

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, December 9, 2020 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



**PRACTICING RADICAL GENEROSITY**  
*Matthew 6:1-4*

**READ: Matthew 6:1-4**

*"<sup>1</sup>Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly." –Matthew 6:1-4 (NKJV)*

*"<sup>1</sup>Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. –Matthew 6:1-4 (NIV)*

*"<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. <sup>4</sup>Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. –Matthew 6:1-4 (NLT)*

***How can a genuine believer in Jesus Christ today... a true Christian, truly have an impact on this tough, hard world we live in? What possible influence could the people described in Scripture as "poor in spirit," "meek," "humble," "thirsty," "mourners," "merciful,"***

*“persecuted” (see the Beatitudes) exert in a society overrun with competitive, aggressive, stubborn, often hostile individual?*

***“Before you can impact the life of another for Christ, you must have been impacted by Christ in a personal and life-changing way”*** You can’t be a world changer if your world hasn’t been changed by Him to start with. Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” actually teaches us how we may impact our world and the lives of those around us for Christ. We have been adding these important keys to impacting your world from Jesus’s sermon. Let’s review where we’ve been and add another one in our study as we proceed through Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount.” Here are 8 important keys to impacting your world...

### **8 Important Keys to Impacting Your World: (From the Sermon on the Mount)**

1. To impact your world for Christ you must **KNOW CHRIST PERSONALLY** = *Matthew 5:1-12, “The Beatitudes”*
2. To impact your world for Christ you must **REFLECT CHRIST** to the **WORLD** (others) = *Matthew 5:13-16, “Salt and Light”*
3. To impact your world for Christ you must **LEARN** to **LIVE** by the **WORD** of God daily = *Matthew 5:17-21, “Fulfilling and Living by the Word”*
4. To impact your world for Christ you must **RIGHTLY RELATE** to **OTHERS** = *Matthew 5:22ff*
5. To impact your world for Christ you must **GUARD YOUR HEART** = *Matthew 5:27-30*
6. To impact your world for Christ you must **BUILD STRONG CHRIST- CENTERED MARRIAGES AND HOMES** = *Matthew 5:31-32*
7. To impact your world for Christ you must **LIVE A LIFE OF INTEGRITY** = *Matthew 5:33-48*
8. To impact your world for Christ you must **PRACTICE RADICAL GENEROSITY** = *Matthew 6:1-4*

### ***How can we live lives of radical generosity?***

God is a giver...

- He gave his only begotten Son to die for the sins of the world.
- Not only that, he gives us life, breath, sunshine, rain, and everything else. As his children, we should be givers as well.
- The previous verse of **Matthew 5:48** says, ***“...be perfect, just your Father in heaven is perfect.”***
- Christ teaches on giving right after calling us to be perfect like our Father.
- Therefore, one of the ways we should aim to be perfect like our Heavenly Father is by generous giving.

In this section of the Sermon on the Mount, Christ again confronts the error of the religious leaders. ***In Matthew 5:20-48, he confronted their misinterpretations of the law. They lessened God’s commands on areas like murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, loving one’s neighbor, etc.*** In Chapter 6, he confronts the wrong manner in which they did their acts of righteousness: giving, praying, and fasting. The entire context follows Christ’s strong words in Matthew 5:20 that if our righteousness doesn’t surpass that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, we will not enter the

kingdom of heaven. Therefore, Christ is warning his followers to bear fruits that match their kingdom citizenship.

In Matthew 6:1-4, Christ teaches principles about how to live radically generous lives that resemble God and please him... and will have a tremendous impact on our world for Christ. How? How does our practice of radical generosity as Jesus calls us to in His “Sermon on the Mount” impact our world for Christ.

**3 Ways Radical Generosity May Impact our World for Christ:** *These are not exclusive (the only three ways our generosity may impact our world), but they are three of the biggest ways that the practice of radical generosity in the life of a believer as Jesus describes in Matthew 6:1-4 may impact world and the lives of others.*

1. **It reflects Christ to the world** – Our radical generosity reflects Jesus Christ, who radically gave His all, even His very life for us, and not when we deserved it or were favorable toward Him, but when we were at our worst and enemies (at odds) with Christ/God. Romans 5:8 says it, “*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for (gave Himself for) us.*” One of the most distinct attributes of God/Christ is giving.
2. **It ministers grace and mercy to others** – Especially the principles of giving as laid out by Jesus in our passage (that we will be exploring in this particular study), may be life changing for the recipients of that kind of giving and generosity. It may actually draw others to Christ. Think of this, when the world “gives” it often expects something in return. We say “nothing is free or without strings attached.” That is the way of the world. Jesus gives of Himself in this radical way that doesn’t expect anything in return... He just gives. His love is that way! He gives love “unconditionally”... “no matter what you do I’m going to keep giving you love.” He gives grace that way... grace is the “unmerited” “undeserved” “unearned” favor of God. He gives mercy that way... in mercy you don’t get what you deserve. Listen, that is life changing for those who have been touched by the grace and mercy of Christ, even by extension through those who live for Him and practice radical giving of themselves and their resources.
3. **It provides the means to reach others for Christ** – Of course, we know that through the radical generosity and giving of Christians/believers the work of the ministry is able to be made possible, to go forward and happen. A good example of that would be the “Lottie Moon Christmas Offering” or “Operation Christmas Child.” We see and know practical examples of this all the time in the church. Listen we couldn’t continue to do ministry and serve as we do without the faithful and even radical giving of the saints.

And all of that is, at least in part, what Jesus is talking about in this section of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:1-4. Let me say it again, in Matthew 6:1-4, Christ teaches principles about how to live radically generous lives that resemble God and please him... and will have a tremendous impact on our world for Christ. *Big Question:* In Matthew 6:1-4, what principles can be discerned about living a radically generous life? Let’s look at these

## **PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING A RADICALLY GENEROUS LIFE**

Let me give these to you... I think we can find at least 3 principles through the teaching of Christ in Matthew 6:1-4 for living a radically generous life as Christians.

### 3 Principles for Living a Radically Generous Life:

1. **Believers must practice giving as a spiritual discipline** – Notice verses 1-2 again, *“<sup>1</sup>Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.”* Did you notice what the first part of **verse 2** says, *“Therefore, when you do a charitable deed...”* Or “Thus whenever you do charitable giving...” How does your Bible translate the first part of verse 2?

**A Good Question:** *What does the fact that Christ says “when you do a charitable deed...” or whenever you do charitable giving” imply about his expectation of his followers?*

The fact that Christ says “when you do a charitable deed (or give)” and not “if you do charitable giving” implies that God expects believers to give and be generous like him.

This was clearly commanded in the OT law. For example in **Leviticus 25:35-36** the Bible says, *“<sup>5</sup> If one of your brethren becomes poor, and <sup>[a]</sup>falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. <sup>36</sup> Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your God, that your brother may live with you.”* Or in Deuteronomy 15:11, *“<sup>11</sup> For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.’”* In fact, many rabbis over-emphasized the need to give—taking the doctrine above Scriptural boundaries. Some taught that giving would actually atone for one’s sins. This is taught within the Apocrypha, which was written during the intertestamental period before the writing of the New Testament.

God certainly commands and expects his people to give generously. And it not in order to secure our salvation... that would be a salvation based on works (what we do). We are not saved by what we do (work), including the good deed to giving, even generously so and helping others. We are saved by these our generosity, but it is certainly a clear testimony of a believers heart and faith. Christ taught that this righteousness will be in kingdom citizens.

➡ Giving will be their consistent practice and discipline. ***The Greek word for “give” actually means an act or deed of mercy.<sup>1</sup>***

Since believers received mercy from God in their salvation, they will be known for showing acts of mercy to others (see Matthew 5:7). Let me just stop here and give you what I believe are some general principles for Christian giving?

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#### **Some general principles for Christian giving:**

***(1) Christian giving naturally happens when Christ is truly first in our life - In 2 Corinthians 8:2-5 (NIV), Paul describes how the poor Macedonian Christians financially***

<sup>1</sup> Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian counter-culture* (p. 128). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

supported the struggling Jerusalem church. Look at it there with me beginning in verse 2, *“<sup>2</sup> That in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. <sup>3</sup> For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, <sup>4</sup> imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. <sup>5</sup> And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.”* Though the Macedonian churches were extremely poor themselves, they begged Paul to allow them to support their brothers in Jerusalem. Therefore, radical generosity is not primarily rooted in what we have but who we have.

➡ Paul said they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to others. If God isn't first in our lives, then we won't be generous givers. Instead, we will be selfish—concerned primarily with our personal benefit. Are you giving yourself fully to the Lord—your time, money, goals, and aspirations? If not, you won't be radically generous.

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(2) **Christian giving should be planned and intentional—not haphazard** – Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.”* The fact that we must decide in our heart implies that our giving should be prayerfully and wisely planned. ***Here is a good question or you? What should our planned giving include?***

- **Our plan for giving should include regular offerings to our local church ministry** - 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 says, *“<sup>1</sup> Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: <sup>2</sup> On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”* Paul taught that every time they gathered on Sunday, in keeping with their income, they should set aside money to give. We should do the same. As the Lord provides income, whether that be every two weeks or once a month, we should prayerfully give to the ministries of our local church.
- **Our plan for giving should include setting aside money for the urgent needs of others** - Paul says in Ephesians 4:28, *“Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”* Don't you love that? Having something to share with those in need seems to be above one's regular giving to the church. These needs might include helping a student go on a mission trip, helping somebody who is struggling financially, supporting an orphanage, or even responding to a world catastrophe. People often ask me, “Can I give my offerings to other ministries or needs instead of to my church?” I always say, “Do both!” God also commands us to help those in need, which is often random. Again, Ephesians 4:28 implies that we should plan to be able to meet those needs. It is good to put in one's budget regular church offerings and also flexible money for random needs. If there are no random needs, then give that money to the church or save it for when other needs occur. Certainly, it is good to regularly support outside ministries that care for the poor or send missionaries; however, it shouldn't replace our giving to our local church. It should be above that giving. God calls for our giving to be decided in the heart; therefore, it must be prayerfully and wisely planned.

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(3) **Christian giving must be offered with a joyful heart** - As mentioned in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity: for*



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*God loves a cheerful giver.*” God wants our giving to be done with a right heart—one of joy—since he loves a cheerful giver. It should not be out of reluctance or compulsion—God doesn’t need our money. He wants our worship. I always say it, “God doesn’t need our money as much as we need to give it!” Therefore, we must be joyful in our giving; this joy comes from our desire to please our Father and help others.

(4) ***Christian giving should be sacrificial*** - Throughout the Old Testament, we see that God commanded people to bring their best. They were not to bring the lame or diseased lamb (cf. Mal 1:8); they were to offer the lamb without blemish (Ex 12:5). We should also always offer our best. In fact, that seems to be the reason Cain’s offering was rejected while Abel’s was accepted. Genesis 4 says Cain gave some of the fruits of his field, while Abel gave the fat portions of the firstborn of his flock. The firstborn and the fat portions were considered the best in those days. Cain’s was rejected while Abel’s was received. Cain wanted the best part for himself—there was no sacrifice in his life. That is how a lot of our offerings are given in the church today. There is no real sacrifice—there is no heart that says, “God, you are the best and worth more than I can offer!” In 2 Samuel 24:24, David said, *“I will not offer to the Lord my God burnt sacrifices that cost me nothing.”* Is your giving sacrificial? Or are you just giving “some” of the fruit of your field—like Cain—the left-over change in your pocket? God wants our best. Our giving must be sacrificial.

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(5) ***Christian giving should ideally be continually increased*** – Listen to what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:7, *“<sup>7</sup> But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.”* Often churches emphasize giving one’s tithe—10% of our income—which was commanded in the Old Testament. Though I think this is a good percentage to begin our giving at, it is never commanded in the New Covenant. The epistles commonly emphasize how we are no longer under the Old Covenant (Rom 6:14, 7:6). We are not bound to practice the food laws, the sabbath days, etc. Many laws continue, but not because we are under the Old Covenant, but because they are repeated in the New Covenant. In the New Testament, there are never any numerical percentages required of our giving. However, we do have teachings like 2 Corinthians 8:7 which says we must seek to excel in giving. This means 10% is a great place to start, but if we stay there we are not obeying the New Covenant. We should seek to excel in our giving. 1 Corinthians 16:2 says we should give according to “the extent that God has blessed you” or it can be translated, “in keeping with how he prospers” (HCSB). This means that many people should be giving way more than 10% because the Lord has prospered them so much. Instead of getting a new phone, new car, or new house, when their finances increase, they should seek to excel in their giving. Are you striving to excel in your giving?

Christ said, *“when you give”* not *“if you give.”* Our giving is expected, and therefore it should be a regularly practiced spiritual discipline. Okay, here is the second principle for living a radically generous life...

2. **Believers Must Guard Against Wrong Motives in Their Giving** – Notice again, Jesus words in in our passage (vv.1-4), *“<sup>1</sup>Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the*

hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.<sup>3</sup> But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,<sup>4</sup> that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.” In Matthew 6:1, Christ warns his disciples to not practice their righteous deeds in front of others to be seen by them. In the rest of Matthew 6, he focuses not only on giving but praying and fasting—two other works God expects believers to practice. The phrase “take heed,” or you Bible may say “be careful” has the sense of “being on guard.”<sup>2</sup>

**NOTE:** *There is a danger that comes along with all kinds of ministry. It is hard not to perform them without concerns about what people think about us or how they perceive our ministry. This is a virtual stronghold for many who serve in public ministry. It can cause great discouragement or great pride. Both are problems, as they are symptoms that prove our ministry is not being done for God alone.*

Christ warns us of this reality, and we must heed it well. Seeking the praise of others instead of God was the primary sin of the Pharisees and scribes. John 12:43 said, “they loved praise from men more than praise from God.” Christ called them “hypocrites.” The word literally means “to wear a mask” and was used of an actor.<sup>3</sup> An actor takes on a false identity and puts on a theatrical performance in order to receive applause.

Sadly, that is how a lot of Christian works are done—preaching, teaching, praying, and, as mentioned in this passage, giving. Christ describes how the hypocrites would sound the trumpet so that all would know they are giving to the poor. John Calvin speculated that maybe they did this under the guise of calling for the poor.<sup>4</sup> In considering the trumpets, we don’t know if Christ was being literal or metaphorical. Either way, his point was that these people wanted everybody to hear and see. They essentially cried out: “Look at how much I am giving! Look at how sacrificial and holy I am!”

We must be very careful of this in our ministries. It is sad that something so good as giving to the poor can be turned into a PR stunt that is all for our benefit. However, this is natural to our sin nature—it is consumed with self-glory.

**A Good Question:** **How can we know if we are doing our giving and other good works to be seen by others instead of for God?** We can tell by asking ourselves some pointed questions:

<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew* (pp. 353–354). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>3</sup> Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian counter-culture* (p. 129). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>4</sup> Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian counter-culture* (pp. 128–129). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

**How can we know if we are doing our giving and other good works to be seen by others instead of for God? Ask yourself...**

- (1) **Is it important for others to see or hear about our good works and accomplishments?** Do we always have to tell others about our successes? If so, maybe the pride of the Pharisees is in our hearts.
- (2) **How do we respond when others praise us?** Are we overly excited? Does that excitement feed us? Is it our primary motivation for finding our passion in our giving, serving, ministry? If so, maybe it reveals a desire for self-glory.
- (3) **How do we respond when people criticize us or don't recognize our accomplishments?** Does this overly discourage us or even make us upset? If so, our focus might not primarily be on serving God and blessing others

Certainly, all of us have experienced these negative tendencies in some way. It is a reminder that we are sinners, and that we must always guard our hearts (Prov 4:23). God's honor and pleasure must always be our primary pursuit, even before the benefit of others.

**Another Good Question:** How should believers guard their hearts from wrong motives in their giving and other good works according to Matthew 6:2-4? Notice what Jesus said in verses 2-4 in our passage, <sup>2</sup> *Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.* <sup>3</sup> *But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,* <sup>4</sup> *that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.* Why?

**2 ways to guard your heart from wrong motives in your giving and other good works:**

- (1) ***To guard our hearts from wrong motives in our good works, we must practice secrecy when performing them*** - Christ said to not announce them with trumpets (v. 2). We must aim to practice our good works and giving in secret. Now it is not a sin for others to see; many times, we cannot avoid being seen. Christ said a city on a hill cannot be hidden, in referring to believers being the light of the world (Matt 5:14-16). The problem is our hearts are prone to being consumed with the thoughts and approval of others instead of the Lord's. So as much as possible, we should practice secrecy in our giving and other good deeds. With our giving, we should try not to tell others—God's knowledge of our works is enough. With other ministry successes, we should also keep those a secret, unless we deem it more beneficial for others to know. Paul didn't share many of his visions and spiritual experiences until it was absolutely necessary and beneficial for others to hear (2 Cor 12). He didn't want them to think too highly of him (12:6).
- (2) ***To guard our hearts from wrong motives in our good works, we must practice immediately forgetting what we've done by not self-consciously dwelling on them*** - When Christ says to not let our left hand know what our right hand is doing, since most people are right-handed, he assumes most will give with their right hands. While giving, one should make sure the left hand is unaware of what the right hand is doing. He uses this metaphor to say that we should even hide our good works from ourselves. The point is that even though others might be unaware of our good works, many times we are still self-conscious of them. We continually replay our giving, teaching, serving, and other



good works over and over in our head—leading either to pride or insecurity. We either puff ourselves up—thinking how great we are—or we get really discouraged because we think we failed. Both of these thought processes reflect that our primary goal in serving is not honoring the Lord and bringing him glory. It is too easy for ourselves and our own approval to become the focus of our good deeds, instead of God. This was exactly how the Pharisees and scribes did their good works. In Luke 18:11-12, a Pharisee, who was praying, continually boasted before the Lord, “Thank you, Lord, that I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get” (paraphrase). Though his works weren’t currently in front of others, they gave him great pride, as he boasted before the Lord about them. When practicing our good works, we must be careful of being self-conscious. **Prepare, do your best to honor the Lord and help others, but entrust the results and glory to God.** Certainly, there is a place for constructive reflection and evaluation, so we can improve in order to better honor God and bless others. But after doing that briefly, we should forget our works (Phil 3:13)—lest they turn into a boast or an insecurity, which are both rooted in pride.

Christ said those who do their works for others to see have received their reward (v. 2). The “have” used here, or “have received” in other versions, is a commercial term meaning to “receive a sum in full and give a receipt for it.”<sup>5</sup> It meant that they will receive nothing else. Their reward is the congratulations of others or their self-congratulations, but they will receive nothing from God. In performing good deeds, including our giving, we must be satisfied with God being our only witness and having only his approval.

**A Good Question:** Why is seeking the approval of others such a danger for those serving in ministry? How have you experienced the sinful propensity to be “self-conscious” over our good works—making them essentially about us instead of God? What are common fruits of being self-conscious in our life and ministry? How can we guard ourselves against the tendencies of seeking the approval of others or our own approval in ministry?

3. **Believers Must Pursue God’s Reward for Selfless Giving** – Jesus says in verse 4, “*that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.*” Finally, Christ encourages his listeners to practice secrecy in their giving because it will be rewarded by God. This is taught throughout the entire Bible, as giving is part of the Lord’s cycle of blessing.<sup>6</sup> Consider some of the following verses:
  - **Proverbs 11:25** - **“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”** God promises refreshment to those who refresh others by their generosity. When they open their homes for others, or give sacrificially, the same will happen to them.

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<sup>5</sup> Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian counter-culture* (pp. 129–130). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>6</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew* (p. 358). Chicago: Moody Press.

- **Psalm 41:1** - *"Blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble."* Those who care for the poor and struggling, God will deliver in times of trouble. What they do for others, God will do for them.
- **2 Corinthians 9:8** - *"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."*

The promise is twofold...

**2 Fold Promise of 2 Corinthians 9:8:**

- (1) **God will make sure givers never lack** - This promise is probably broader than just financial provisions; it could also refer to God meeting their emotional, social, and physical needs.
- (2) **God will make them abound in every good work** - If God can trust us with money, he can trust us with reaching souls, understanding and teaching the Bible, caring for the poor, etc. He will increase the righteousness of givers.

Paul reinforces this in **2 Corinthians 9:10** When he says, *"Now God who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your supply of seed and will cause the harvest of your righteousness to grow."*

As a general principle, our effectiveness in ministry correlates to our faithfulness and generosity with God's money. In **Luke 16:10-11**, Christ said it this way: *"The one who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and the one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you haven't been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will entrust you with the true riches?"* "True riches" don't just apply to righteous works on earth, but eternal riches in heaven. In **Luke 19**, the reward for those who were faithful with God's minas was ruling over cities in the coming kingdom. **John MacArthur's** comments on the correlation between the faithful use of finances and ministry are helpful. He says, *"Many young men have dropped out of seminary because they could not handle money, and the Lord did not want them in His ministry. Others have begun in the ministry but later dropped out for the same reason. Still others remain in the ministry but produce little fruit because God will not commit the care of eternal souls to them when they cannot even manage their own finances. Spiritual influences and effectiveness have a lot to do with how well finances are handled."*<sup>7</sup>

Are you being a radical giver? If so, God will radically reward you and that reward includes provisions on earth and expanded righteousness both in heaven and on earth. Those who sow sparingly will also reap sparingly and those who sow generously will reap generously (2 Cor 9:6). How is God calling you to be a radical giver?

**A Good Question:** What promises stood out to you most when considering the reward for givers? How have you seen the principle of giving and receiving at work in your life—either negatively or positively (cf. Mal 3:8-12)?

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<sup>7</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew* (Vol. 1, p. 359). Chicago: Moody Press.

**CONCLUSION**

The members of Christ's kingdom will be radical givers. Their righteousness will surpass that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. What are some principles about practicing radical generosity?

**3 Key Principles for Living a Radically Generous Life:**

- 1. Believers Must Practice Giving as a Spiritual Discipline**
- 2. Believers Must Guard Against Wrong Motives in Their Giving**
- 3. Believers Must Pursue God's Reward for Selfless Giving**