THE MAIN THING:
God calls all His children to be generous givers with their time, abilities and resources to bless others and draw them into His kingdom. As we sow seed to this end, God will multiply this seed abundantly that we may grow in faith and do it again.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: Opportunities to connect and pray as a group
1. What is the best gardening result that you have ever seen?
2. What results have you seen from “investments” in God and His Kingdom?

PURSUE GOD: Time that is devoted to the Word of God
2. What is the difference between giving obediently and giving “under pressure” (2 Cor. 9:7 NLT)?
3. How does Luke 6:37 speak to the process of giving?
4. Read Matthew 6:21 and 2 Cor 9:7. Why do Jesus and Paul place such an emphasis on the heart in regards to generosity?
5. How does the phrase “decided in your heart” influence what type of giver you are?
6. The “Law of the Harvest” involves cost, struggle and patience. What are the benefits to the giver and the recipients?

Application: Working out the Word
1. Where do I enjoy giving/serving at this point? How can I extend this joy to other parts of my life?
2. What about times when I am not cheerful, but I know that the need has to be met, should I still give?
3. How has your attitude changed as you have stepped out in giving?
4. Have you caught yourself saying, “As soon as I’ve finished …, then I’ll start to …”

Quote: ‘You can give without loving, but you can’t love without giving.’

Concerning joy in giving, Spurgeon said, “There is hardship in everything – except eating pancakes.”

PURSUE MISSION: Seek to be the community of God’s people in your community
Do an outdoor Fall yard cleaning for a shut in, single mom, or senior adult.

THE WORD (NIV)

2 Corinthians 9:6-11
6… Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously, 7 each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.” 10 Now he 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. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

37 “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Matthew 6:19-21
19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
The heart of the Christian faith is about giving and being generous. This theme is woven through the Scriptures. The word ‘give’ is used in the Bible almost 2x more than faith, hope and love combined. While you can give without loving, you cannot love without giving. God exemplifies this in John 3:16. That was sacrificial giving by God to draw people to Himself. So we, through our sacrificial giving are to draw people to God. (1 Tim 2:4, Rom 12:1-2) God’s principles relating to generosity are simple: 1) All that I have God owns, 2) All that I need God provides, and 3) All that I give God multiplies.

What would you do if you won a million dollars? Your response will reveal the values you hold to. The materialist is attached to the world they live in. The fully devoted Christian is attached to the world they are going to. When you are generous, is it as a debt you feel you owe God, or as an investment? God is concerned with our actions and motives for doing so. When God explains why we should be generous, and our motives in giving, He uses the analogy of a farmer investing in seed. His desire is that we view our generosity as an investment in something that matters to Him. (2 Cor 9:6-11) As there are natural laws, so too there are spiritual laws. One of those is the law of sowing and reaping. In this passage we see principles of this law.

1. **To have a harvest you must plant seed.** (vs 6) Agriculturally and spiritually the principle is the same – no seed, no harvest. There will be no spiritual growth or kingdom impact without stepping out in faith and planting seed. (Luke 6:38) Here we are called to give first then trust Him to do what we cannot do and so grow in our faith and intimacy with Him. God is working behind the scenes whether or not we see the harvest. However, if we do nothing, there will be no harvest, and we will miss the adventure God had in store to grow our faith in Him. He has chosen to meet the needs of the world through us and the seed we sow. So step out in faith and offer the seed of our time, prayers and spiritual gifts, our talents and money.

2. **You harvest some time after you plant the seed.** Plants take time to grow. Fruit ripens slowly. The harvest takes place months after you plant the seed and this requires patience and trust. The harvest will come in God’s way and in God’s time. He does not call us to be successful; He calls us to be faithful and to trust Him to bring the harvest. God is working in ways you are not aware of and is multiplying your investment in His way and time for His glory. Be mindful of your motives. God does not reward selfishness.

3. **The more seeds you plant the more you harvest.** The farmer must plant seed in order to reap, but he knows that he will harvest far more than he plants. (eg. Wheat will yield 33x what is sown on average) So too with our sowing; you cannot out give God. (vs 7) When you see that giving in all its forms is not a debt you owe to God but an investment and then your attitude will become one of joy when you witness the harvest of changed and blessed lives because of you planting your seeds. This in turn will cause your faith to come alive and make you an even greater cheerful giver, wanting to give more. God always blesses those who are generous, though his gifts are not always a material blessing. No matter the blessing it is for us to respond in greater generosity. (vs 10)

Whether we gain or lose materially, God is faithful and can be trusted no matter where we live. Trust Jesus and step out and give first in faith to bless others by putting a seed in the ground. (Matt 6:19-21) Jesus advises us to stay out of earthly treasures. While they are not bad they don’t last. Lest you find your identity, significance and security in them invest instead in the things that matter to God. Jesus also reminds us to load up on heavenly treasures. Investing heavily in God’s kingdom with an eternal perspective on life will dramatically change the way we live our lives and invest the time, abilities and money God has entrusted to us.

If you were to die today, is there anything you wish you would have given away? If so why are you still hanging onto it? Is there anything or anyone you wish you would have invested more of your time into? Then why aren’t you pursuing that now? (Matt 6:33) Your kingdom investments won’t die with you but will multiply and live on forever into eternity. Trust God to believe in and align your life with His principles of generosity. Make up your mind on how seriously you want to take God at His Word. Don’t wait for ‘as soon as …’ before you do this. That time will never come. Now is the time to start planting seed and doing what God is calling us to do. Consider your own obituary. What would it read like? Now edit it where it needs to be edited. Live for God’s glory.