

PRAYER AND FASTING GUIDE

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WINTER 02

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“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. 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.” - 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

In God’s story of His love for humanity, He gave what He decided in His heart to give, which was Jesus. He never reluctantly or under compulsion chose to sacrifice His son so we could be reunited with Him. God went first to show us how to live out 2 Corinthians 9:7-8. He gave everything and because of that, we have been blessed abundantly so that in all things and at all times, we have all that we need.

There are seasons when it doesn’t feel or even look like we have all that we need. In fact, at times we can feel like we are operating in lack. When we are in these seasons, our fleshly response is to cling tightly to what we have and withhold from giving because we don’t know when or even if things will be restored.

So, what do we do in these seasons? How do we live lives reflecting these verses? We live with open hands cheerfully. We decide in our hearts it all belongs to the Lord, and we are merely stewards of what we have been given. We ask God to give us eyes to see the way He does, and we approach each day as a gift.

These verses are not referring to just monetary things. This also refers to our time, our talents, and our treasures. We have each been given gifts and talents that can be used to bring heaven to earth. We have been given time where we can host people in our homes, serve on a team, or sit with someone who is sick or in need of company. We have treasures that can be sown to help advance God's purpose.

As we are fasting and praying, reflect on this area. How are we living? With a closed fist or an open hand? Together, let's ask God to illuminate the areas of our lives where we have given reluctantly and ask Him to show us how we can be cheerful givers.

READ:

Luke 10:25-37

REFLECT:

- *What were the roles of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan when this parable was told?*
- *Why would Jesus highlight the Samaritan in the story as the “hero”?*
- *Were any of the three obligated to give?*
- *In what ways did the Samaritan give above and beyond?*

PRAYER:

Father, thank you for giving your most valuable gift so we could live. Teach me how to give like You. Open my eyes to the gifts and talents I have been given that can be used to build your kingdom. Show me the amount in which You want me to sow financially this year. Help me to live with an open hand and to do so with a cheerful heart. I trust You will make up for any lack in my life and provide for all of my needs. In Jesus' name, amen.