

Cheerful Giver

Being a Cheerful Giver

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Genesis 4:1–7 NLT

Now Adam had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the Lord’s help, I have produced a man!” Later, she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

“Why are you so angry?” the Lord asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

2 Corinthians 9:6–11 NLT

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. *You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.”* And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. As the Scriptures say, *“They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever.”*

For God is the one who *provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat*. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.

Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.

1 Timothy 6:9–10 NLT

But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

1. Like the farmer determining how much to plant, our giving is an indication of our heart towards (or away) from God.

Proverbs 22:9 NLT

Blessed are those who are generous, because they feed the poor.

Proverbs 22:9 ESV

Whoever has a bountiful [good] eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.

2. A “cheerful giver” has a “good eye,” recognizing the needs, doing what they can to meet those needs, and receives the blessing of God.

Psalms 112:1–10 NLT

Praise the Lord! How joyful are those who fear the Lord and delight in obeying his commands. Their children will be successful everywhere; an entire generation of godly people will be blessed. ³ They themselves will be wealthy, and their good deeds will last forever.

Light shines in the darkness for the godly. They are generous, compassionate, and righteous. Good comes to those who lend money generously and conduct their business fairly. Such people will not be overcome by evil. Those who are righteous will be long remembered. They do not fear bad news; they confidently trust the Lord to care for them. They are confident and fearless and can face their foes triumphantly. They share freely and give generously to those in need. Their good deeds will be remembered forever. They will have influence and honor. The wicked will see this and be infuriated. They will grind their teeth in anger; they will slink away, their hopes thwarted.

Matthew 6:19–21 NLT

Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

3. God desires to partner with us in tending to the needs around us. This gives us true identity and purpose AND eternal rewards.

Isaiah 55:10 NLT

The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry.

4. When you have a “good eye,” it is impossible to out-give God. The generosity becomes a planted seed, bringing an even greater harvest of generosity.

Small Group Guide: Being a Cheerful Giver

Opening Question:

When you think about giving, what words or feelings come to mind? Do you find it easy or challenging to give cheerfully? Why?

The Heart of Generosity

Our attitude toward giving reveals a lot about our heart's view of God. The Bible teaches that true generosity is rooted in seeing needs with "a good eye"—a willingness to recognize and respond sacrificially to others' needs. A cheerful giver is one who gives joyfully because they see the needs around them and partner with God's purpose.

God is the ultimate giver, and the way we give reflects our trust and heart toward Him. Abel's offering was accepted because of the heart behind it—God desires our hearts more than our gifts. Paul encourages us to adopt a heavenly perspective, storing up treasures in heaven by practicing generosity here on earth. Our acts of kindness and giving have eternal significance; they are remembered forever and influence others both now and in eternity.

God's generosity is never outdone; when we give cheerfully, we become part of His divine cycle of blessing and multiplication. This isn't just about giving money—it's about partnering with God's ongoing work in the world. NT Wright beautifully explains, "Everything we give and do is an act of worship that glorifies God and makes His kingdom more visible. When we give cheerfully and generously, we participate in the divine provision, and God's kingdom expands in and through us."* This perspective transforms giving from an obligation into a joyful expression of our trust and love for God.

Understanding that everything belongs to God helps us release the grip of materialism. When we recognize that our resources are ultimately His, giving becomes an act of worship—placing our trust in God's provision rather than in our possessions. Genuine cheerfulness in giving flows from a heart that believes God's promise to supply all our needs, and that our generosity can make an eternal difference.

For Discussion:

1. What does having a “good eye”—seeing needs with compassion—look like in your everyday life? How can you practice this?
2. NT Wright says, **“When we give cheerfully and generously, we participate in the divine provision and God's kingdom expands in and through us.”** How does this idea encourage you to view your resources differently?
3. How can you develop a joyful and trusting attitude toward giving, especially when it requires sacrifice?