



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 2

Week two of the *It All Belongs to God* series had us diving more deeply into the Law of the Harvest. This Biblically-based principle has been so abused over the years that we tend to want to leave it alone. It's the idea that the more generously we sow, the more plentiful the harvest will be. It's not a get-rich-quick scheme, rather it is a law of generosity. When we are generous, our eyes begin to see the fruit that God desires for us to see. May you respond to your times of study and prayer with a spirit of generosity that leads to joy and blessing. Open your hands, open your hearts, open your eyes to see it!

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: 2 CORINTHIANS 9.6-11

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.⁷ 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.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.⁹ As it is written:

*"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever."*

¹⁰ *Now 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.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.*

- There is so much to unpack in this message from Paul to the believers in Corinth. It comes after a reminder of the church's faithfulness in raising an offering that helped the Gospel of Jesus Christ reach more people. Once again, the audience would have fully understood the agricultural metaphor he used. The more seed you sow, the more likely you are to see a strong harvest. One or

two kernels do not often result in a field of wheat with left-overs for the poor. But Paul also places the decision of generosity not in the minds of the people, but leaves it to their hearts (v 7). **Have you ever wrestled with a decision around generosity? Was your heart willing to give before your mind was ready to see the resources go?**

- *Jesus, I want to see your Gospel spread to every person in every nation. May the gifts that I give for that purpose be given from my heart with joy! Amen.*

TUESDAY: GALATIANS 6.7-8

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

- Scholars point out that Paul was most likely defending his request for an offering against the claims of other leaders who had tried to discredit him. The offering was meant to fund the ongoing mission of the young church across the region and centered in Jerusalem. There will always be multiple demands placed on our resources. **There is no shortage of people or groups ready to accept your money. This simple (but challenging) question can help us to discern the godliness of our giving: Are you giving to please the flesh or to please the Spirit of God?**
- *God, will you keep the flesh-or-Spirit lens before me so that I might internalize it and discern the nature of my gifts to your good work in the world. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: EPHESIANS 3.20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- When we try to measure the impact of our faithful giving, we will always fall short. God can do immeasurably more than our imagination will allow us to anticipate or reflect upon. God's glory surrounds us in our humanity—we are God's creation. The church as the body of Christ hosts the glory of God and will do so for ever and ever. Paul uses these words as a benediction to this teaching. Whatever you do as a follower of Jesus and whatever happens in this broken world, you are contributing to a movement far greater than yourself. **Name a time when your imagination in God was stretched to capacity.**
- *God, thank you for calling me to dream big dreams for your Kingdom, AND thank you for working way beyond my vision. Amen.*

THURSDAY: PHILIPPIANS 4.14-19

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.¹⁵ Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.¹⁷ Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account.¹⁸ I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

- Generosity is noticeable. So is a lack of generosity. Paul was expressing his joy and gratitude for the gifts of the Philippians while pointing out that he had everything he needed. The additional

gifts are like a fragrant offering before God. **Have you ever felt compelled to give an over-and-above offering or gift to someone? Did you find joy in giving the gift? Have you ever been the recipient of such a gift?**

- *God, I want to be a part of such a movement that my gifts stretch far beyond my awareness and are a blessing to generations to come. Amen.*

FRIDAY: LUKE 6.37-38

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

- This may be the simplest recording of this teaching. *Give, and it will be given to you.* The principle shared by Pastor Jacob this week can lead us to live lives of expectancy with no fear of scarcity. The more you sow, the larger the harvest will be. The gift given is pressed down to make room for more blessings! Picture a measuring cup with grain that is pressed down and shaken together. **When have the blessings in your life seemed to be “running over”?**
- *Jesus, I commit to generously pouring out gifts in response to you regardless of the space I’m pouring into, because I know, with you, there is always room for more! Amen.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 90.12-14

*Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

¹³ *Relent, LORD! How long will it be?
Have compassion on your servants.*

¹⁴ *Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,
that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.*

- The times we are most likely to succumb to a scarcity mindset are those when we are under stress (cue the pandemic toilet paper reference!). We hunker down and hoard. We can become so obsessed with our own survival that we lose sight of God’s design for our lives. As bad as it gets, we have faith that God will *satisfy us in the morning with [His] unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.* It is God’s harvest that will sustain us and provide everything we need. **In what circumstances have you been tempted to say something like, “Relent, Lord!” Have you ever gone to bed carrying a heavy hunger or burden that was met by God first thing in the morning?**
- *God, you satisfy every longing in my life with your great love for me. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob asked, “do you want to live a life with a scarcity mentality? or an abundant kind of life? It will not be found in storing up, but in pouring out. You decide what that means for you and then do it cheerfully.”

- What examples of the scarcity mentality do you see in the world around you?
- Who around you is living an “abundant kind of life”? How do you measure that abundance?
- As you reflect on the past week, would you say you spend more time and energy “storing up” or “pouring out”?
- How do you move from reluctance to cheerful in your giving?