for us to plant in others. And so don't think by using the seed part of your money. For its purpose.

[25 : 44] That God's going to stop providing you the bread. In other words. Let me put it this way. You'll never be in danger of harming yourself. By giving too much. Because that's what God wants of you.

And God is your provider. And so by definition. You can't actually. Harm yourself by giving too much. Unless you believe that you are your provider. Which you're not.

God intends that you give. That's part of being. Who you were made to be. Not just an eater. But a sower. And when you are doing what God intends.

He has promised to give you what you need. And if you believe that. Then you can give cheerfully. So that's the second truth. That we need to know. In order to give cheerfully. And then there's one final truth in this passage.

That should help us to give cheerfully. And that is. Knowing that your giving. Will glorify God. Knowing. That your giving.

[26 : 41] Will glorify God. Look at verse 11. You will be enriched in every way. So that you can be generous on every occasion. And through us. Your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

The service that you perform. Is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people. But is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves.

Others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ. And for your generosity in sharing with them. And with everyone else. So look here. What Paul is saying here is that your giving will actually result in praise and thanksgiving to God.

And the first way that happens. The first way God is glorified through Christians giving. Is when that giving is used for kingdom work. Obviously. Obviously. So Paul says.

Through us. Your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. Note the through us. Through us. Paul and his colleagues. In the apostolic team. They are entrusted with the money.

[27 : 47] So that they can look after it. And use it wisely for kingdom purposes. Which in this case was to help the Jerusalem churches. And when that happens. When God's money is given.

And then looked after. And distributed by capable men for gospel purposes. Those who benefit from it. Will give God credit. And that's the idea. The idea is that we manage our money as a church.

In such a way. That we don't get the credit. But God gets the credit. And so when you give money to the church. As opposed to just giving it to some person in the street.

Which is not necessarily bad. But it might not be the best use of your money. Because you never know what that person is going to do with it. When you give money through the church. To God's work.

The church leadership will cause. And it's their job to cause. That money to cause people to give thanks to God. Whether it's the people who hear the gospel.

[28 : 44] Through the missionaries we support. Or people who read the gospel. Through the tracts we print. Or people who hear God's word. Through the teaching of this church. Or people who benefit from the church's social action programs.

And their lives are changed. Then they will thank God for that. Because we do those things in God's name. And God will be glorified. And what social action programs?

You might be asking. We'll hang around for our AVM later. But the point is. God is glorified when his people use his money. For kingdom work. Even though technically he doesn't need your money.

It's not like God is sitting hand. A hat in hand. Waiting for your generosity before he can do his work. It's all his anyway. And if you don't give. Someone else will. God will cause someone else to give. But rather.

Think of it this way. He has entrusted some of his seed money to you. In order to give you the privilege of planting it. Like with the Corinthians. That's what Paul was saying to the Corinthians.

[29 : 44] When he described seed. And he took that idea of the seed that God provides. From Isaiah 55. He said to the Corinthians. Well you know what your seed is. It's your surplus. It's the money that God's given you.

Over and above. What you need. And that money he gave you. To invest. In the growth of his kingdom. To invest. In others. And. God has given you that as a privilege.

Is what he's getting at. And so God doesn't need us to give. But he gives us. The privilege of being involved. In his kingdom work. In other words. He wants. To give you a way.

To be involved in other people. Glorifying him. Which is a privilege that. You don't realize how big a privilege it is. He doesn't have to. But he wants to. He wants to give you a way.

To be. Involved in other people. Glorifying him. So that one day. You can. Look back. On this short life.

[30 : 41] From eternity. And say. I invested in something that mattered. In that life. Something that counted. And God gave me.

The opportunity. To invest. In heavenly treasures. In something that counted for eternity. And not just my passing. Fleeting. Unsatisfied happiness.

In this life. But something bigger. Something more important. God gives us each the opportunity. To do that. When he gives us. Resources. So that's. Another way. God is glorified.

In your giving. Well. When you give. God is glorified. In your own life. Through you. Exercising that privilege. But also. There's another way.

God is glorified. In your giving. And that is. Because your giving. Is a sign. That you are content. In him. And that glorifies him. As. Pastor John Piper says.

[31 : 36] God is most glorified. In us. When we are most satisfied. In him. God is most glorified. In us. When we are most satisfied. In him.

What is the chief end of man? What is our purpose? To glorify God. And to do that. By enjoying him forever. Westminster Catechism.

Question one. Your pleasure in God. And your enjoyment. Of him. And your contentment. In him. That is how. You glorify him. You know.

We think. In order to glorify God. We have to. You know. Do all these great. Works. Out there. In the world. And of course. Those works. Do glorify God.

But you can start glorifying God. Right in your own heart. And in your own life. By finding your contentment. In him. And delighting in him. And enjoying him. That is how. The first and foremost way.

[32 : 34] That you glorify. God. And how you fulfill. Your purpose. As a human being. And giving. Where does giving fit into that? Well giving is. Proof.

Of your joy in God. And your contentment in him. Proof. To those around you. Proof to yourself. And it's a. It's a. It's a display to God. That you find. It's a declaration to God.

That you're content. And satisfied in him. It's saying. You're so. Content in him. That you don't need. Anything more than he sees. Fit to give you. And so.

It's an act of praise. Giving is actually. Itself. A form of worship. That's why we. Pass the bags around. On a Sunday. It's because it's a. It's a sacred. Act of worship.

But. You know. As I said last week. Bag. The bags that go around. On a Sunday. Aren't the primary way. We encourage people to give. I mean. You've got to set up. Giving. Financially. Through EFTs. Or whatever. The most convenient way.

[33 : 29] To give it. But. It's part of our worship. As well. And. Pass the bags around. And giving. Is not just. A convenient way. To get money. In fact. It's a very inconvenient way.

We've got to count it. And bank it. And cash. And you know. It's much easier. To do it another way. But we include it. In part of our service. Because it's an act of worship. And it's a reminder to us. Giving is actually.

It's worshiping God. It's telling him. My contentment is in you. Not in my money. Which I'm happy to give away. For your purposes. That's the next way. That giving glorifies God.

And then finally. Before we finish. Which I'm going to do. In a few moments. Don't worry. Finally. Giving glorifies God. Because it embodies. The kingdom that is coming.

Let me explain what I mean. When we give. It displays. What the new world. Is going to be like. It displays a little bit of it.

[34 : 24] Generosity within. God's people. Acts as a kind of a trailer. Or a preview. Of the coming kingdom. What's coming. When Jesus returns. And he establishes his kingdom.

Over all the earth. Once and for all. So remember. Isaiah 55. Which Paul quotes from. What's interesting. I got Adrian to read.

The whole passage. This morning. From Isaiah 55. And I hope you were listening. A little bit. Because. In the context. Of that chapter. It is actually. Anticipating the age to come.

Let me. Remind you. Of what it says. It starts. By describing. A world. Where no one. Will be in need. Imagine that. Imagine a world. Where there is. Everyone has what they need.

Your. And it says this. Come. All. Who are thirsty. Come to the waters. And you. Who have no money. Come buy and eat.

[35 : 19] Come buy wine and milk. Without money. And without cost. You know. Wine and milk. For an Israelite. In the desert. That wasn't just necessities. That was luxuries. And so.

God. Through Isaiah. Is describing a world. Where everybody. Will have not only. What they need. But what they want. Where. Every. Every need. And every desire. Is satisfied. A world.

That is restored. To what it should be. So Isaiah 55. Ends with these words. Instead of the thorn bush. Will grow the juniper. And instead of briars. The myrtle will grow. If you like gardening.

That is good news. But we. We know. And if you're. If you. If you're a gardener. You will know. We're not in that world yet. We suffer the effects.

Of brokenness. Both in nature. As well as. In our society. And in our economy. And especially. In our country. The poverty. And the broken homes.

[36 : 16] And the economic scarcity. And the unemployment. Are all just signs. That we are not. In that world. That God intends for us. But you see. As God's people. Who have that.

Sure hope. Through Jesus Christ. Of that world to come. As we give. As we. Direct God's money. To meet some of those. Needs. That have been created.

Because of the brokenness. In our world. Well then we. In effect. Are doing. You know what we're doing. When we do that. When we give towards. Healing some of the brokenness. Of course. We can't heal at all.

But it's so important. That we still do. What we can. Because when we do that. We are actually. Doing a form. Of what Jesus did. When he healed people. Of their brokenness.

Do you notice. If you read the gospels. When Jesus came. Which he told his disciples. Primarily to preach. And teach. That did not stop him. From healing diseases. From restoring sight.

[37 : 10] To the blind. From healing. Lame people. From restoring. Healing brokenness. When he encountered it. Because that was. A foreshadowing.

Of the coming kingdom. And it backed up. What he was preaching. And so it's the same. With us. When we. Work to heal. The brokenness. That we come across.

As God's people. We are foreshadowing. The coming kingdom. And we are pointing people. To where they can find. True and permanent restoration. And you know what. When we do that. They will actually start. Listening to what we have to say.

And as we look after each other. Within the church. And ensure that there are none among us. Who are in dire need. And we prove our love for one another. In that. Then we are foreshadowing God's kingdom.

Within the church. And that's how the world will know. That we are his people. His disciples. And then he will be greatly glorified in us. As we show how satisfied we are in him. Through our giving.

[38 : 08] As we give cheerfully. Let's pray that God will. Help us to do that. Amen. Yes Lord. We thank you for this chapter. That you have inspired to be written.

By the apostle Paul. And we thank you that it does provide us. With what we need. To be cheerful givers. As you are looking for. And so we pray Lord.

That you would help us. To let these truths. That we've heard this morning. Sink in. And stay. In our hearts. So that we will.

Grow to be. Givers. But not just givers. Cheerful givers. That we will enjoy. The opportunity. To be involved. In other people. Coming to know you.

And glorifying you. Through our giving. Thank you for this great privilege. Help us. To take advantage of it. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Amen.