



Advent, Part 3

Grace for the Giver

If you have a Bible—and I hope you do—let me invite you to open to 2 Corinthians 8. It's good to be together with God's Word. We're in the middle of an Advent series, thinking about the coming of Jesus as we anticipate Christmas a week and a half from now.

Today we come to 2 Corinthians 8:9 that talks about Jesus' coming in a way that totally transforms the way we view money. As soon as I use that word "money," I realize I am walking on delicate ground. I know there are some guests here with us today—maybe friends or family members or others who are exploring Christianity—and immediately some of you might think, "Of course. All churches talk about is money." Others who are Christians may be tempted to think the same thing.

Most of us, if we're honest, don't really want to talk about money. We want to spend our money the way we think is best. We don't even like the idea of a conversation about how we should approach finances. The reality is there's a reason for that. Our money is pretty close to our hearts. We wouldn't say that, but Jesus said that. *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:21).

So whether we want to admit it or not, our hearts are pretty intertwined with our money, which makes this pretty delicate ground. All the more so in a month when we in the church are challenging each other to give at the end of this year in greater ways than we've given all year. My prayer is that in the next few minutes, this delicate ground will turn into delightful ground. My prayer is that in the next few minutes, through the power of God's Word, we might see that it's actually really good to talk about money. It's really good for us, it's really for others and it's really good for the glory of God.

What I aim to show you in the next few minutes is that the coming of Jesus radically changes our perspective on giving, including giving money. Advent—the celebration of the coming of Christ—radically, totally, completely and wonderfully changes our perspective on giving and money. I want to invite you to read this verse with me. It's one of the most beautiful verses in all the Bible describing the coming of Jesus. Let's read 2 Corinthians 8:9 together: *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."*

What a verse! Look at the grace of Jesus. He was rich. He had all the good heaven could offer, yet He chose to put on a robe of humanity and become a man—a baby, a screaming, crying, hungry, tired,

bed-wetting baby. He would grow up working with His hands as the Son of a carpenter. Eventually He would be mocked, beaten, scourged, spit upon and crucified on a cross. Jesus became poor—why? So you and I might become rich. That’s the gospel message: Jesus became poor so you and I could become rich.

Now, this is not rich in a worldly sense. This verse is not saying Jesus became poor and died on a cross so we could have huge houses and great cars. That’s not what this means. This verse is talking about spiritual riches and spiritual wealth far beyond anything with which this world can ever compare or compete. What I want you to see is that this verse about the coming of Christ appears in the middle of some of the clearest teaching on giving and money in the entire Bible. This is why I make the statement that the coming of Jesus radically, totally, completely and wonderfully changes our perspective on giving.

Look at the context around this verse beginning with 2 Corinthians 8:1. I want you to listen to the lead-up to verse nine:

¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. ⁶ Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

Do you see it? Paul is writing this letter to the church. A place called Corinth is collecting an offering from them and from other churches for the impoverished church in Jerusalem. The church in Jerusalem was in the middle of a famine and many were starving. At the end of 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote to the church at Corinth to begin collecting an offering. Now he’s on his way to see them, so he spends two chapters—2 Corinthians 8-9—encouraging them to give. We won’t read these two chapters in full so jump to the end of chapter nine. We just read how he started this picture of giving and now look at how he ends, beginning with 2 Corinthians 9:6. Paul writes:

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be

enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others,¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

Do you feel the tone here? This is not, “You need to feel bad for all you have, so start giving more before you feel worse.” That’s not the way Christians talk about giving. Look at the words at the end of chapter nine: bountiful, cheerful, abounding, giving freely, increasing harvest, being enriched in every way, overflowing in thanksgiving, surpassing grace, giving thanks for God’s inexpressible gift! Giving is glorious for the Christian. Hear how the coming of Jesus radically changes our perspective on giving and money in at least three ways.

Followers of Jesus give out of the overflow of grace.

Christians give—why? Because they’re overflowing with the grace of God. In the beginning of 2 Corinthians 8, Paul describes how these churches in Macedonia were giving. Listen to how he describes them in verse one: *“We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia.”* Then go down further to the end of verse six, where he speaks of this *“act of grace.”* In verse seven, Paul says, *“See also that you excel in this act of grace.”* He’s saying giving is an act of grace. That’s what leads into verse nine: *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Followers of Jesus are not motivated to give by guilt. Followers of Jesus are motivated to give by grace. The whole picture here is God’s supernatural love in the hearts of these Macedonian Christians just overflowing through their lives. This is God’s grace at work in these Macedonian Christians.

Now, you might think because Paul was using them as an example of giving that they were wealthy churches, but that’s not the case. In fact, the exact opposite was true. These churches in Macedonia—places like Philippi and Thessalonica—were abysmally poor. They’d been ravaged by wars, plundered by the Romans. When the gospel came to them, they faced fierce persecution. If you put it all together, they faced a combination of high taxes, low economic status, slavery and persecution that had reduced their lives and families to extreme poverty. Did you hear those words that describe them? Severe affliction and extreme poverty.

But then listen to 2 Corinthians 8:2: *“In a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.”* Did you catch that math equation? For the Macedonians, severe trial plus extreme poverty equals abundant joy plus rich generosity. How does that happen? The answer is grace. God’s love and grace so transforms hearts that people who have nothing give everything.

What would happen if God gave us this kind of heart with all the resources we have in this part of the world? What would happen in McLean Bible Church if we were giving supernaturally out of the overflow of God's grace in our hearts? We would give willingly, which is how followers of Jesus give. The coming of Jesus causes us to give willingly. Listen to verses three and four: *"They gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints."*

Did you hear that? How many times do people come to church and beg for the offering? "I can't wait until they take up the offering—this is so good! It's what I've been looking forward to all week long." That's God's grace at work. We give willingly because of the abundance of God's generosity toward us. We know God's love toward us, so we want to show God's love toward others. That's why we give. We know how generous God has been to us, so we want to be generous to others. This is an other-worldly way to think about and look at giving. We give because of God's abundant generosity and we give according to and beyond our ability. It's exactly what 1 Corinthians 8:3 says.

Look at verse 12, *"If the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have."* So Christian giving is not just about how much you give, it's about stretching beyond your ability to give. Think about it simply in this way: Imagine somebody giving a million dollars. You might think, "Now, that is an extravagant gift." Absolutely, it's a lot of money, but is it an extravagant gift if that person made ten million dollars during the year? Somebody who gives \$5,000 who only makes \$30,000 a year has given a far more extravagant gift. The key is they do it of their own accord and not because they have to; they give because they want to. They give willingly because of the grace of God in their hearts.

As followers of Jesus we give willingly and generously. In verse two, we see that their giving "overflowed in a wealth of generosity." The same thing comes up in 2 Corinthians 9:6: *"The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."* Bountiful sowing, bountiful reaping—that's a reference to generous giving. If a farmer sows a little seed, he reaps a little harvest. If he sows a great amount of seed, he reaps a great harvest. It's pretty simple.

So what type of harvest do you want in your life? Here's the picture: Generous giving to God leads to greater glory for God and greater joy for us. So do we want that? Do you want greater glory for God and greater joy for you? Followers of Jesus want these things, so we give.

This is so different from every message this world is selling you and me all week long. We have just a few minutes with God's Word opened now to hear a very different message than we hear everywhere else around us. This world is saying constantly from every direction to every one of us, "You will be happy when you get more, when you get better, when you get nicer. That's what will make you happy."

I'm pleading with you in the few minutes we have today—based on the authority of God's Word—don't buy it. It is a lie. We're swimming in an ocean of deceit. Don't be deceived. . Right now, hear what God is saying in His Word. He has designed your heart, not to be glad in getting more but to be glad in giving more. It's just a totally countercultural way to think.

This is good news; it's delightful ground for us to talk about. God is not saying "Give" because He's against us. God is saying "Give" because He is for us. He wants to save us from the lies that are coming at us in all these different ways. This is the love of God speaking to us like this. Listen to 2 Corinthians 9:8-11 and notice the "alls" in verse eight:

⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

See what God's Word is teaching us. God gives enough for us and excess for others. God makes all grace abound to you so you have all you need. God supplies seed to the sower—bread for food. Christian in this gathering, you have—in the God of the universe—a Father in heaven Who is committed to providing for you, Who wants to make all grace abound to you. Why? Verse 11: this is so that you will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous in every way.

Ask the question, "When then do we have more than we need?" The answer in the Bible is clear, but it's not the answer of the American Dream. In fact, it's totally different. Even the average American Christian answers that question by thinking it's so we can have more stuff, nicer stuff, bigger stuff, better savings accounts, more comforts, more luxuries. That kind of thinking is not from God, Who says, "I give you more than you need so that you can be generous to those in need." God gives to us generously so that we can give to others extravagantly. He gives excess to us to be given to others.

Think about John Wesley as an illustration here. John Wesley because a famous preacher in England and was the founder of the Methodist church in the 18th century. In 1731, Wesley started limiting his expenses so he would have more money to give to the poor. He had a regular procedure for tithing, but he wanted to limit his expenses to give as much as possible to the poor. He decided he was going to live and tithe off of 28 pounds a year. That year, he recorded that his income was 30 pounds. His living expenses, even with the tithe, were 28. So he had two pounds above and beyond that to give away.

The next year his income doubled, but he still lived on 28 pounds and he gave 32 pounds away. The third year his income jumped to 90 pounds and the fourth year to 120 pounds. But he continued to live on 28 pounds, giving away 92 pounds to the poor that year. He basically preached that Christians should not just tithe, they should also give away all extra income once family and creditors are taken care

of. He believed that with an increase in income, the Christian standard of giving should increase, not the standard of living.

He started that practice at Oxford and continued it throughout his life, even when his income eventually rose to thousands of pounds. He lived simply and quickly gave his surplus away. One year's income was slightly over 1,400 pounds. He gave away all but 30. His biographer said he was afraid of laying up treasures on earth, so the money went out as quickly as it came in. When he died in 1791, most of the 30,000 pounds he had earned in his lifetime he had given away. That is a very different way to live.

What if we believed that an increase in salary doesn't necessitate an increase in our standard of living? What if we viewed an increase in salary as an increase in our standard of giving? This is where 2 Corinthians 8-9 is so exciting because where God has given us so much compared to the rest of the world.

You might ask, "Is it wrong that we are relatively wealthy?" The Bible doesn't say it is. The Bible does caution us that our money can quickly control our hearts and consume our lives. But 2 Corinthians 8-9 is saying, "God has been generous to you." In a sense it's like He's saying, "Make money. Make tons of money, by the grace of God. Make a lot of money, because that's more provision from God to give away for others' good and His glory. So don't feel bad for making money. Feel great about making money to give away for God's glory. God has given us the ability to give so generously. This is what God's Word is saying to us in this setting.

In a sermon earlier this year, we looked at the Bible's teaching that the tithe is the base of Christian giving. It's not the ceiling; it's the floor. It's where Christian giving starts. Then we asked, "What if we actually started doing what we see in the Word?" Based on the average household incomes in the communities around our campuses, if people in our church simply tithed, our budget as a church would be over \$111 million. But right now it's under \$30 million, according to some information I received from our financial team this week. If each of us just upped our giving by 1%, that would be an extra \$11 million. It is incredible to see the ability God has given us to give for others' good and for His glory—and for our joy.

I would like to share a bit of personal testimony. I hesitate to do this for multiple reasons which I think will make sense in a moment. When I wrote my first book, Radical, I put in the front of that book that any and all royalties would be given away for the glory of Christ among the nations. Now, keep in mind at that point I thought maybe my mom and a few other people would read this book. So don't think, "Well, that was noble of you." It really didn't feel like much of a sacrifice at all. I had no idea that millions of people around the world would read that book.

Do the math—a lot of money from that book was given away. But I couldn't—and I still can't—touch any of it, not a penny of it, because of what was written in the front of that book. I'd like to think if I had known then what I know now, I would still have written that in the front of the book. But what I've

discovered in the process is the joy of being able to give for the glory of Christ in ways beyond what I ever could have imagined. Because of this, in the three books I've written since then—and the one I just finished this week—I've written the same thing in the front. I hope this next book sells a lot and I'm not getting a penny from it. It's all going toward the glory of Christ in the nations.

Obviously that's an extreme example, but I would encourage each of us to consider how God has given us such opportunities to give generously and willingly. We need to realize it is a blessing from God to be a part of this.

Our next point is way over the top: Followers of Jesus don't only give willingly and generously, we also give cheerfully. It says in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *"Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

Just so you know, that word "cheerful" in the original New Testament language literally means hilarious. I love that picture. I can see us passing the offering baskets while we're laughing. "This is so awesome!" Everybody is smiling. Jesus totally changes our perspective on giving.

Just to be clear and because I know we live in a pretty sensitive economic climate today, let me add that this is not socialism we're talking about here. This is not limited receiving and forced giving. That would actually miss the whole point of this passage. The Bible is saying we're not forced by God to give. We are freed by Him to give. We're totally transformed from the inside out, so we're freed by God from the love of money and the desire for more. Jesus totally changes our perspective. It's not, "What do I have to give? Pastor, just tell me—what box do I need to check? Do I need to tithe? If so, do I tithe off the gross or the net? Tell me—gross or net?"

Followers of Jesus do approach giving by asking, "What do I have to give?" Followers of Jesus say, "How much can I give? I want to give as much as I can out of the overflow of grace." That's just point one. We've got to fly through these last two.

Followers of Jesus give as a demonstration of the gospel.

The second way Jesus radically changes our perspective on giving is that followers of Jesus give as a demonstration of the gospel. This is really the crux of the verse we read together at the beginning. For those of you who are here today who are not yet followers of Jesus, you may not know what we mean when we say "gospel." Here's what we mean.

There is one true God Who created the world and all that's in it, including you and me. He created each one of us. Each one of us has decided to turn away from God's ways to our own ways. It's what the Bible calls sin. We have done things our own way instead of God's way, and as a result we are separated from Him. If we die separated from God, we will spend eternity separated from Him and all of His goodness, love, grace and mercy.

The good news is God has not left us alone in our separation from Him. God has come to us. This is what we celebrate at Christmas. God has come to us in the person of Jesus, Who lived the life none of us could ever live—a life of perfect obedience to the Father. Then, although He had no sin for which to pay a price and not deserve to die, He chose to die. In fact, that's the very reason He came. Jesus came to die for our sins, to pay the price we deserve to pay for our sins. That's what happened at the cross. He died on a cross for you and for me.

Then the good news just keeps getting better, because He didn't stay dead for long. Three days later He rose from the grave, conquering sin and death, so that eternal life is available to all who put their faith in Jesus. He became poor so we might become rich, and I'm talking rich in a way that nothing in this world can compare or compete with. Jesus laid down His life for us so we might have eternal life and riches with Him.

This is the gospel—a word that means good news. I invite you today to believe it, to receive it and to become rich. Today you can become rich. I know out of the thousands of people who are gathered right now on all our campuses, some and maybe many of you do not know the riches of being in a relationship with God. You're far from God. Hear His love in bringing you to this place today to hear that Jesus has paid the price so that you can be rich in relationship with God.

You say, "How do I do that? What do I have to do?" God is not trying to exact a payment from you. He has done this out of His love and grace and mercy toward you. You simply receive this gift. You say, "I have sinned against You. I trust Your love in what Jesus did on the cross for me. I want the life You offer me through Him." It's just faith in Him and I invite you to put your faith in Him now. Believe this gospel.

For all who have life in Jesus, it just makes sense for us to do what He did. We don't live like the rest of the world anymore. We do what He did, which means we now sacrifice our rights for others. Think about this in relation to giving. If we're not careful when it comes to giving, we can start to think, "Wait a minute. Don't I have a right to this or that in this world?" Sure, we have rights to all kinds of things. We're Americans, after all. But the gospel compels us on some level to lay down our rights for others, realizing yes, we could have more here or there. But at some point Jesus in us compels us to lay aside what we want for what others need. At which point I ask, "Well, how much do I need to lay aside?" There's not an easy answer for that. I appreciate the way C.S. Lewis put it:

I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I'm afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditures on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.

As followers of Jesus, it just makes sense to sacrifice our rights for others and spend our resources on others. Do you see the beauty here in this passage? In 2 Corinthians 8:4, these churches in Macedonia are taking part in the relief of the saints. There were suffering and starving Christians in Jerusalem, so these Christians in Macedonia and Corinth were giving. They were spending their resources for the relief of others. Second Corinthians 9:12 says. *“For the ministry of this service is...supplying the needs of the saints.”*

People in need are receiving supply because of you, because of God’s grace in your giving. This is breathtaking when you think about it, that we—through our giving—get to bring others relief, supply, help for those who are in need. It’s just like what Jesus did for us. He brought relief, supply and help so we might live. And now we get to do the same thing for others.

I trust that you’ve seen and read about what’s happening in Yemen right now. I know this is a politically charged situation and that’s definitely not why I bring it up. I bring it up because a couple of our pastors were in that region of the world this last week, meeting with some of the few Christians who live in Yemen and who came out for training in God’s Word. If you don’t know what’s going on in Yemen, you need to learn about it to fuel your praying and more. People are starving to death—children in particular. Four hundred thousand kids right now are classified as so severely malnourished that they will likely die if there’s not intervention soon—400,000. Every day 130 children under age five are dying in Yemen due to hunger or preventable diseases—every day.

If what is happening in Yemen were to happen among kids in our church, pretty much all of our kids age five and under would be dead by this time next week. They would all be gone. I debated in my mind whether to show you a picture of one child, a seven-year-old little girl about the age of my daughter, who was in the New York Times and got a lot of coverage. I just remember opening up my news app and was astonished by this picture this little girl who was starving and eventually died. I decided not to show it because it would be classified as horror. We cannot hide our heads in the sand when it comes to suffering in the world, pretending like it’s not real. Not when we realize that we can be part of helping them.

Just so you know, our pastors were meeting there, exploring through contacts with the few churches there, ways we can help them, particularly through the overage we hope to bring in at the end of this year. We can be a part of helping them. We have resources to spend on others.

Do we realize this is a grace from God toward us? Why were we not born in Yemen? Why was I not born in Yemen? Why are my children not starving? I have no answer for that question apart from the grace of God. I had nothing to do with where I was born. I do not understand His grace. But I do know this. His grace given to me is not just for me. His grace given to us is not just for us. His grace is given so that we might be a demonstration of His gospel in the world. It’s just an act of grace that we get to be

a part of giving like this. It's why I said, "Give me the basket! I want to be part of this. I want to spend my resources on others."

God, cause that heart in me, in us, more and more and more and more.

Amidst the cold and rain last night, some of our church members were over at a Title 1 school in a community about 20 minutes from here that's very poor. There are places in this community where five families crammed into one apartment. They rent one room for a family. Last night some of you were there doing a mobile Christmas village. We've been doing this all month long, having a service we hope will become a church plant soon. We've been reaching out to needs all across that community. By the grace of God, we get to be part of bringing life and help and hope to people in need—right here in DC and all around the world. What a joy to be able to give!

So let's give, brothers and sisters. Let's experience the fullness of this joy in the spread of God's grace. This is what we were created for—not for what this world says we were created for. Stop believing the lie and start living with grace and truth the life God has created us to live, so that others might have life.

All that leads to the last picture here.

Followers of Jesus give to promote thanksgiving to God.

Followers of Jesus give out of the overflow of grace, we give as a demonstration of the gospel and we give to promote thanksgiving to God. Keep going in 2 Corinthians 9:12: *"For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints..."* People are living. They're eating and thriving as the result of your giving. That's awesome. *"But [it] is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God."* This is the beauty. The One Who gives the grace gets the glory. Grace giving like this doesn't bring credit to us. Grace giving like this brings credit to Whom? To God. It brings glory to God.

Keep going in verse 13: *"By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others."* Don't you love this? Giving that is grounded in God's grace resounds to God's glory. This is what we want, right? We want people in Yemen to know the love, grace mercy of God toward them. The majority of the people in Yemen right now have little to no knowledge of the gospel. We want them to know about God's grace and love for them. That's why we do this.

And not just in Yemen. We want people all over Metro DC—in this Title 1 school community where we were last night—we want them to know and love God so they can glorify Him for His grace toward them. We want people to know and enjoy the grace of God forever and ever and ever. This creates a powerful unity and leads us to see that giving unites the people of God. I love that in verse 14 Paul talks about how those you give to *"long for you and pray for you."* There's a picture of unity, particularly in the body of Christ when we give with one another, to one another.

Think about this. As we give to support the church around DC and around the world, we are uniting with the church around DC and around the world. We are saying to the few brothers and sisters we have in Yemen, “You are not alone. We are with you.” We’re saying to the church in greater Washington, DC, “We are with you.” We’re saying to our brothers and sisters in Title 1 school communities, “We are with you. We are not the wealthy church that ignores you, we’re your family. We are with you.”

Giving unites the people of God and in this, giving exalts the goodness of God. Don’t you love how these two chapters end? Verse 15 says, “*Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!*” This is what it all comes back to—Jesus, the inexpressible gift of God. When we see what a gift He is—though He was rich, He became poor so we might become rich—it just makes sense for us to give. His coming radically changes our perspective on giving and money.

Here’s what I want to invite us to do in response to God’s Word. What we must not do is hear God’s Word, close the Book and think, “Okay, what’s next in our lives?” This is God speaking to us. I want to give us an opportunity to reflect on what He’s saying to each of us, and to pray accordingly. We need to ask God, “What does this mean? What are You calling me to do?”

Or maybe it’s just, “God, I really want more and nicer and better in this world. Change my heart. I need You to change my heart.” God is totally pleased with that kind of praying from His children. “God, create in me a willing, generous and sacrificial heart. I want the heart of Christ. Do this in me. Cause this supernatural grace to flow in me.” It’s not natural. None of this is natural.

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