

## The Greatness of Giving Our Time - Talent – Treasure

### 1.1.17

(Matthew 6:1-4), (Mark 12:38-40)

"Be especially careful when you are trying to be good so that you don't make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won't be applauding.

When you do something for someone else, don't call attention to yourself. You've seen them in action, I'm sure – play actors I call them – treating a prayer meeting and a street corner alike as a stage, acting compassionate as long as someone is watching, playing to the crowds. They get applause, true, but that's all they get. When you help someone out, don't think about how it looks. Just do it - quietly and unobtrusively.

That is the way your God, who conceived you in love, working behind the scenes, helps you out. (THE MESSAGE)

"Be careful not to parade your acts of tzedakah in front of people in order to be seen by them! If you do, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So, when you do tzedakah, don't announce it with trumpets to win people's praise, like

the hypocrites in the synagogues and on the streets. Yes! I tell you, they have their reward already! But you, when you do tzedakah, don't even let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Then your tzedakah will be in secret; and your Father, who sees what you do in secret, will reward you."

(Complete Jewish Bible)

### Biblical Principles of Time - Talent - Treasure

Jesus taught the radical and revolutionary Galileans alongside the Sea of Galilee about how the old law would finally be made complete through a new covenant with God. He speaks to a people who are ready for a new message of a new kingdom - and they got it. That of course was two thousand years ago, and Jesus gave that message in person. Today, Jesus speaks directly to us in these four dynamic verses, and in these four verses there is one point, and in this one point there are three eternal truths. Because there are four verses, one point, and three truths I named this teaching a few years ago, "The 413".

## 4 Verses

"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do -blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you." (NLT)

## 1 Point

Always Do What We Do for God:

Do it for Love

Do it for Free

Do it for Real

Do it Then Keep it a Secret

### 3 Truths

As part of the kingdom of God, whatever we give (whether it is time, talent, or treasure), we must give with a sincere heart, so that it may be pleasing to God, and a blessing to men. Then and only then can our giving be a good (righteous) gift.

As part of the kingdom of God, whatever we give (whether it is time, talent, or treasure), we must have the right motive in our heart, so that it may be pleasing to God, and a blessing to men. Then and only then can our giving be an honorable (righteous) gift.

As part of the kingdom of God, whatever we give (whether it is time, talent, or treasure), we must give it from our heart as worship to God - to be seen only by God, so that it may be pleasing to Him, and a blessing to men. Then and only then can our giving be a faithful (righteous) gift.

## Conclusion

Give and do good to show how great God is - not to be told how great you are.

Give and serve from a humble heart - not from a heart that craves recognition and reward.

Don't just act good – find the heart of Jesus, and be good.

Don't claw, scratch, plot and scheme for notoriety and greatness – love, serve, give and forgive in faithfulness and humility.

It is never the right thing - to use the goodness of a God thing - to build the fame, fortune, and greatness of a man thing.

Find a new place and a new way to share the goodness of God with all that is in your heart - under the radar, off the grid, lower-profile, behind the scenes, backstage and behind closed doors,

without the pride and without the ego, clean heart, clear mind,  
free-form and pure-flow.

The reward for giving to God and to others of our time-talent-treasure is the life, love, and mercy of Jesus. Is there anything richer? Is there anything better? Is there anything more alive than living the 413 - living in the will and pleasure of God?

# The Meaning of Giving Our Time - Talent – Treasure

1.8.17

## Introduction

What is the meaning of life?

Does my life have meaning?

Big human existence questions that have been asked since by men and women since the beginning. This could get so deep so fast that we all could drown in a bucket of water. So, I am going to be very logical, practical, and biblical and keep us all afloat. Those two questions either become literally overwhelming, or they eventually find shape and form - in which case we have our answer to both questions. For us Christians the shape becomes God, and the form becomes faith. It is our time – talent – treasure that God uses in our life to bring meaning and to make a difference while we are here to get us ready for there...

Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

## Making the Case for Meaning

Last week we made the case for the greatness of giving our time – talent – treasure to God and His service of Him and others. This week I want to explore the meaning to giving our time – talent – treasure. Finding meaning to our lives and what we do with them has been the driving force behind both the mission and achievement of mankind forever – this has not changed. In context, finding the meaning of giving our time – talent – treasure



to God and others will become the release we need to move ahead and become obedient in giving our best to God and those we love the most.

The majority of us want to live a life pleasing to God – with a kind heart, a good deed, and a right mind towards everyone. The majority of us also want to believe that we can do something with our lives that will make a difference for our world, our families, our church, and for ourselves. We want to know that what we do and how we live is meaningful and not meaningless - that it will last. We ask ourselves, will my life have mattered?

The short and feel good answer to all of these questions of course is YES! Yes, our lives are meaningful. Yes, our lives can make a difference for our world, our families, our church, and for ourselves. And yes, our having lived here on this earth will have mattered.

The longer and “this is more difficult to feel good” answer is also of course Yes! But, YES with a mission, YES with a message, and Yes with a commitment to honoring God.

I believe that we can answer these questions today, and I believe that those answers can be found with logical thinking, in practical places, and by applying biblical truths to our time – our talent – and to our treasure.

To begin, we start with the end - the end of this life, and the beginning of the next life. So, we ask ourselves, “what do I need to be in this life, so that my life will have meaning beyond this life”? Listen to the words of Jesus in John’s biography, and the Epistles of His disciples Peter and John...

John 6:39-40

**For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.**

John 10:27-29

**My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.**

1 Peter 1:23-25

For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God. As the Scriptures say, People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the word of the Lord remains forever.

1 John 2:17

And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

What we are hearing is that if we give our life to Creator God, if we live our life to serve and to do the will of Eternal God, then our life does not end. Who we were and what we did will go on and will make a difference not only in this life, but certainly the life to come. From this biblical truth, we have an answer to the meaning of life. Those who truly seek truth discover that the meaning of life takes on the shape of God – He is life. Creator, Maker, Giver, Resurrection and Eternal. Find God – find meaning - find life.

The next piece to this is to find meaning to our time – talent – treasure. A wonderfully gifted and talented friend of mine used to sing a song many years ago that said, “only what you do for Christ will last.” I loved the song and I loved him, but when I was young it did not have the same meaning to me as it does today. Then I was inspired by a friend that I admired and believed in, and because the words meant something to him they meant something to me. He inspired me with his message, but he gave my life meaning with his time – talent – and with his treasure. I had already dreamed that my life would be given to serve God and others but because he invested in me and others like me I was determined that I would make my life last by serving Christ with my time – my talent – my treasure. And now forty years later those words not only comfort and bring peace to me – they have given my life meaning. That nothing that I have done for God or others is meaningless but rather it is meaningful. In the end (which is the beginning) who I am, and what I have done for Christ will last.

Matthew 6:19-21

**Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay**

up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Colossians 3:22-24

Serve them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord. Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there

is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, A the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all C who have loved his appearing.

What we are hearing is that our time – talent – treasure can be used in our life to not only make a difference in the outcome of the lives others, but to make a difference in the outcome of our own. From this biblical truth, we have an answer for using our time – talent – treasure to mean something both world (this and the next). Those who truly seek truth discover that God will most certainly use our time – talent – treasure (if given to Him) to create meaning in life that takes on the form of faith. Faith – creates life.

1.15.17

The Value of Giving our Time

Subtitle: Dispelling the Theory that Time Can Fly

Ecclesiastes 3:1-5

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. ESV

Ephesians 5:15-17

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. So, do

not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ESV

## Introduction

**We all have time.** In spite of our full schedules, over commitments, and the unrealistic expectations of our time - there is still time. When we sit down and make an honest evaluation of our time we usually find that it is probably our use or abuse of our time that is more the problem than merely that we do not have any. Yet each moment, of every minute, hour, day, week, month, and year seems more limited and fleeting than at any time before.

If our time is limited, fleeting, or if time actually "flies" as they say, then how important is it that you and I learn to value and practice our time, by giving it to what is most valuable to God and the lives of those that we love? If time in this life is truly only a vapor, or flashing before our face then we should ask ourselves how important it is for us to not only maximize (wise use of our time) not only our own time, but the time of others, and of course the time we have with those we love the most. These kinds of questions are fairly intense for an ordinary Sunday morning gathering, but because of our time and the



significance of what we do with it, we can agree it is time that we ask these questions and answer them with God's truth.

## What We Know About the Value of Giving Our Time

We know – God values time – even though He Himself is outside of time.

2 Peter 3:8-9

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ESV

We know that God values time as a means to accomplish His plans and purposes in our lives.

2 Peter 3:9-14

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth

and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ESV

We know that God values the use of our time to seek and to serve Him and others.

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Rom 12:6-18

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ESV

## Conclusion

My challenge for us the beginning of a new year is this. Can we begin a

dialogue that focuses on the giving and stewardship of our time? Let's begin conversation between ourselves and God, and a conversation within the community at Reunion that reminds us of the importance of giving our time to God and to others. We could begin that conversation with this question.

**Are we generously giving our time to God, or are we selfishly giving God's time to ourselves?**

Here are some talking points for that conversation not with God, but among ourselves here at Reunion.

### **Valued Time for Worship**

- Personal Devotion and Growth of Faith
- Personal Service and Commitment to the Worshipping Community

### **Valued Time for Serving and Leading Family**

- Spiritual Leadership and Lifestyle in the Home

- Leadership in Service and Commitment to the Loving Community

### **Valued Time for Service of Others**

- Biblical Leadership in Compassionate Service of Others
- Personal Participation and Commitment to the Serving Community

1.22.17

The Joy of Giving our Talent

Sub-Title - Reunion's Got Talent

Luke 12:48

Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

1 Timothy 4:11-16

Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

## Introduction

We all have different talents and abilities! We all have special gifts, talents, and abilities given to us by our Heavenly Father. When we were born, we brought these gifts, talents, and abilities with us. The bible is filled with stories of men and women who were either naturally talented, or developed their talent and then generously and obediently gave those talents and gifts back to God and to the service of His Kingdom.

As a young man, Joseph was a leader whose brothers were jealous of his talent and gifts. However, as Joseph continued obediently to give his visionary talents and gifts of architecture, engineering, and design to God and to others he brought joy to not only millions of people, but eventually to his brothers as well. Moses was gifted and talented but was reluctant with his talent, eventually God persuaded him to use his talents and gifts to free and lead His people. King David was wildly talented - he could sing, play music, dance, hunt, and fight as a warrior poet. He inspired, ministered, and brought joy and healing by generously giving those talents to God.

Some of us can sing well or play an instrument. Others of us may be good in sports or able to work well with our hands. Other talents might be spiritually centered such as understanding others, patience, cheerfulness, warmth, welcome, and hospitality, or the ability to teach and share wisdom with others.

1 Corinthians 12:4-8

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

### Using and Improving Our Talents Brings Joy

To use our talents and gifts for the encouragement and pleasure of others is pleasing to God. God uses our obedience in giving and developing our talent and gifts to bring joy into not only our own life, but the lives of countless others as well. We have a responsibility to develop the talents gifts we have been given. Sometimes we are paralyzed with fearful or limited thinking about



our abilities and shortcomings. We too often compare ourselves to celebrities and high profile personalities, saying to ourselves "I'll never be able be like that!" So instead of moving forward to develop, grow and share our talents and gifts we pull back from our dream and talent and in reality, we eventually lose our joy! We focus far too often on what we can't do instead of what we can do – and that in itself steals from us (and others) of the much-needed joy of the Lord.

Yes, I agree, some people are more talented, and have more gifts than you or I do in some regard. But, you need to hear this today. God has uniquely talented and gifted me in ways that no one else can take or diminish. And when I generously and obediently share those gifts and talents with God and His people, I am filled with His joy, and I am certain He uses my talents and gifts to bring joy to all those around me! You are different me from only in that your gifts and talents are uniquely distinct from mine! That is God's design.

The truth remains - the joy that comes to you and others when you share and give your unique talents in service to God is unmistakable and undeniable!

Sometimes we do not use our talents because we are afraid that we might fail or be criticized by others. We should not hide our talents. We should use them. Then others can see our good works and glorify our Heavenly Father.

Matthew 5:14-16

**You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**

Obviously, there are certain things we must do to develop our talents so that we can and should share them. Here are some practice steps to help us get going so that we can begin to experience and share the joy of the Lord in our lives!

**One** - we must discover our talents. We should evaluate ourselves to find our strengths and abilities. Our family, church community, and friends can help us do this. We should also ask our Heavenly Father to help us discover and learn about how to best use our talents for Him.

**Two** - we must be willing to spend the time and effort to develop the talent we are seeking. This takes some commitment and some discipline on our part. Don't think for a moment that the enemy wants this kind of breakthrough in your life and the lives of those you love. This move forward will change lives – including your own. Time to stop procrastinating and sitting on the sidelines!

**Three** - we must have faith that our Heavenly Father will help us, and we must have some faith in ourselves. The scripture says that you are God's delight. He chose you, He saved you, He loves you, and now He wants to use you to fill your life and the lives of others with joy unspeakable!

**Four** - we must learn the skills necessary for us to develop our talents. We might do this by taking a class, special training, lessons, asking a friend to teach us, or by reading an instructional and educational book (not Wikipedia or Google) – a real book.

**Five** - we must practice using our talent. Every talent takes effort and work to develop. The mastery of a talent must be earned. Even naturally gifted people must practice to make sure that they are capable, sharp, and ever improving their talent and gifts. Count the cost and then be willing to pay the price!

**Six** - we must share our talent with others. This is **not** optional for us Christians – this is expected and commanded. We will be held accountable for not only **what we do** - but for **what we did not do**. It is by our using our talents that they grow and bring the joy. All of these things are do-able if we pray and seek God's help. He wants us to develop our talents – that is why He gave them. ...**HE WILL HELP US**

## Matthew 25:14-19

For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had

received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.'

## The Power of Giving our Treasure

1.29.17

Proverbs 11:24-25

One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered. ESV

Matthew 6:19-25

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 12:13-16

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "**Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?**" And he said to them,

"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

2 Corinthians 9:6-13

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.



## Introduction

We will conclude this series on Time - Talent - Treasure this morning during what we like to call our community Sunday. I believe this the perfect setting for sharing the words of biblical truth regarding our attitude and heart towards giving to God what we value most. Most of us have come to understand just how powerful the concepts of a generous heart can be within the dynamics of attempting to live out our faith before God and others, all the while wanting to be successful at making a difference with our lives, and with our families. We want to make our life count for something - right? Over the last couple of weeks we have talked openly and honestly about the **"value of giving our time"** and the **"joy of giving our talent"** to God and to others. Together, we have found that these principles have real meaning and add real purpose to the life of anyone who will faithfully use them. Not to not only our life, but as we have learned, to the lives of many others as well.

Today, we will talk about the **"power of giving our treasure"** to God and to others. I believe that God's word will teach us that there is substantial power added to the lives of those who will give generously of their treasure to God and to others. I also

believe that we will clearly be able to see that by rejecting this biblical truth, our lives can also lack meaning, and we can end up living an entire lifetime powerless to influence and make a difference with our life and the lives of others. Let's start with a conversation that Jesus once had with a wealthy and well educated young man who wanted to follow Jesus and become part of His movement. If you want, you can find the story in the gospels of either Matthew 19, Mark 10, or Luke 18.

Luke 18:18-24

A young ruler asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "**Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'**" And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "**One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.**" But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.

This guy seemed to have what it would take to be a top disciple. Educated, religious, successful, confident, great skill set - it seemed like the perfect resume. Somewhere however, in his heart and character there was a flaw. Obviously he had the power and the ability to do many things, but Jesus only asked him to do one thing. He asked him to do the one thing he wouldn't do. And because he would not - that left him powerless to change his life, and life of others.

"Jesus never asks us to give what we can't give, only what we won't give. Therein lies the power to change the outcome of our life..."

### Three Powerful Treasure Questions

**Starting Point** - What is My Treasure?

**Experience Point** - How is My Treasure Changing My Life and the Lives of Others?

**Finish Point** - Did I Give the Best of My Treasure That I Could Give?

## **Conclusion**

Do you want the power to change the outcome of your life? Of course you do - and so do I! And because this truth we have the practical tools available to supernaturally change not only our life, but the lives of hundreds of people around us! The idea of giving our treasure is not God taking our treasure from us - but rather it is God giving a treasure to us! When we faithfully and graciously live obediently in this truth we are empowered in life, we have power for life, and power to make us ready for the new life!

2 Corinthians 9:6-13

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has

distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.