

## **“THE GOSPEL OF GOD’S ABOUNDING GRACE.”**

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**April 28, 2019, 10:30 AM**

**Scripture Texts: II Corinthians 9:8-11; Philippians 4:19**

### **Introduction.**

Do you know people who make promises and then don’t keep them?

Most of us have experiences with people who have promised more than they can deliver. Most of us have been let down, have had expectations unmet. Parents, spouses, teachers, bosses, friends, churches, life.

And it is easy to transfer those thoughts and feelings to God. Have you ever questioned whether God has kept a promise? Have you felt let down or failed? Have you ever felt God keeps His promises for other people but not for you?

I think there is wisdom in living by the motto of “under promise and over deliver.” Be known as a person of your word, who follows through, does what he says.

Is God guilty of over promising and under delivering?

Goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. (Psalm 23)

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4)

God withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly. (Psalm 84:11)

If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. (Matthew 17:20)

If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. (Matthew 18:19)

God causes all things to work for good for those who love Him. (Romans 8:28)

**Philippians 4:19** My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

**II Corinthians 9:8** 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.

Is God guilty of over promising and under delivering? Does He really do more than we ask or imagine? (Ephesians 3:20-21) Can we trust God? Is He a God of His Word?

**GEMS Theme verse. II Corinthians 9:8.**

**II Corinthians 9:8 (NIV)** 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.

**II Corinthians 9:8 (ESV)** 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.

This verse has a context. The context of the verse is Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian church to give generously, for those who sow generously will reap generously and God loves a cheerful giver. But this verse is also a principle of Gospel generosity that applies to many areas of life.

Remember the Gospel. Who does what? God does it all and we do nothing. God first loves and first initiates and first comes and first humbles Himself and first suffers and first dies and first rises from the dead as the first fruits of a great coming harvest of righteousness and resurrection.

God gives us His grace and then we respond with faith and repentance and obedience.

Grace is something you cannot go and get, it is only something you can be given. You can't earn it, deserve it, or make it happen for yourself. You can no more bring about grace than you can bring about your birth.

God is a giver, a grace giver. God is a never-ending fountain of grace of overflowing generosity toward us so that we may be the same toward others.

We were dead, and He makes us alive. We were poor, and He makes us rich.

But we are flesh and our fleshly nature always wants to respond with doubt, with lack of trust, when we feel like His is absent, silent, failing. And when we doubt His promises and provision, then we grasp and hold on and don't let go of what we have already been given. What if I give and then I end up with less? Shouldn't we look out for our own interests?

Have we built dams in our lives to try to keep what He has generously given to us? Do these dams show a lack of faith that God is rich, that God's provision will stop flowing? Will God keep His promises?

## **Understanding God's promises.**

### ***God is able.***

Are you lacking faith, lacking trust, doubting, questioning? Hear this statement of faith. God is able. Soul listen up. Soul that is doubting, listen, to what I preach to you, God is able. Not I am able, but God is able.

### ***What is God able to do?***

God is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3:20-21).

God is able to deliver us from temptation and evil (I Corinthians 10:13).

God is able to guard what He has entrusted to us (II Timothy 1:12).

God is able to raise people from the dead (Hebrews 11:19).

God is able to do all He promises (Romans 4:21).

Let me tease out that word abound and what it can look like in your life. God is able to make you abound, thrive, flourish, prosper, overflow, above and beyond all expectations. God is able to over promise and over deliver. This overflowing glass is a picture of Gospel generosity.

### ***God is able to give all sufficiency in everything.***

Notice the huge sweeping promises in our text, all, all, all, all, everything.

God is able to take care of every need in every circumstance all the time. Who can say something like that? Only the omnipotent God of the universe.

The sufficiency of God is a careful word.

### ***God may, and in fact, often does provide in ways we don't expect.***

Why is some people's sufficiency more or less than other people's sufficiency? Because sufficiency is the measure of what God determines is good for each of us. God knows what is best, what is profitable, what will not bring harm to our souls and cause us to make shipwreck of our faith. (Not too much, not too little, Proverbs 30:9).

God is doing a thousand things in your life right now, though you may only be aware of a few of them. His grace is always abounding toward you.

But what does that work look like? How can we recognize it? Why do we often miss it?

One of the reasons we lack faith in God's provision is because we know that sometimes He provides in ways we don't expect or don't like, and that translates to us as God has failed us, has failed to keep a promise.

If there is something you think you need now that you don't have now, God doesn't think you need it now. He has another reason. Don't grumble against the perfect and loving wisdom of God. What we need now, we have now.

God's good gifts to us contain a mix of pain and pleasure, toil and rest, clouds and sun, storms and calm. Peace like a river or sorrows like sea billows. When streams of abundance flow and when we are in a desert place, when the world's all as it should be and when we are on the road marked with suffering.

Hebrews 11 gives two completely different and opposite pictures of God's provision in this life and in the life to come. Some were victorious and blessed, others were persecuted and lost their lives. All were commended for their faith (Hebrews 11:33-40).

This life is fragile and short, fleeting, just a wisp of smoke. Everything in this life, even the best of things is going to burn up, it is kindling for a really big fire. So why are we so concerned about and anxious about and grasping for the things of this life?

***Our greatest need is God that God provide more of Himself.***

**Matthew 6:33** Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**Psalm 27:4** One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

**Proverbs 3:5-6** Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.

What do we want more, the gift or the giver? What do we delight in more?

If God never did another thing, would He be enough?

God's plan and path is to lead us further up and further in to Him, more of Him, not more stuff.

***God has already made the ultimate provision for your greatest need.***

He has given us the good news of the Gospel. Jesus is the good and perfect gift come down to us from the Father above. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift, far more than we could ask or imagine or deserve.

The lavish love of God compelled Him to send His Son. If He will give us His Son, He will give us anything else we need.

## **Implications and application.**

Consider the fruit of *Gospel generosity* in our lives.

### ***Believing Gospel generosity means the end of grumbling.***

Confidence in God's grace and goodness and perfect provision increases trust and decreases grumbling and complaining.

Grumbling is lack of trust in the providence of God.

Grumbling says we don't believe God cares about the details of our lives.

Grumbling is disbelief in the spectacular promises of God in Scripture.

Grumbling is making little of God's sovereignty and wisdom and goodness.

Grumbling is dishonoring our perfect Father in heaven.

Children and teenagers who grumble and complain about some decision their parents make are dishonoring their parents and saying their parents don't know what's best and right and good.

Christians who grumble and complain and murmur and gripe are doing the same thing our kids do but to our heavenly Father.

Gospel generosity says there can be nothing in our lives that is cause for grumbling. The Lord gives, the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord. (Job 1:21).

### ***Believing this means the end of anxiety.***

**Hebrews 13:5-6** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we can confidently say,

"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

**Psalms 112:7** He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord.

### ***Believing this means the end of fear of finances and fear of generosity.***

Remember the Gospel. What kind of gift has God given us in Christ? If we have been treated like that, how can we be anything but generous to others in need?

A person who has received God's abundant grace and knows God's grace is gracious and generous. If we are neither, then we don't know God or His grace.

Are we a person who wants so much for ourselves that we have so little to give others? Or are we a person who wants so little for ourselves that we are able to give far more to others?

No one has been impoverished by being generous. God multiplies back to us what we need, so we can continue to be generous some more. All who sow bountifully, reap bountifully.

There are two kinds of giving. There is the kind of giving that depends on and trusts in what we already have. And then there is the kind of giving that trusts God's future grace.

God is able to give you all the future grace you need so that you can actually abound in good works, in ministry and service to the Lord.

The enabling grace of God will provide all the means necessary for you to succeed in what He has called you and given into your hands to do.

***Believing this means the end of falling for Satan's lies.***

Believing this means we won't fall for the lie Adam and Eve fell for, that God was withholding something good from them. Believing that God's grace is good and sufficient and abundant, means not taking Satan's bait that happiness or better things or more pleasurable things can be found in sin, in worldly pleasures, in ungodliness.

The truth of Gospel generosity will transform our attitudes and our ability to resist the enemy in the face of his temptations.

So, we are called to be a blessing. What are we called to be a blessing with? With what is ours or with what is God's? What do we have that we have not received? God blesses us with His blessings, so we can be a blessing to others with the blessings He has given us.

And if we spend and give what is His, He is faithful and rich to supply more. He who gives seed to the sower will increase your harvest, so you can sow more and harvest more.

Do you know the sufficiency of God's grace, the abundance of God's grace, the overflowing riches of God's grace toward us in Jesus?

Increase your ability to see God's Gospel generosity all around you, in those thousands of ways, and look for it in others. Make much of God and His sufficient and abounding grace. Boast in it, worship Him for it. Preach it to yourself.

**Ephesians 2:7** in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

And I can guarantee you when you see the ten million ways God has been faithful to all His promises and has blessed you with every material and spiritual blessing you are going

to wish you had been freer and more generous and had been more of a blessing to others as the GEMS have encouraged us to be.