

Grace and Giving

I. The Basis of Abundant Life: We Have A Good Father!

A. Our Father Has Good Plans for Our Future

[Jer 29:11 NIV](#) For I know the **plans I have for you,**" declares the LORD, "plans to **prosper (SHALOM)** you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

[3 John 2 NAS](#) Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as **your soul prospers.**

Prosper — Go well, by led in a good way

It's a **wholesome way of thinking, feeling, deciding** about life, health, money, ... It reflects **Who** He Is and **How** He Is.

[Eph 5:1 ESV](#) Therefore be imitators of God as **beloved children. 2** And **walk in love,** as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

RIGHTEOUSNESS — Wholeness of Relationship

[Matt 6:25 NKJ](#) "Therefore I say to you, **do not worry** about your **life,** what you will **eat** or what you will **drink;** nor about your body, **what you will put on.** ... [26](#) Look at the birds of the air, ...Are you not of more value than they? [28](#) Consider the lilies... [31](#) Therefore **do not worry,** ...

[33](#) But seek first the **kingdom** of God and His **righteousness,** and all these things shall be added to you.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RELATIONAL — That which maintains wholeness in relationship. Good Relationship & Plans

The **Essence of Sin is Separation** from our Good Father! **Taking ourselves TOO seriously.** Trying to make it on our own. The Orphan.

WORRY (FEAR) & ORPHAN AT ANY AGE!

Greg Laurie — There was an older lady who was determined to be prepared if she ever felt physically threatened. So she signed up for a training course on using handguns, and completed it. One day after shopping, she returned to her car and found four men inside it. She immediately dropped her shopping bags, drew out her handgun and screamed, "I have a gun, and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!" The four men quickly got out and ran away.

Somewhat shaken, the lady loaded her bags and got into the car. But she wasn't able to get her key into the ignition. It slowly dawned on her that her similar car was parked several spaces away. So she did what she had to do. She loaded her bags into her own car and drove to the police station to turn herself in.

The desk sergeant nearly fell off his chair laughing. He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four men were reporting a carjacking by an old woman with thick glasses and curly white hair, carrying a large handgun. No charges were filed.

Like the old lady in this story, we all have a tendency to want to keep and defend what we think is ours.

THE PATTERN OF LOVE AND BLESSING

Isa 51:1 NKJ "**Listen** to Me, you who **follow after righteousness**,

You who **seek the LORD**:

Look to the rock from which you were hewn,

And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug.

2 **Look** to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you;

For I called him alone,

And **blessed** him and **increased** him."

The **Blessing of God on Abrahams life reveals His heart toward us!**

Eph 1:3 ESV Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing** in the heavenly places,

II. A GRACE OF GIVING

1. Grace is the ABILITY of God given, not earned!

[John 1:14 NKJV](#) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth**.... [16](#) And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

2. Grace liberates us from every bondage!

[Eph 2:8 NIV](#) For it is by **grace you have been saved**, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — [9](#) not by works, so that no one can boast.

3. There is a Grace of Generosity

[2 Cor 8:7 NIV](#) But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — see that you also excel in this **grace of giving**.

III. First Fruits

A. Given at the Beginning (Tithe after the Harvest)

1. Through Firstfruits we sanctify our whole life and all we love.

[Rom 11:16 NIV](#) If the part of the dough offered as **firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy**; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

2. It's a Pattern not Legalism - We honor the King of Kings with the First and the Best

3. Giving is Sowing

[2 Cor 9:6-7 NIV](#) Remember this: Whoever **sows** sparingly will also **reap** sparingly, and whoever **sows** generously will also **reap** generously. [7](#) Each man should **give** what he has decided in his heart to **give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

The seed we sow connects our lives to the soil of God's love.

You can't eat dirt, yet all our food comes from dirt. The life in the seed can grow and capture the power of the Sun, transforming dirt and water into food, into clothing, into housing, into fuel !

Apple seed -- not just an apple, but a tree that gives for years and year!

4. The Measure is proportional.

[Luke 6:38 NKJV](#) Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the **same measure** that you use, it will be **measured back** to you."

This is very personal. The same **measure** I use, is how it is measured back to me!

5. Our Giving Releases God's Creative Ability

[2 Cor 9:8 NKJ](#) And **God is able** to make all grace abound **toward you**, that **you**, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

God works with what we have!

Don't let what you don't have overrule what you do have!

[2 Cor 8:12 NIV](#) For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable **according to what one has**, not according to what he does not have.

OUR TESTIMONY — 1977 starving ... increased our giving

Be thankful and begin to use what you do have!

V. Conclusion

PRAY FOR A REVELATION OF DIVINE LOVE

Healing the Orphan Heart