

June 8, 2014 by Steve Brandon



# The Benefits of Giving

## Philippians 4:15-19

- 1. Giving Makes an Impact (verses 15-16).**
- 2. Giving Adds to Your Account (verse 17).**
- 3. Giving Pleases God (verse 18).**
- 4. Giving Brings God's Blessing (verse 19).**

This past week I met a pastor who planted a church a little over five years ago. He had obtained some funding through a church planting organization to plant this church. The arrangement of the organization was that the funding for the church plant would run out in five years. And so, he has been laboring in the harvest. And many of the people in the church have come to Christ through his ministry. Well, in recent months, the five years ran out. And the church now has the burden of fully funding the work itself. By God's grace, they are able to fully fund themselves, but it hasn't been easy.

This pastor related to me a particular challenge: teaching new Christians how to give. For years, they have lived for themselves, developing habits of spending everything that they earned on themselves, with little thought given to giving of their resources to others. Yet, God's people have been taught to give. And I trust that in years to come, they will learn to give in greater and greater ways.

Now, as we come this morning to Philippians chapter 4, we will hear of a young church comprised of new converts who learned quickly how to give. And in this way, they stood out as an example among the other churches in their region. Consider our text:

Philippians 4:15-19

You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

These are words of commendation to the Philippians. When Paul came to Philippi, Christ had not yet been preached there. He heard that there was a prayer meeting down by the river each Sabbath. And so, he went. There he met a few women and preached the gospel to them. Lydia, a seller of purple fabrics, heard Paul's words and "the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul" (Acts 16:14). She believed and was baptized and urged Paul and Titus to come into her house and stay for a while (Acts 16:15).

Soon afterwards, he found himself beaten with rods and thrown in prison for disturbing the peace. Soon afterwards the leaders of the city told them to leave. After leaving Philippi, "they traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, [and] they came to Thessalonica" (Acts 17:1). Paul was there for only three weeks. But in that time, the church in Philippi sent at least two financial gifts to help Paul in his ministry. That's what we see in verse 16, ...

Philippians 4:16

for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

Thessalonica and Philippi were less than 100 miles apart. There was certainly enough time for some messengers to go back and forth to let the church in Philippi know what was happening in Thessalonica and even to deliver a gift. And on two occasions, they sent a gift to Paul, who received them and was helped by them in the ministry. That's the point of verse 15, ...

Philippians 4:15

You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

Paul was commending them for giving to his ministry, especially as they were the only church who helped Paul during those early days of the expansion of the gospel into Macedonia and beyond. In general, this was Paul's pattern. Not to take any money from churches where the gospel was brand new. But instead to rely upon his own labor, as in Corinth, where he made tents with Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:2-3). Or to rely upon the labor of his friends, such as Silas and Timothy, who, upon their arrival in Corinth supported Paul completely (Acts 18:5). Or to rely upon other churches to help him, but never from new churches.

In fact, there were times when Paul never took any money from the churches to which he was ministering. Listen to 2 Corinthians 11:7-8 --

"Did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge? I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you."

That's not to say that he didn't receive any financial help at all from others. He did. And on his first trip into Macedonia, the church in Philippi was a church that helped him. In fact, it was the only church to help. Not the church in Iconium, Lystra, or Derbe (Acts 16:1-2). Not the church in Thessalonica or Berea (Acts 17:1-15). Only Philippi. This fact speaks to how much this church cared for Paul in the early days of his ministry.

However, it had been ten years since those days. And now, Paul has received another gift from Philippi. Thus, the reason for this letter to the Philippian church. "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me" (Philippians 4:10).

Now, here's my first point about giving. ...

## **1. Giving Makes an Impact (verses 15-16).**

Certainly, it made an impact in Paul's ministry. It enabled him to minister to those in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, where he remained for a year and a half (Acts 18:11). And as you give towards the ministry of those who are ministering the word of God, it will make an impact. As God has promised, his word goes out and it never returns void "without accomplishing what [God] desires" (Isaiah 55:11).

And so, I encourage you, every little gift helps. We don't know how large the gifts to Paul were. But I would suspect that they were somewhat small. The church wasn't big in Philippi; it had only just started. And they were only learning how to give. But, God will make an impact with every gift that is given.

But, there's another impact that giving makes. It makes an impact upon the one who receives the gift. Just think about the timing of this letter. The Philippians had given Paul a few gifts some ten years ago. And then, nothing for 10 years. And now, here has come another gift.

Paul knows in his mind what those in Philippi gave. He remembers that they gave him financial help 10 years ago. He remembers that they gave him nothing for 10 years. He knows now that their hearts of concern for Paul were revived (verse 10) and that they now gave him a gift. And Paul remembers some very specific details about this giving 10 years ago. He remembers that the Philippian church was the only church to give. He remembers that they give a gift twice.

And so, I ask you, "How does Paul know this?" Did he keep a ledger of all the gifts that were given to him? Did he consult this ledger to do a bit of research, noticing then that the Philippian church was the only church that gave during those days? Or, does giving make such an impact upon those who receive it that they can often remember the kindness shown, even decades later.

I remember being a poor student in seminary. There was a man at the church who befriended me. He was a single man, who had a very well-paying engineering job at one of the local aerospace companies. He was very bright and for some reason took an interest in my plight. I had gone to seminary straight from college where I studied physics and computer science. I was able to speak with him about scientific things. I believe that he was curious as to how a scientific mind would endure the rigors of seminary, which is all about literature. We had some great conversations. He would often probe into my mind to see what sorts of things I was learning and how I was doing spiritually.

He had resources and I had need. And I can remember on a number of occasions, how he would take me out to a restaurant and pick up the tab. I remember going to the doctor one time and he paid my bill. I remember that he gave me some books that he thought would be helpful to me. He was very generous toward me. He gave, never expecting me to give in return. He knew full well my situation. He knew full well that he was making far more money than he could ever spend on himself.

Now, I can't remember the exact details about how much he helped me in those days. But, I would guess over the two years that I was in California, he probably gifted me some \$300 in financial help. It was not a lot. And it was much out of friendship. And so, I think that he simply wanted to be a blessing in my life. And he was. I would suspect that when I left, he picked up another student to show his kindness to.

But, my point is this. To this day, his generosity toward me has never been forgotten. I haven't seen him for 15 years. I spent some time yesterday trying to track him down to extend a note of thankfulness to him. [👉](#)When I think of him, I think of his generosity toward me.

He made an impact upon my life. He helped me in my need during my seminary years. He has shown me the sort of blessing that I might be in the lives of others if I am generous toward others. Giving makes an impact (verses 15-16). Have you made an impact on others?

Let's turn now to my second point, ...

## **2. Giving Adds To Your Account (verse 17).**

Now, this is exactly opposite of what we might think. We generally think the other way. When I give, my account decreases; it doesn't increase. But, this is what Paul says: "giving increases your account." Look at verse 17, ...

Philippians 4:17

Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

Now, again, Paul is giving us his perspective on why he is so joyful at receiving the gift from the Philippians. It's not because he speaks from want (verse 11). Nor is it that he seeks the gift for himself (verse 17). Rather, he knows that as the Philippians gave this gift, their account

was increased.

You say, "How does this work?" Well, it works like this. You have two accounts. And when you give to the work of the Lord, your earthly account decreases. But your heavenly account increases. That's what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, ...

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

He's talking about giving. As you give of your resources to God's work, you are actually storing up treasures in heaven. Now, the good thing about your treasures in heaven is that they will never default. They won't rust. They won't be stolen. They simply accumulate. God knows full well where your account in heaven sits. And He will see to it that it will be there when you arrive.

Now, one of the things that I love about how Jesus says this is that he's looking out for our best interest. Any good financial planner will direct you direct you and your investments into the place that earns the best return. And Jesus says that your best return is to invest your earthly dollars into your heavenly account.

Randy Alcorn says this, ...

Consider what Jesus is saying: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth." Why not? Because earthly treasures are bad? No. *Because they won't last.*

Scripture says, "Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle" (Proverbs 23:5). What a picture. Next time you buy a prized possession, imagine it sprouting wings and flying off. Sooner or later it will disappear.

But when Jesus warns us not to store up treasures on earth, it's not just because wealth *might* be lost; It's because wealth will *always* be lost. Either it leaves us while we live, or we leave it when we die. No exceptions. [\[2\]](#)

Paul saw this and knew this. And so did the Philippians. And that's what made Paul so happy. They understood! They were building up their treasures in heaven.

God knows every dollar that you have ever invested in His kingdom. Jesus said, "Whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42). Jesus said, "When you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Luke 14:13-14). The Lord remembers every cup of cold water that you gave. And you won't lose your reward for such deeds. The Lord remembers every time you help the helpless, and you will be repaid. Because, giving adds to your account (verse 17).

Seemingly every year a story hits the papers of an older person who lived very frugally, and yet, left millions to their favorite charity. Like the story of Margaret Southern. She lived in a modest townhouse in Greenville, South Carolina. There was nothing particularly striking about her. She taught special needs children. She cared for her ailing brother for almost a decade. She loved the Atlanta Braves and would stay up late watching them play. When she died, she requested that there be no funeral, no memorial, or even an obituary. She wanted to be cremated and buried with her brother and parents. And yet, when she died last October (8 months ago) at the age of 94, she left \$8.4 million to the Community Foundation of Greenville to benefit children and animals.

Her husband was successful as an actuary. He died in 1983 and left her a comfortable, but not large estate. She returned to Greenville in the mid 1980's, and began investing. Through the success of 3M and General Foods and Heinz, her account began to amass to the millions she was able to give away at her death. [\[3\]](#)

How many are doing the same with their heavenly account? Humbly investing their resources in the kingdom of God, and dying relatively poor, but rich in heaven. They have us all fooled. By earthly standards, they are living modestly. And yet, when eternity unfolds, all will be made known. They were investing in eternity.

A missionary friend of mine who has spent his days in Ukraine was recently reflecting upon those who have given to his ministry, allowing him to train pastors in Kiev for several decades now. And he wrote this, "We wouldn't be here without some very sly people who are quietly but steadily amassing their fortunes in heaven" (Bruce and Aimee).

How's your heavenly bank account doing? If you want it to increase, you need to invest it by giving. You will never regret what you invest there.

Well, let's move on to my third point, ...

### 3. Giving Pleases God (verse 18).

Philippians 4:18

But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus

what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

With these words, Paul is affirming that the gift that was sent to him by those in Philippi was more than enough to meet his need. Because of their gift, he lacked nothing. God had met his every need, and then some.

And as he writes, he is fully content with everything that he has (4:11). But, Paul was content regardless of his financial state. We saw this last week, "Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need" (Philippians 4:11-12).

With the gift that the Philippians had sent, Paul was in one of those "having abundance," situations. Their gift came by a man named Epaphroditus, a man of integrity, who had been entrusted with the responsibility of bringing the gift to Paul. Epaphroditus, as you remember, was a member of the church in Philippi and had brought the gift to Paul in Rome. Some of his story is told back in chapter 2. In verse 25, Paul describes Epaphroditus "my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier." He described him as "your messenger and minister to my need."

Traveling in those days with large sums of money was a dangerous work. From best that we can tell, he faced some dangers along the way to deliver the gift to Paul. We don't know if there were dangers from people or dangers from disease. But, we do know (according to verse 30) that, "he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me."

While there in Rome with Paul, he was "sick to the point of death" (verse 27), which the Philippians had heard about (verse 26). But, now, he had recovered enough for Paul to send him back to Philippi. In fact it was he who brought this letter back to Philippi, in many ways, far more valuable than any money that the Philippians had sent to Paul. But notice how he describes the gift that the Philippians sent him. He said that it was, ...

Philippians 4:18

... a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

Paul borrows from the sacrificial language of the Old Testament. Animals were brought to the priests with a heart of humility and repentance. And when that animal was killed and offered up in fire by the high priest upon the altar, the smoke of the sacrifice ascended to heaven. We read in several places in Leviticus that the offering by fire was "a soothing aroma to the LORD." <sup>[4]</sup>Over and over the LORD repeats this phrase. It will be, "a soothing aroma to the LORD, ... a soothing aroma to the LORD, ... a soothing aroma to the LORD."

Apparently, the LORD delights in the smell of burnt flesh. When we burn something in the kitchen, we open the windows and turn on the fans, seeking to rid the house of the burnt smell. But, God, on the other hand, took deep breaths of the smoke of the burning flesh and was well-pleased and satisfied with the sacrifice. And that's the idea here of verse 18. When we give of our resources to kingdom work, our giving is pleasing to God. God takes pleasure in our giving.

God takes pleasure in it for the same reason that Paul rejoiced in the gift that the Philippians had sent. Paul was happy, not so much in the gift itself (verse 17), but in the "profit that increases to your account" (verse 17). God is happy, not so much in the gift itself, but in the "profit that increases to your account" (verse 17).

The call of Christ in the call to abandon this world and to live by faith for the world to come. He gave His all for us. We give our all for him. "And he died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf" (2 Corinthians 5:15). And when we give of our resources to the world to come, God is greatly pleased with us, because we show that Christ is our treasure and not the things on earth.

We read in Hebrews 11 of all of those who lived by faith and were pleasing to God. Hebrews 11:6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." And giving is often an act of faith, believing and trusting in God's provision, as we give away from a portion of what we have received. And when we have that faith, God is pleased with us. With faith, it is possible.

As we give to build His kingdom, it shows that we are seeking "a better country, that is a heavenly one." And the promise of Hebrews 11:16 is that God is not ashamed to be called our God as He prepares a city for us. Giving Pleases God (verse 18).

When Paul spoke of giving in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, he spoke of the joy of God when we give. He said, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Do you want to please God? Then give to His kingdom. Give with a joyful, cheerful, thankful and willing heart.

David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29, after the funds had been secured to build the temple, is such a great model of this. I will read it in full that you might catch a glimpse of joyful giving that pleases the LORD.

1 Chronicles 29:10-19

So David blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed are You, O Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name.

"But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours. Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness, I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You.

I trust that you can sense the willing joyfulness of David as he was able to give to the people. Such an attitude is pleasing to God.

Let's move on to our final point this morning.

#### **4. Giving Brings God's Blessing (verse 19).**

Philippians 4:19

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

This is one of the great promises of all the Bible. It promises that God will meet all of our needs. Now, before you take this promise and run with it, I want to caution you.

Last week we saw how Philippians 4:13 is often taken out of context. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." People take that as an absolute promise that anything you want to accomplish is possible. You simply need to believe in Christ. And last week we saw that the promise is more about Christ being enough. It speaks of Christ's ability to make us content. Whether we have plenty or little, we can be content in God.

And this week, I say that Philippians 4:19 can often be taken out of context as well. Oh, it's a comforting promise. It's a promise that we will never lack, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). But, I ask you, "To whom is this promise given?" It is given to those in Philippi who had sacrificed to send Paul a financial gift. It is given to those who are giving away their resources for kingdom purposes. In other words, *it is given to givers*.

If you are here this morning resting upon this promise, while at the same time, clutching onto your worldly possessions and not giving to God's work, then this promise has no part in your life. The overwhelming message of the Bible is this: God will bless those who give. Those who give much will be blessed much. Those who give little will be blessed little.

2 Corinthians 9:6

He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the LORD from your wealth  
and from the first of all your produce;  
So your barns will be filled with plenty  
and your vats will overflow with new wine.

Prov. 11:24

There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more,  
And there is one who withholds what is justly due,  
and yet it results only in want.

This doesn't make sense. How can someone scatter their wealth and yet increase all the more? This is how God works. You give, and God will return it to your life with a blessing. And the promise of verse 19 will be very real, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

When we are generous, God promises to supply all of our "needs." Verse 19 is not saying that God has promised to make us rich. Verse 19 is not saying that God has promised to overflow our lives with abundant wealth. No, if we are generous, then God will supply all of our "needs." You can bank on that. You trust in the Lord and give, and God will provide for you.

But, if you don't trust the Lord and don't give, you may not know God's provision in your life. In fact, when the people of Israel came back into the land after the Babylonian captivity, they faced some hardship. The hardship came because they weren't giving to God's work.

Haggai 1:7-8

Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Consider your ways! Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified," says the LORD.

In other words, give to God's kingdom work for God's glory and pleasure. God continues, ...

Haggai 1:9

"You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?" declares the Lord of hosts, "Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house."

Those in Jerusalem were taking care of their own needs while neglecting the house of God. It was in dis-repair. And God had told them to give to the work. But, they weren't giving to God's work. They were consuming all of their resources on themselves. And so, God continues, ...

Haggai 1:10-11

Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

Because they weren't giving, they didn't see God's blessing upon their life. In fact, they saw God's curse. They saw the rains withheld. They saw a drought on the land. They saw their income diminished.

And God can do the same with each and every one of you. He can give you the work. He can grant you the sales. He can give you the promotion. He can give you the raise.

But, if you refuse to be a giver, God can withhold the work. God can stop the sales. God can prevent the promotion. He can tank the company, so that everyone in the corporation must take a pay cut to survive.

Now, I don't believe that it's a tit-for-tat where you give "x" amount, and God will bless you "x" amount. You withhold "x" amount, and God will withhold "x" amount. God's ways are more mysterious than that. But, if the flow of your life is one of giving, you will know the provision of God in your life, and Philippians 4:19 will be true in your life. "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Randy Alcorn says this: "Ironically, many people can't afford to give precisely *because* they're not giving (Haggai 1:9-11). If we pay our debt to God first, then we will incur His blessing to help us pay our debts to men. But when we rob God to pay men, we rob ourselves of God's blessing. No wonder we don't have enough. It's a vicious cycle, and it takes obedient faith to break out of it." [\[5\]](#)

And for those who break out of it and give to God's kingdom, the promise of verse 19 is theirs. "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Randy Alcorn then goes on to speak about the tithe. He writes, ...

When people tell me they can't afford to tithe, I ask them, "If your income was reduced by 10 percent would you die?" They say, "No." And I say, "Then you've admitted that you can afford to tithe. It's just that you don't *want* to."

I'm not saying that it's easy to give. I'm saying--and there are thousands who will agree--that it's much easier to live on 90 percent or 50 percent or 10 percent of your income *inside* the will of God that it is to live on 100 percent *outside* it.

Tithing is like a toddler's first steps: They aren't his last or best steps, but they're a good start. Once you learn to ride a bike, you don't need the training wheels. Once you learn to give, tithing becomes irrelevant. And if you can ride the bike without ever using training wheels, good for you.

I have no problem with people who say 'we're not under the tithe,' just as long as they're not using that as justification for giving less. But in my mind the current giving statistics among Christians clearly indicate most of us need a giving jump-start. If you find a gateway to giving that's better than the tithe, wonderful. But if not, why not start where God started His First Covenant children?" [\[6\]](#)

As I said last week, the tithe is a good starting point. As the Lord blesses you, be ready and willing to give to His kingdom beyond the tithe. Notice how God's blessing comes. "And my God will supply all your needs *according to* His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Note that verse 19 doesn't say, "And my God will supply all your needs *out of* His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." It isn't "out of" God's riches that He supplies. It is "according to" God's riches that He supplies. And the difference is immense.

Suppose for a moment that you have caught the eye of a multi-millionaire. He has compassion upon you and wants to help you financially. He says, "I see that you are struggling in your life. The work hasn't come. Circumstances have turned against you. But, I have a heart for you. I want you to know that I will meet all of your needs out of my riches."

How does that sound? It sounds pretty good. I think that most of us would accept such a deal. But, that's not what verse 19 is saying. Here's what verse 19 is saying.

Suppose for a moment that you have caught the eye of a multi-millionaire. He has compassion upon you and wants to help you financially. He says, "I see that you are struggling in your life. The work hasn't come. Circumstances have turned against you. But, I have a heart for you. I want you to know that I will meet all of your needs according to my riches."

Do you hear the difference? In the first circumstance, the millionaire is going to give you out of his resources (which are vast) to help you. As he gives to you, his wealth will decrease ever so slightly. But, in the second circumstance, the millionaire is going to give you according to his resources to help you. In other words, his giving to you will be in measure with his wealth, not from his wealth. And the question comes, "How much are 'His riches in glory in Christ Jesus'?" Christ simply owns everything. How's that?

Psalm 50:10-12

For every beast of the forest is Mine,  
The cattle on a thousand hills.  
I know every bird of the mountains,  
And everything that moves in the field is Mine.  
If I were hungry I would not tell you,  
For the world is Mine, and all it contains.

I recently saw a graphic denoting how much money some of the richest people in the world have and what cities they could purchase. Warren Buffet (at \$56.1 billion) could purchase Charlotte, NC. Bill Gates (at \$76.6 billion) could purchase Boston. The Walton Family (of Walmart, at \$111.5 billion) could purchase Seattle, WA! [7] But, God could purchase every city. His resources never lack. He is able to bless those who give according to His wealth.

So, let's be a giving people and know the provision of God in our lives.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on June 8, 2014 by Steve Brandon.  
For more information see [www.rvbc.cc](http://www.rvbc.cc).

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[1] Two days after I gave my message, I received the following note from a mutual friend, "Good to hear from you Steve. I have some good and sad news for you. [Our friend] died of a very aggressive skin cancer two years ago. The good news is that he is out of pain and enjoying the Savior." I replied, "Thanks for letting me know. It was over a decade since I spoke with him. I used his kindness and generosity toward me in my message on Sunday as an illustration and wanted to encourage him. But, he has all the encouragement that he needs now, having fully received his reward (Matthew 10:42)."

[2] Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*, p. 13, emphasis his.

[3] <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/01/30/millionaire-teacher-gift/5065425/>

[4] See Leviticus 1:9, 13, 17; 2:12; 3:16.

[5] Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*, p. 66, emphasis his.

[6] *Ibid*, pp. 66-67, emphasis his.

[7] <http://twentytwowords.com/map-shows-what-town-your-favorite-billionaire-could-afford-to-buy-in-whole/>