2 Corinthians 9.10-15

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[0:00] Isn't God good? Isn't he just? He's amazing. So generous in all his ways. Today, Hi, my name's Andrew.

If you have not yet met,! We've been exploring what's been going on as Paul is writing to the Corinthians to encourage them in their giving to help the church in Jerusalem.
And today, we're just going to sort of be finishing on the last five, six verses of 2 Corinthians 9. So if you've got your Bible, please turn in your Bible to it.
It should also come up on the screen in a moment so we can read it together. Okay, here we go. So now to him who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.
You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion and through us, your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. The service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.
[1:29] Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

and in their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift.
Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I'm just going to try and work through this passage over the next 15, 20 minutes, something like that. Where I might start at verse 10 is this, now he who supplies.
I just want to pause on that, now he who supplies. I think in the world today, we are constantly bombarded to negate who God is, to forget who he is, and to live lives which are pursuing our own agendas, our own independent, self-reliant ways.
And he wants to encourage us to ignore who God is. And so this morning, I just want us to pause and consider who God is. We've been doing that in our worship, which is great.
[2:47] Worship helps us to do that. We can do that through the word, through prayer. But I wonder, if I was to ask you this question, who is God to you today? What would be your response?

What would be my response? Provider. Provides all that we ever need. He's known, one of his names in the scriptures, Jehovah Jireh.
God who provides for the needs of his people. and God who makes his ultimate provision in Jesus, his son, our saviour.
Wow. What sort of provision is that? A Lord who knows everything that we need before we know what we need and provides for us.
Another word which comes to my mind is I think about who God is. Sustainer. He's the one who not only gives life but he sustains things through his powerful word we're told in Hebrews 1.
[3:51] He looks after the humble, the alien, the outcast, the fatherless, along with everyone else. He sustains all things. It means I can't add a day to my life because God's the one who sustains me and he gets to choose how long I last for.

Wow. Is that good? Just. God is just. He's passionately.
He's justice. He wants us to reflect that to the world around us but he is just. Merciful and gracious. Read Ephesians 2. If you want to understand something of the mercy and gracious, grace of God. Wow. Merciful. Wow. He has mercy on us.
Gracious. He extends his love to us even though we don't deserve it. He's defined by the word love.
[5:08] God is love. 1 John 4. God is love. That is who he is. But within that he's also holy. Pure and holy.

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Set apart. Cannot have anything to do with mankind's sin and yet provides a way for sin to be dealt with that we can come into his presence made clean and pure and holy given robes of righteousness given to us through Christ that we can approach the throne of God.
Faithful in all his ways. That good. Faithful in all his ways. Not just some. He's not fickle. He's faithful. in all his ways.
You might want to read in 2 Corinthians 1. In other words he's totally good and trustworthy. Totally good and trustworthy.
So we can trust him in everything. He gives us all the resources we need. Isn't he good?
[6:22] Isn't he great? Oh dear. Can we try that one again? Isn't he good?

Yes. Isn't he great? Yes. Yes. Absolutely. I hope something's going on in our hearts here as we just remind ourselves this is the one who supplies all our needs.
He's totally faithful. He's totally trustworthy. We don't need to worry and live in anxiety because he is good and he is just and he is faithful and he's trustworthy and he's all-knowing and he's the sustainer of life.
He's the creator of life. Isn't he good? Yes. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. So as we start to read this passage we're just reminded of who our amazing God is.
Now he who supplies seed to the sower oh wow hang on so we've got a bit more detail here he's the one who supplies seed to the sower. In other words he provides he provides all that he need and bread for food but also supply and increase your sower seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.
[7:41] Wow. What's all that about? Sounds good to me. God's generosity reviewed in Christ is here to enrich and change all of our lives.

The entirety of our lives. It's not just well he's generous with his son and that's it. No, no he's generous. In his generosity he wants to affect the entirety of our lives of how we live our lives. Recognizing he will supply all of our needs. He'll give us all that we need to give away. He'll give us all that we need to be generous. He'll provide everything.
Friends, I think sometimes we can have a stingy spirit because we're not sure God will provide. And we can get into this sort of oh well if I do that will God look after me?
That's why we need to remind ourselves who he is. That we can trust him that he's faithful that he's good. Because actually if we know that well then I can trust him when he calls me to share off his abundant goodness with others.
[8:51] Whether that's in my time, my treasure, my talents or any other aspect of our lives. Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed.

Why does he do that? So you can give more away. Hallelujah. And would enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. In other words, the impact of your lives will be greater as we are righteous before God, as we are made righteous in God and we live lives of righteousness.
Live righteous lives. Hey, there's going to be an impact in others. And in that process, verse 11, you will be made rich in every way.
Wow. Who would like to be rich? It's okay. You can say yes. Goodness me, we're unsure of that one, aren't we? He wants to make us rich in every way.
I'm not necessarily talking about money. Rich in every way across our lives. Now, please, I'm not getting into some sort of weird prosperity gospel here.
[10:02] But he wants to provide for all of our needs and he wants to enrich us that we too can be generous with who God is, what God's given us.

God's generosity enriches the whole of our lives. Why? Maybe a good question to ask, why does he want to enrich us so we can be a blessing to the rest of the world? So we can demonstrate God's generosity to the world that he's put us in, to the people he's put around us.
In other words, giving from those riches he gives us in order to bless others. That's what he wants us to do with it. It's interesting, isn't it?
I think when we take our eyes off Jesus, we quickly become inward looking and stingy and selfish and mean spirited. But when we gaze on the fullness of who Jesus is, the enormity of what he's done, and how he reflects something of the Father to us, he reflects the Father to us in every way. And the goodness of God and the grace of God and the mercy of God and the love of God and all those other things we've discussed already, wow, I can be generous. Because I can trust him.

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[11:21] He's the one who provides for me. It's not, you know, yes, sure, we have jobs and that gives us income and things like that, but ultimately he's the one who provides us with those jobs. He's the one who's in control. He's the one that we can trust completely.

And so when we focus on him who's able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine, as we gaze on him and recognize all he is, all he gives to us, all he has for us, how trustworthy he is, we can be more generous.
We can give more of ourselves away. And please, I'm not thinking here money, I'm thinking the whole aspect, every aspect of our lives. We've used this phrase, time, talent, treasures.
That's one way of trying to encapsulate everything which makes up our lives. As we gaze on him and see his abundant riches, as we receive from him, we can give it all away.
Isn't he good? Yes, he is. That's why it's so important we start by focusing on God, not on our circumstances, not on what's going on around us.
[12:37] recognizing that God makes us rich in every way which is important. Why?

So we can be generous, so we can reflect the grace of God in our lives to others, both believers and not believers, not yet believers. Why don't you turn to the person next to you and tell them something about God which will encourage them.
You may want to say God's good, you may want to say something else, but why don't you just do that for a moment and listen and hear what you get back as well. Thank you. Okay.
Okay. We need to remind ourselves how good God is, how great he is, how magnificent he is, how far more than anything we can ask or imagine, the greatness and majesty of God.
And then as we continue reading, verses 12, 13, this service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people, so as we're generous and as we overflow in generosity to others, we're helping supply the needs of God's people, but it's also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.
[14:14] So as we are generous, other people are going to go, oh wow, look what God's done through them. Thank you God, which is the right response. Because we aren't generous in order to get our praise, we're generous to reflect something of the goodness of God to others.

for them to go, oh look, I'm seeing something of God through your spirit, through your attitude, through the way in which you live your life. But people go, oh wow, this is the gospel, I didn't realise this was the gospel.
We bring a revelation of who God is to others. And he goes on, because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.
It's the same thing. People are going to praise God because of your generosity. Okay, awkward question moment.
Does that happen in your life at the moment? Do people end up seeing something of God because of the way in which we live our lives?
[15:40] Because we are generous with everything that God's given us. Does it speak of the magnificence of God, the abundance of God, of the greatness of God? God? God? God?

God? God? God? Just chew on it for a moment.
This isn't to beat ourselves up. This is to make sure we're taking hold of the word and thinking, yeah, how am I doing with applying this in my life? How am I doing with taking hold of it and making it live out through my life to others?
Does it demonstrate something of God's magnificence, of his abundance? How's my life do this?
It may be around money, but it may be around your time, time for others, time given in the service of God in all sorts of different ways, in the workplace, in the home, within the church life.
[16:53] Maybe something about how we use those things that God's given us, those talents, those gifts God's given us. Do we use them to point to us, or do we use them to point to him? And yes, it does involve our finances too, and all our possessions, treasures.

How do we use those to glorify God? How do they reflect the grace of God which has touched our hearts and lives, which has changed our hearts and lives, in how we talk about others, in how we behave with others?
It's generous God into our spirit. Have we seen the generosity of God, which is always going to be far more than we can ever really grab hold of?

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the generosity of God in Christ, in sins forgiven, in a new life, in being filled with his spirit, in him listening to us as we talk with him, him intervening in our lives in all sorts of amazing ways.
how do our lives reflect that to the world which God's put us in, to the people God's put us amongst? Paul continues, and he says, and in their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you because of the surpassing grace God has given you.
[18:36] In other words, as people experience the grace of God, they're going to go, oh wow, thank you so much, yes. But what we should be looking for is recognising the surpassing grace of God.

I love that phrase, surpassing. It's not a word we use very often nowadays, is it? Surpassing grace of God. In other words, it beats everything else.
The grace of God, which is just amazing. The grace of God, which we've experienced in our lives. The surpassing grace of God, it covers over everything else, it overtakes everything else.
Friends, how are we doing with digging into the grace of God? Enjoying God's grace? What do we mean by grace? Well, there's an acronym, isn't there? Great riches at Christ's expense.
It's the generosity of God expressed to us in Christ that we get to be saved and brought into his family and brought into his kingdom and we get to live out the fullness of what it is to be a child of God, knowing that we're safe, knowing that we're secure, knowing that we're loved, knowing that we're cherished and how that brings freedom and liberty to everything we do in our lives.
[19:50] That's something of the grace of God. If I try to expound too much on the grace of God in the last remaining three minutes I've got to teach in this morning, we wouldn't get any further.

The grace of God is phenomenal. It's overarching. It's transformative. When we think about being generous, let's start in the grace of God.
Wow, I'm loved. I've come to experience the generosity of God in his grace and mercy over my life. Me, who deserved eternal separation from the Father, gets brought into his family, come to enjoy the grace of God.
wow. He gets involved, he provides, he cares, he changes our lives, he sets us free from those things which were held us captive. It's like something of the grace of God and yet there's so much more.
how are we doing with the grace of God? Does it shape us? Does it define us?
[20:59] Does it change our life? Does it result in us being generous, generous in our heart, generous in our mind, generous in our spirit, outworked in every aspect of our lives?

That others go, wow, look at their generosity, not to praise them but that reflects something of God. We're seeing God here through this people's generosity. Remember, God's the one who provides for everything.
All we're doing is just taking what he's given us and going, hey, let's give it away. That's why we start by gazing on him.
We gaze on him as we feast on him. We're just about to come to a wonderful feast which he's provided for us. As we feast on him, oh God, help me to give this away now to others.
Help me to reflect this to all those people you put around me. They will change my whole life.
Romans 15 verses 26, 27.
[22:12] You don't need to turn to it now but you may want to later on. It seems to reflect all that the Corinthians did. They clearly responded to this request, this encouragement from Paul.

Paul, I guess I want to just ask the question, what's it going to look like for us? Are we going to hear God's call to be generous?
Are we going to let it change our hearts and our lives? Will later on others go, oh yeah, yeah, not to praise us but they were generous.
They were generous in their attitude. Generosity shaped their lives as we give of our time, our talents, our treasure.
You may think this is a very simple little illustration but friends, those of us every week will have something to share and we don't. Can I ask the question, is that generous?
[23:21] God gives us stuff to share, let's give it away. When he stirs our hearts with the scripture, perhaps a tongue or interpretation of tongue, or other prophetic gifts or a prayer, or just a word of encouragement for one person, let's be generous in giving it away.

What happens when we do it? It gives us more to give away. That's just a little way in which we can express generosity. When somebody's mean about somebody at work, maybe they've done

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something daft and silly and wrong.
How do we respond? There's an opportunity there to extend the grace of God knowing that, hey, literally there but for the grace of God go all of us. will we?
When perhaps somebody in our family or wider family or our circle of friends does something which really upsets us, which perhaps even offends us, would we be generous knowing God's forgiveness forgiveness and extend forgiveness to others?
That they would know something of the grace of God that we get to experience day by day. When we see a need and we know that God has provided for us in this way so we can actually help that need, maybe in our time, it may be in our energy, it may be in our finances, will we respond or will we hold back and go, oh, I don't know, if I do that then maybe I won't have enough.
[25:18] Maybe I'll run out of energy, maybe I'll run out of time, maybe I'll run out of finances if I give that to God. Or will we go, he who provides the seed will provide us more.

He'll give us more, he'll give us more energy, he'll give us more time, he'll help us to make good calls, good choices, in all sorts of different ways.
Are we going to allow the majesty of God to penetrate our hearts such that we are, let God confide, and maybe he wants to provide through me, and I'll be generous with who I am, with all that I have, with all that God's given me.
We started by gazing on him, and it would be great now to come back and feed on his amazing feast which he gives us in Jesus, and so if the worship team can come back, that would be wonderful.
We are going to come and delight ourselves in God's generous provision in Jesus for us. As we do so, can I encourage us, pray a dangerous prayer this morning.
[26:44] Excuse me. Pray a dangerous prayer this morning. Be something like this, God, I want to see more of your generosity, that I can be generous in my heart and my life.

Change me, that I would be, I would outwork, I would reflect the generosity of God to each and everyone that I come across in the entirety of my life.
Sorry, that was a long, waffly sentence, but hopefully got the gist of it. God's good. Let's feast on him, let's come and worship him, let's come and delight in him.
Nadia, let's stand please. Thanks, Andrew. Please stand if you're on it. Let's sing what he's done.

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