



GROUPS LESSON | WEEK 4

Sermon: February 1, 2026

CONTRIBUTING TO THE KINGDOM: SOWING TO GAIN GROUND (2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-11)

Sowing generously today ensures a Kingdom harvest tomorrow; generosity is God's strategy for gaining ground.

HOOK

MAIN POINT: *Sowing generously today ensures a Kingdom harvest tomorrow; generosity is God's strategy for gaining ground.*

In the final days of baseball's dead ball era (prior to the meteoric rise of Babe Ruth), the 1919 Chicago White Sox took the field against the Cincinnati Reds in a best-of-nine World Series. The fix was in. Eight Chicago players, infamously referred to as the "Black Sox," participated in an effort to intentionally lose and throw the series to the tune of \$80,000 (\$1.5m today). Unsurprisingly, the heavily favored Sox lost the series 5 games to 3. The details of the scandal began to drip out shortly after. Every player that participated in the greed received a lifetime ban from baseball, including Shoeless Joe Jackson, who was on the trajectory to be immortalized in the Hall of Fame.

The players who worked with gamblers to create the fix showed their true heart towards baseball. They played not for a love of the game, but with hopes of enriching themselves. Not only did they miss out on the reward of a championship (and the bonuses that would have come with it), but they missed out on the opportunity to ever compete on the field again.

As Christ-followers, greed is one of the key temptations that can hold us back from contributing to Kingdom efforts and being a part of what God is doing through his Church. The Church, which God has preserved for 2000 years, will continue on without us, but it should be our desire to sow generously and reap the spiritual rewards of being part of the victorious team of Christ. We don't want to miss out on what the Lord is doing!

MAIN POINT: Sowing generously today ensures a Kingdom harvest tomorrow; generosity is God's strategy for gaining ground.

Talking Point 1: Good stewards sow bountifully

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

- Q: What is a steward?

A steward is someone who has been entrusted with the responsibility of managing someone else's possessions or affairs. Biblically, stewardship refers to the truth that everything belongs to God, and therefore all of us that partake in life are, in some sense, stewards. Throughout the New Testament, we see the concept of stewardship applied in a variety of ways:

- Jesus tells "the parable of the talents", centered around a master that entrusted various amounts of wealth to three different servants. Two of the servants were good stewards of the wealth and received a reward when the master returned. One servant was a bad steward and paid the price (Matthew 25:14-30).
- Paul was entrusted with the stewardship of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1-7).
- All Christians have been entrusted with gifts, which are meant to build up and strengthen the church, when stewarded properly (1 Peter 4:10).
- The early church felt it incumbent to steward their finances in such a way that no one would ever be in need (Acts 2:45) and steward their time and space in such a way that they would regularly break bread together in homes (Acts 2:46). As a result, God continued to entrust more people into their stewardship by way of salvation (Acts 2:47).

The immediate context in 2 Corinthians 9 is financial stewardship. Paul uses a familiar agricultural illustration to describe the relationship between God, man, and money. He describes the good steward as someone who "sows bountifully" rather than reluctantly, "for God loves a cheerful giver." The concept of sowing seeds into the ground implies a harvest at some point down the road. This is a passage that can easily be twisted by false teachers to suggest that if you sow money today, you'll be rich tomorrow. Paul says no such thing. The blessings received at the harvest are not necessarily monetary. The Christian should not give with an expectation of accumulating wealth, but rather he should be motivated by a deep love and passion for God, his Church, and advancing his Kingdom plan of redemption.

We will discuss more on the harvest and the blessings that one "reaps" later on. In verse 7, Paul really calls out those in the church that give out of obligation rather than obedience—there is a difference. Obligation knows what they're supposed to do but refuses to orient their heart around why they do it. Obedience follows through out of a love for the Lord even when it would be more comfortable and convenient not to.

- Q: What does it look like to "reap bountifully" if it is more than mere financial gain?
- Q: Why does Paul specifically call out the reluctant giver? If they are giving regardless, why does he care?

Read: Galatians 6:7-9

Note that Paul applies “sowing” and “reaping” to more than just financial giving. He applies it to Christian living. In other words, the righteous follower of Christ will be rewarded, and the wicked will deal with the consequences of their wickedness. Again, the reward is far greater than cash value.

- Q: Apart from financial giving, what might it look like to “sow to the Spirit”?

Talking Point 2: Good stewards live righteously and make a lasting impact

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:8-9

Paul presents an essential truth in verse 8—God is the source of our sufficiency. We have been entrusted by God with the breath of life itself. How will we steward that? The multitudes steward life as they please, appeasing their own desires, seeking sufficiency in the things of the world. But the sanctified, set apart, remnant of Christ is called to steward life in such a way that it glorifies God. God lavishes his grace upon us, as evidenced by the truth that we have what we need to survive, and that he allows us to have another day as his stewards. What will we do with what he has provided?

- Q: How did you “steward” your life before you became a Christ follower?
- Q: What does it look like to “abound in every good work”?

Verse 9 provides a critical answer to that second question. Paul pulls this quote from Psalm 112:9. Psalm 112 describes the activity and heart of a godly man, and verse 9 provides us with a key attribute of his godliness—his generosity. Then, we see the effect of his generosity in the fact that “his righteousness endures forever.” The indication is that the man that sows righteousness will reap eternal life, but also that his generosity will have an impact beyond his days.

Together, verses 8 and 9 show us that because we serve a God who has entrusted us with life and provides our every need, we should be motivated to give sacrificially, knowing that the one who sacrificed his own life for us has secured our place in eternity.

- Q: In what way does generosity today make a lasting impact?
- Q: According to these verses, what is the connection between God’s grace and our giving?

Talking Point 3: Good stewards depend on God for the harvest

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:10-11

One of the most intriguing Bible moments that these words from Paul invoke is that of Joseph storing grain (Genesis 41). It must have been confusing to the people of Egypt who only consumed what they needed during seven years of incredible harvest. Joseph restricted the human tendency of indulgence in order to save the grain, knowing that seven years of famine were coming. In the latter seven years, Joseph did not simply distribute the grain to as many in Egypt as he could. Rather, the world came to them, seeking salvation from the famine, including his own brothers. God entrusted Joseph with a position of power and with an abundance of food. He stewarded it in such a way that he got to be part of God blessing the

nations and restoring relationships.

When God “multiplies” our seed for sowing, and “increases” the harvest, and we are “enriched in every way” it is by no means for our own personal gain. This principle of generosity exists for the advancement of his Kingdom, not our own. The human tendency of greed will be to give in hopes of gaining, but a biblical understanding of stewardship shows that we give in hopes of giving more. Understand that this is not a hard-and-fast financial rule. In Joseph’s case, God supplied the seed for seven years and then shut it off for seven. This was not because Joseph was unrighteous, but it was a test of Joseph’s stewardship, a path for redemption to occur among the house of Israel, and a way for God to be honored among the nations. Our stewardship, our generosity, is not actually about us.

God is sovereign over all. The harvest depends on him. He blesses us with the responsibility of working the field, and he gives us the seeds to plant. But he provides the rain and sprouts the fruit.

- Q: How have you seen God supply the seed and bread?
- Q: Where in this principle of generosity is it easiest to get off track? Why?
- Q: Why does generosity lead us to thanksgiving?



MAIN POINT: Sowing generously today ensures a Kingdom harvest tomorrow; generosity is God’s strategy for gaining ground.

Spend a few minutes discussing the practical applications of today’s passage:

- Q: In what ways does Gaining Ground represent generosity for our community?
- Q: Where can you “sow” for the Kingdom? (think beyond just financially)
- Q: Who is an individual or a family that you can be generous to this week?

Spend the last few moments praying that God would break down any mental or emotional hurdles that might prevent you from willingly and cheerfully giving.