

“Gratitude is Soul Work”

2 Corinthians 9:6-9

11/10/24

Thank you for choosing church. Thank you for doing soul work. Thank you for being generous with your time and giving your time to the Lord. Generosity generates and generosity.

The reason I love Church is because this is about one of the last places remaining where we can publicly do soul work. Soul work is Jesus’ work. Our vision, our mission is to do Jesus’ Work through our hands.

This vision and mission are not new. Paul writes to the Corinthians about 20 years after Jesus’ ascension into Heaven to raise money to do Jesus’ Work Through Our Hands!

If you have ever wondered how Christ’s Church began, the story is like how most organizations or businesses begin: with a compelling story that inspires investors. The investors see results. And the loop continues.

2024 years ago, God the Creator chose to become one of us as Jesus Christ. He still lives and will live in us when we trust Jesus! Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to a young Jewish girl named Mary. He brings purpose to those who are sleepwalking. He preaches good news to the poor. Jesus says the Kingdom of God is right in front of us: all we must do is reach out and do it. Jesus challenges the powerful and the rich so that Pontius Pilate crucified Him. Jesus forgives the people who crucify Him and by the power of His Holy Spirit will empower us to forgive those who crucify us. When we trust Jesus, we will begin to live Heaven on earth and when we die, we will immediately be with Jesus. Jesus will judge all people at death. We do not fear death because Jesus lives and lives in us! The only reason we live is friendship with Jesus and each other. Our attitude of gratitude and generosity are rooted in Jesus.

The elders of this Church are asking you to invest in Jesus’ Work through Our Hands. We need your generosity to be the most hospitable church and to continue Jesus’ ministry!

2 Corinthians 9:10-15

We can see that Paul believes an attitude of gratitude is Biblical and the beginning of faithful living. To raise money for Jesus’ Work through our Hands, Paul first quotes Proverbs 11:24, “The one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” When we look out back to our new landscaping, we will know if they used a little grass seed or a whole lot of grass seed. It takes time, but time will tell. If we want to see the world changed for Jesus, we must generously invest in our children’s faith. We must generously encourage each other’s faith.

Generosity generates generosity is another way to say Proverbs 11:25, “A generous person will be enriched.” Paul knows that an attitude of gratitude is Biblical, He knows the story of Jesus

giving His life to enrich our lives. Think back to that grass seed. The more grass seed we give, the more grass will grow to create even more grass seed. Generosity creates a positive feedback loop. When we enter the room generous and kind, more often than not we are going to create a culture of generosity and kindness.

Paul promises us that an attitude of gratitude is Biblical for he quotes Deuteronomy 15:10-11, "Give liberally...for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake." Generosity generates generosity!

After this contentious election, we all want peace. Peace is an outcome of hard work. Peace doesn't just come to us. When we practice Jesus' disciplines of gratitude and generosity we will build a peaceful life. The reason Jesus teaches the habits of generosity and gratitude is to ensure we create the outcome of having enough, being content, being whole, being complete, at peace. Peace is the outcome of practicing gratitude and generosity.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all remember the central miracle of Jesus creating enough from 5 loaves and 2 fish. John 6 specifically recalls one little boy who was willing to give everything he had to Jesus and Jesus multiplied it for the people. When we share there is more than enough. As a nation and within our families we must teach Jesus' central message that when we share there is more than enough! Generosity generates generosity!

God's Word teaches us by practicing gratitude we will understand we have enough, when Paul quotes Psalm 112:9, "The faithful have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever..." Generosity generates generosity!

Our vision and mission are to demonstrate that Jesus lives and lives in us. The best way to point to Jesus are through gratitude and generosity. When we show gratitude and appreciation for others we are pointing to Jesus. When we generously live, we are showing Jesus lives.

Join us by accepting Jesus Christ to live in you. Join us by generously investing in Jesus ministry at NPC so together we can do Jesus' Word through our Hands.

Love,
Pastor Curtis

- I. An attitude of gratitude is Biblical and the beginning of faithful living.
 - A. The one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. -Proverbs 11:24
 - B. A generous person will be enriched. -Proverbs 11:25
 - C. Give liberally...for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. -Deuteronomy 15:10-11
- II. Generosity and gratitude build a peaceful life.
 - A. Generosity leads to having enough.
 - 1. Jesus with 5 loaves and 2 fish. When we share there is more than enough. -John 6
 - B. Gratitude leads to understanding we have enough.
 - 1. The faithful have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever...-Psalm 112:9
- III. Generosity and gratitude are the best way to point to Jesus.
 - A. Christian faith is generously living as Jesus lives.
 - B. Our generosity continues Jesus' ministry.
 - C. Generosity is purposeful living.

When we reach out and grab something we are actively choosing it.

Give our best selves.

- 1. An attitude of gratitude is Biblical and the beginning of faithful living.
 - A. The Lord commands to remember whose we are (The Lord's Chosen) and where we have come from (Slavery) -Deuteronomy 26:5
 - B. Generosity is an act of gratitude. -Deuteronomy 26:3
 - C. The Lord commands that we share the profits with the immigrant, orphan, and widow. -Deuteronomy 26:13
- 2. But if down, having a bad day, or in a rut, generously give to experience joy.
 - A. Eucharist is a Greek word that means "thanksgiving."
 - B. Eucharist comes from the root word "chara" that means "joy."
 - C. During communion/the Lord's Supper/the Eucharist we celebrate that Christ generously gives His life so that we may generously live!
- 3. Trusting in Christ is all that matters.
 - A. Christian faith is commitment to Jesus Christ.
 - B. The commitment is to walk with Jesus through prayer and worship.
 - C. God is not any thought or what we want God to be. Christians believe God shows us who God is as Jesus Christ.
 - D. We have peace/rest/contentment because we trust that our lives rest in Jesus' good and gracious hands.
 - E. Gratitude is the beginning of faithful living.

Colossians 2:6-7