

# Prosperity Through Sowing and Reaping



## Walking Through the Land of God's Promises (Part 13)
## by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue this week's conducted tour through the land of God's promises.

Yesterday I looked at some of the promises of prosperity for which the primary condition is that we bring our full tithe into God's storehouse and I defined tithe as the first tenth of our income set apart for God.

Today I'm going to look at another scriptural principle upon which God promises us prosperity. I believe that the principle that we're going to look at today will take us even further into this area of prosperity than the promise of tithing that we looked at yesterday.

I'm going to turn now to 2 Corinthians 9 and read some verses from that chapter. We need to bear in mind that 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 both deal with the theme of our giving money to God. The background was that Paul was taking up an offering from various churches for some believers who were in financial need. One of the churches that had promised an offering was this church at Corinth to which Paul is writing and he's writing now to explain how he wants it arranged and he gives some of the motives that are important and the principles which should govern our giving to God. Therefore, it becomes important for us because the same motives and the same principles are valid for us today. Reading then in 2 Corinthians 9:5-9:

> "So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. [You see, the motives are very important. Paul goes on:] Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Now when Paul uses the phrases "sowing" and "reaping," he's borrowing from the terminology of agriculture but he's applying it to money. "Sowing" is giving and "reaping" is receiving, again in terms of money. Bear that in mind, it's important. Paul goes on with another principle, another thing

that relates to motive.

> "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 Greek says "a hilarious giver." I wonder how many of us are "hilarious" in our giving? I've seen people in a very poor, backward, underprivileged nation of the Third World giving hilariously to God far above their tithe and I saw how God blessed them when they did. Going back to the words of Paul, verse 8:

> "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

What a rich verse that is! There are two abound's and five all's. Altogether it leaves no room for lack or insufficiency in any area of our lives and it's God's grace that Paul is writing about. In fact, the key word in these chapters on giving is "grace." Giving is a grace. It's one of the Christian graces. It also springs from the grace of God. And then Paul quotes in this connection from a Psalm in the Old Testament, Psalm 112, and we'll look at that psalm a little later on.

> "As it is written: 'He [that's a righteous man] has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.'" (NIV)

Notice there's a very close connection between giving to the poor and enduring righteousness. And again, the word "scattered" that's used there suggests a man sowing seed in his field. In this connection we have to see that there's a divine exchange which took place by God's foreordained purpose and through God's grace at the cross and this is the basis. At the cross, Jesus bore the poverty curse that had come upon the human race through its disobedience, that we in turn might be partakers of His wealth. This is stated in the previous chapter of 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 8:9:

> "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, [as he hung there naked on the cross] so that you through his poverty might become rich." (NIV)

You see, that's the exchange. The basis for all God's provision is Jesus took the poverty curse that we might receive His blessing and His abundance through faith. And it's grace, and that grace is manifested in our lives by the fact that God makes it abound to us so that in all things, at all times having all that we need, we abound to every good work.

Now the principle that comes up there, especially from Paul's reference to agriculture and to reaping and sowing is that increase comes through scattering. The measure in which we scatter, in which we sow, will determine the measure in which we reap. Have you every pictured a farmer who has some tremendously wonderful seed that he's very delighted with and he says, "This seed is so good, I'm just going to hold on to it. I'm not going to throw any of it away." How much return would he ever get from that seed? Nothing. This is one of the paradoxes of nature, a divine paradox. That scattering leads to increase, but withholding leads to poverty. Everything in the Bible tells us this: that stinginess ultimately leads to poverty. That if we want increase, we have to scatter.

Now we're going to have a look at the psalm in the Old Testament which Paul quoted in that passage in 2 Corinthians 9. The psalm is 112, we're going to read verses 1-3, verse 5, and verses 8 and 9. This psalm pictures a man of outstanding righteousness whose life is built firmly on the foundation of God's Word and the fear of the Lord. This is what it says:

> "Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in [the Lord's] commands. His children will be mighty in the land; each generation of the upright will be blessed. [That's a promise of continuing blessing from generation to generation. Verse 3:] Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. [Notice the direct connection between righteousness and wealth and riches in his house. Verse 5:] Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, [That's the same principle again: increase comes through scattering. Verse 8, such a man:] His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes. [Verse 9, the verse that Paul quotes in 2 Corinthians 9:] He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor, his righteousness endures forever; his horn will be lifted high in honor." (NIV)

We see again scattering is a mark of righteousness that's giving generously and not withholding, and it establishes our righteousness and it ensures that we will reap. So we could say this: lending and giving generously are joined with righteousness, security and prosperity. It's God's purposes, they can never be separated.

Again, we have the same paradox of scattering and withholding in Proverbs 11:24:

> "One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty." (NIV)

Withholding from God and from the poor what we need to give them will bring poverty. But giving freely, scattering in faith according to the principles of God's Word, giving to God and giving to those who are in need, will cause us to gain even more. Bear in mind, all this has to be done in faith because without faith it is impossible to please God. That's why we give before we receive, we scatter before we reap. It's always the faith principle.

Paul applies basic principles of agriculture to the handling of money in God's kingdom. We need to see this that it's practical. I would suggest that a farmer dealing with his land to get the best crops, there are three simple principles he needs to observe. He needs to choose good soil first. Secondly, he needs to make proper preparation of the soil. Thirdly, he needs to have good management of his whole enterprise. If a farmer just walked down main street in the local city scattering his seed right and left in the gutters, he wouldn't reap anything. So where we scatter makes a lot of difference. It's an investment. We need good soil, good preparation, good management.

The same, I believe, is true of our investment in God's kingdom. If we sow wisely, we will reap. We shouldn't give on impulse, we shouldn't give just out of an emotional urge, but we should sincerely seek out those ministries and those enterprises of God which are based on proper scriptural principles, those which are working in good soil, those where there's proper preparation to insure their maximum return and where the management is good and ethical and honest. I'm afraid that many of God's people miss out on the blessings of sowing either because they don't understand that you have to sow before you reap, you have to scatter in order that you may increase or else because they sow where there isn't going to be a good return. They invest in unworthy ministries or unscriptural operations or places where the management isn't good and they don't get the return that they need.

Let me ask you to check these three questions as we come to the close of my message for today. When you consider giving, are you flowing with God's purposes? Are you following the basic principles? And are your motives right? If the answer to those questions if "Yes," I believe the end for you will be prosperity and abundance.

Our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll move on to another area of God's promises, the area of healing. I'll be explaining God's basic provision for total health.

## Radio Program

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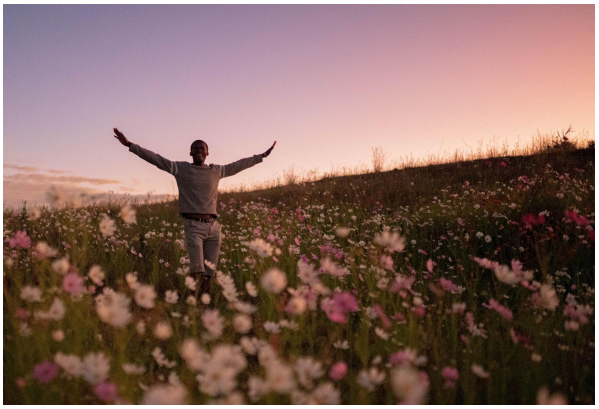

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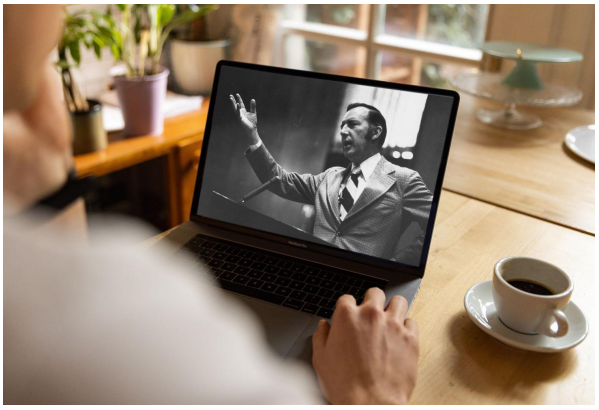

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