

# May 18, 2003 Pm

by Stephen Fenton

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*God's generosity in our lives should motivate us to be cheerful givers, not expecting something in return, but because of his goodness and love.*

**Duration:** 6:49

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Mark 5:19, Luke 6:38, Romans 12:8, 2 Corinthians 8:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6, 1 John 4:19

**Topics:** "Generous Giving", "Stewardship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of generosity and sharing God's blessings with others. He highlights the story of the demoniac of the Gadarenes, who was instructed by Jesus to go home and tell others about what God had done for him. The preacher connects this concept of generosity to our finances, stating that it is not just about money but about deeper things. He also mentions the cheerful givers who serve in the church and encourages the congregation to be cheerful givers in all aspects of their lives.

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## Transcript

We've been in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 over the last few weeks speaking about the grace that God works in our lives when he causes us to want to give. Everything in our lives as New Testament Christians comes out of God's goodness toward us. We give because he has given and worked and blessed in our souls.

There's no other reason. There's no other compulsion to give other than his goodness. And he sets in our hearts, as truly we know him, a burning torch of generosity so that our hearts want to overflow.

And it's not just finances. It's in every way. We long to pour out our praises.

We long to pour out our service. We long to be good to others. We long to take every opportunity to share the generosity that is being shared with us.

That's what grace is all about. That's why you want to tell other people about Jesus. That's why he simply said to those whom he had rescued, particularly the demoniac of the Gadarenes, now you just go home and tell others what God has done for you.

Go home and share the generosity with other people who need it. It's not just about money. In fact, it's really not much about money at all.

It's about much deeper things than that. But it connects to our finances. And I don't want to go over all of that ground again tonight, but I want to come back to the end of chapter 9 and do a little bit of an overlap from where we were because we thought about this generosity and how generous God has been to us.

We have thought about it again tonight. We thought about it last week. We thought about it again tonight.

And I just want to point out to you in closing in this chapter, the results of God's generosity and that generosity that pours out through us. The results. One of the things that Paul makes very plain in 2 Corinthians and in chapter 9 and in verse 6 is that as we're generous, God is generous back.

Now, that's not why we give. Let's establish that. It's amazing how crass and how materialistic and how shallow Christians can be, but sometimes Christians make it about this.

They give to God so that he'll give back to them. What is that? That's not about grace. It's about greed.

It's not what it's about for us. Paul says in verse 6, remember this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

God gets excited when we get generous. And it's not just about our finances. When we get generous with our love, God gets excited.

When we reach out and go out of our way to pour out love on someone else, God gets excited and he loves us back. When we get excited about the things that he gives us to express, like our musical talents, then he gives back blessing. When we started this morning, I was just overwhelmed with the music.

And I bless the Lord for a group of people who give themselves consistently week after week, month after month. But you know what? If you were to ask any single one of them, it is not a burden. They're up there because they love to do it.

And that's only one place you can serve the Lord, but they love to do it. It's a joy. If it's a burden, then eventually the Lord will take them out of there because he loves cheerful givers.

Chad's always encouraging us. He did it tonight before we went up. He said, let's practice.

He's always encouraging us to be cheerful givers in our music. The reason they're not smiling sometimes is they're concentrating so hard. Bless them.

And they just need to pray that they'll relax and even make their mistakes and grin again. Because that's good for us when we do that. But they're cheerful givers, even though they may not look like it.

It's like Kevin when he was going to Ukraine last week. He's so steady, Kevin. And he said, this is me excited.

Cheerful givers. Judy, on the other hand, could hardly contain herself. I went in to see Judy the other day on the day before they left, and she's ready to burst.

She didn't know if she'd make it to the next day. She was that excited. Cheerful givers.

It's not a burden. You went down this morning to see the kids. If you had opportunity to do that.

There are people who are there who don't want to be there. They're not cheerful givers. They're cranky.

But you also meet people down there who cheerfully give. And you know, their challenge is deeper in many ways because they're not seen. We're up here enjoying the message and the worship and watching God work.

And they're down there taking care of our kids, teaching them, blessing them, giving to them. It's not a burden though. Such a neat thing to meet a few weeks ago with some of the teachers who are involved in that.

And just listen to their generosity of spirit. How excited they were. How willing they were.

See, Karen this morning, she's going to be mad at me now because I talk about her. See, you're dressed up. I don't know what she was dressed up as.

She was going to Egypt. She's all dressed up as an Egyptian. We didn't see that.

Kids got to see that. Generosity of spirit. And the thing is, when you sow in that way, you reap back.

That's not why we do it. We don't. We don't do it for that reason.

God has already blessed us so richly. What more do we need? How much more could he give us? Sometimes he gives us so much more we could burst.

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