

“Not a Needy Person among Them” – How the Grace of God Makes a Generous People

Introduction

The Text

³² Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. ³⁶ Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, ³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. (Acts 4:32–37)

It's Complicated

- A. I think it's safe to say we all probably have a bit of a complicated relationship with money. It's hard, especially here in Silicon Valley, where it seems so front-of-mind all the time.
 - 1. Some of the richest people in the world live here. There's a lot of money in the area.
 - 2. And that amount of wealth, all localized like it is, of course, drives up the cost of living for others in our cities, accentuating the fact that they don't have it. They're barely scraping by.
 - a. I just saw a study the other day pointing out, no surprise, that the wealth disparity in Silicon Valley is one of the worst in the nation. So, for example, the top 0.001% of Silicon Valley households hold more wealth than the bottom 50% combined.
 - i. And so, for various reasons, everyone around the Bay Area seems to be chasing after the almighty dollar. I'm sure you feel a little caught up in the mix of that yourself.
- B. And that's what makes Luke's account of the early church in [Acts 4](#) here so astounding.
 - 1. They're not chasing the dollar.
 - 2. They're giving it up, they're letting it go in love for the needy among them, around them.
 - a. It's a Christian counter-culture. It makes no sense . . . until it does.
- C. And that's what I want to help us see this morning. I want to connect the dots for us between the gospel and grace of God and the stunning, seemingly irrational, generosity of his people.

1. And so with, regard to this generosity, we're going to look at just two things as they appear in our text: (1) The Facts; and (2) The Means. I want you to see that these early Christians are radically generous. And I want you to see where it all comes from.

(1) The Facts

First Pass Through These Verses

- A. The first thing I want to make sure we're clear on is just the fact these early Christians are amazingly free from an enamored with money and they're willing to share with anyone who has need.
- B. So Luke begins straightaway there in v. 32: "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul . . ."
 1. It sounds beautiful! But what does it mean?
 - a. Well, I think it means that their hearts and very lives were intertwined to such a degree that they would weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. "If you are burdened, I'm burdened. If you're blessed, I'm blessed." One heart. One soul. That's the idea.
 2. And this profound unity evidences itself in the way they handle their money and possessions . . .
- C. So Luke continues: ". . . and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common" (v. 32).
 1. It's one thing to say: "I love you and we're united and we're brothers and sisters, family in Christ," and all this.
 2. And it's another thing to say: "What's mine is yours and I regard whatever I have as part of the common purse," as it were.
 - a. You say: "Put your money where your mouth is." Well, these early Christians are literally doing just that.
 3. It's interesting. The same Greek word translated here as "his own [Gk. idios]"—"no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own [Gk. idios]"—is the same Greek word that showed up earlier in Acts 4:23 to refer to the people or "friends" that Peter and John quickly rushed off to after they were released by the religious authorities: "When they were released, they went to their friends [Gk. idios = lit. 'to their own]."
 - a. And I bring this up because I think the implication is profound. And it shows you what starts to shift when you come Jesus.
 - i. Now, on the one hand, they look at their brothers and sisters in Christ and say: "You are my own."

- ii. But then, on the other hand, they look at their stuff and say: “None of this is my own.”

- (1) Because they are of one heart and soul with God’s people, they are free and loose with their own things, willing to let go of it, to leverage it for the good of others. Don’t you see? They are attached and devoted to each other, not to their stuff.

- b. Sadly, so often it’s the opposite here, especially in America isn’t it?

- i. I’m devoted to my stuff . . .
 - ii. And if you get in the way of that, if you threaten that, if you start costing me more than you’re paying off for me, I’ll get rid of you, without even thinking twice. I’ll just cut you off like the parasite that you are. Thinking you could get my money, my things, my time, my whatever.

- (1) And that kind of attitude poisons the church as well.

- (2) But it’s not here at the beginning. And I don’t want it to be at Mercy Hill. “You are my own, but my stuff, for all I care, it’s yours.”

- D. And because of that, Luke goes on down in v. 34 to tell us: “There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold³⁵ and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

Early Communism?

- A. Now, let me just be clear on this: we are not talking about some early form of Communism here. That’s not what this is. It’s Christian communalism, but it’s not early Communism.

- 1. How do I know?

- B. Well, for one thing, as we’ve seen already, the motivation for selling and giving isn’t ultimately coming from outside pressure from the apostles or something. It’s coming from the inside—we are “of one heart and soul” (v. 32).

- 1. And that implies this giving isn’t forced, it’s voluntary. I want to do it. It’s from my heart. It’s not from the governing authorities or something like that.

- C. And this becomes even more plain when we see later how Peter deals with Ananias and Saphira when they come and try to deceive him into thinking they’re giving more than they are.

- 1. Here’s what he says in Acts 5:4: “While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal?”

- a. In other words: “If you wanted to keep the property, you could have. If you wanted to sell it and keep the proceeds for yourself, you could have. You’re not in trouble here because you kept some back for yourself and you broke some Christian Communist code of conduct. You’re in trouble because you’re lying, acting like

you're giving it all when in fact you're not. If you wanted to keep it, just keep it. This is voluntary. From the heart."

- i. We'll look at whatever may have been motivating them next time. But, this time, at least note this: the generosity we see with these early Christians was not compelled by the apostles from the outside. It was voluntary—bubbling up from the heart. "I want give. I want to help."
- ii. As Paul writes in [2 Cor. 9:7](#): "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

D. And beyond all of this, it's obvious that, though some Christians are selling their properties and things here, many still retained their homes and things.

1. So earlier in [Acts 2](#), when Luke is giving a similar summary of the life of the early church, he says this: "⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need" (vv. 44–45). So it sounds like they're just getting rid of everything, right?

a. But then in [v. 46](#), Luke tells us that "day by day, [they were] attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes . . ."

i. In other words: many still had homes. Many still had property and possessions. Some sold, and some kept—but all were living generously and were ready to give as God called them to.

2. And, later, when Lydia's heart is opened by God to so that she really dials into what Paul is saying and she comes to faith. After she's baptized, Luke says that "she urged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.' And she prevailed upon us" ([Acts 16:15](#)). In other words: "and so we went."

a. They don't say: "Hey, I'm so sorry this wasn't made plain earlier, but now that you're a Christian—if you really want to be a Christian—you can't have that house anymore. Good thing Paul is an apostle, you can go sell it, and bring the proceeds right back to him. Or better yet, just turn the keys over here and now and we'll take it off your hands, thank you very much."

b. They don't say that. Because this isn't early Communism. This is Christian communalism. And she actually exemplifies that, don't you see? "Come to my house, I want to share. What's mine is yours. Make yourself at home." That's the heart underneath all of this. She has it!

E. The issue here is not whether or not we can still possess things, the issue is whether such things truly still possess us.

1. That's what's clearly implied by those stunning words back up in [Acts 4:32](#): "no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own . . ."

- a. Did you catch it? They still had things that belonged to them, but they just didn't reckon it all as such. They didn't "say" it was theirs and only theirs. Something changed in the way they spoke about their possessions.
 - i. They had possessions, but they weren't possessed by them. They considered their stuff ready for use to help any who had need. If that means selling it at some point, well I've already put it in God's hands. "It's his, it's yours; it's not really mine."

F. And so we have to ask: Well, where then does this come from? If these Christians are so generous, but it's not because they're forced to from the outside, instead something has changed on the inside—what is that? How do I become more like this?

(2) The Means (v. 33)

Second Pass Through These Verses

- A. So here we come to this idea of the means. And for this I should like to make another pass through these verses in an effort to make the matter especially clear.
- B. First, we can't miss the fact that this radical generosity is being shown by those whom Luke refers to as "believers." Look at v. 32: "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul"
 - 1. So they were believers, but believers in what?
- C. Well, for this we see something of it at the beginning of v. 33: "And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus"
 - 1. In other words, they are hearing and believing the gospel of Jesus Christ—that he lived the life we should have lived, died the death we should have died, and rose again on the third day as evidence that God received his sacrifice for our sin and we can now be fully forgiven and restored to God through him.
 - a. It's the good news of God's grace.
- D. And that's why Luke goes on in v. 33 to conclude: "[A]nd great grace was upon them all."

"Great Grace"

- A. So, where does such generosity and self-sacrificial love come from? What are the means? What is enabling this behavior?
 - 1. It's not coming from the outside pressure of governing authorities.
 - 2. It's not from the moral law of God bearing its weight upon us until we finally break down and conform.
 - 3. It's not even from looking to Jesus as a good example and trying our best to follow in his footsteps.

4. It's from grace. The grace of God comes to settle in our hearts like a stick of dynamite. We take it in and it detonates on the interior, lighting up everything, changing everything!
- B. This is the connection made all over the New Testament—the free grace of God enables the wild generosity of his people . . .
1. There is perhaps no more clearer an example of this than what we find in [2 Cor. 8](#). There Paul is writing to the Corinthians, encouraging them to give generously to meet the needs of the suffering saints in Jerusalem. And here's what he says: ¹"We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ²for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—⁵and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. ⁶Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. ⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (vv. 1-9). He goes on but I'll stop there.
 - a. You see it, don't you? He says: "Listen Corinthians. Here's how I know the grace of God has been active among the Christians in Macedonia. Even in their affliction, even in their extreme poverty, even though things were so hard for them personally, when they heard of the suffering Christians in Jerusalem, still they begged that I might let them take part in sharing whatever they had left to bless them. They gave according to their means and beyond their means. We couldn't stop them or stay the hand of their generosity."
 - b. That's what the grace of God looks like when it's at work among a people. Because that's what Jesus has done for us.
 - i. He gave his life to save us. He was made a beggar on that cross—naked and alone, forsaken by his Father—all so that we could be brought in as God's children, qualified now to share in his eternal inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.
- C. Listen, when you truly get the grace of God for you, it changes the way you handle your money. It has to. And if it hasn't, what it reveals to us is that there is some unbelief and some disconnect between us and the grace God is offering in Jesus.

Disentangling from Money

- A. Let me try to show how this works out a little more practically. For this, I want to consider: What is it that makes it so hard for us to disentangle and detach ourselves from money and wealth and all this? Why does it have such a hold on us in the first place?

- B. Do you remember Jesus' interaction with the rich young ruler?
1. The guy wants to follow God it would seem. He asks Jesus what else he needs to do to inherit eternal life. And when Jesus discerns that money is the issue and he calls him to give it up, to sell what he has and give it to the poor and come follow him, he can't do it. He can't let it go. And some of us may be like that, you know.
 - a. But why?
- C. It seems to me that we come to money because it promises us three things in particular.
1. And I just want to identify each of these for us.
 2. And then I want to show you how Jesus and his grace offers it to you in a much more full and lasting way.
 3. And the upshot, again, is that, when you really get grace, you no longer look to money to do this for you and you're free to unleash it in love for God and others.

Promise #1: Status

- A. One of the things we come to money looking for is status, right? Here's how I know I'm worth something. Here's how I know I'm better than you. Here's what sets me apart . . . I have money.
1. I live in this house in this neighborhood on this side of town. My kids go to this school, not that one. Look at the car I drive. Look at the phone I have. Look at the clothes I wear.
 - a. I remember as a kid, I so badly wanted to be wearing Nike shoes, and my mom would sometimes want to go to Payless ShoeSource as it was called, and you get all these knock off brands. Probably the same quality shoe, but it didn't have the swoosh. So it was a fraction of the price. But I would fight her on it. "Mom, I can't show up at school wearing these! It lowers my status. I'm not as cool."
 2. So it's hard to give up my money because that's what we use to help establish our status and self-worth. It's how I know I matter. It's how I know I'm better.
- B. But, listen, in the gospel, because of grace, Jesus offers you a status so much more substantial and lasting. He offers you right standing with God, now and forever.
1. It doesn't go up and down with what brand you're wearing, or with the bottom line in your bank account, or something.
 2. It's stable. Because it's attached to Jesus. He's risen up never to die again—he lives to make intercession for you, his righteousness is credited to you.
 - a. You know you're worth something not because of what you're able to do, but because of what he's already done for you . . . in grace.
- C. There's a place in Luke's gospel ([Luke 16:19-31](#)) where Jesus, I think, is trying to get at this very point. He tells a parable contrasting the fates of this rich man and poor man. And it's really interesting.

1. The rich man has everything this life has to offer—he clothes himself in lavish purple garments, he feasts on the finest of foods every day, he indulges in all the comforts and extravagances and all this.
 2. And the poor man is laid at this rich man’s gate, and even though the rich man passes by him with frequency he shows not a hint of compassion or charity.
 3. And, in the parable, they both die. And the rich man descends to hell, but the poor man is carried up to God.
- D. And, while there is much to be said about this parable, there is one little detail that’s always intrigued me.
1. The poor man in this parable is given a name by Jesus (in fact, he’s the only person in all of Jesus’ parables to whom he gives a name): “[And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus . . .](#)” (v. 20).
 2. But the rich man, interestingly enough, remains nameless.
 - a. It’s odd, isn’t it—that Jesus would name one and not the other? It seems so odd, in fact, that some scribes, copying the manuscripts and things down through years, thought this to be a sort of mix up in the text, and they attempted to give the rich man a name as well. But it’s clearly not a part of the original.
- E. And it misses Jesus’ point. Don’t you see? He didn’t give the man a name because he didn’t intend to. I think it’s Jesus’ way of getting at this status thing.
1. You see, we like to think that money helps us make a name for ourselves. “Ah, now we know we’re something.”
 - a. In this life, everyone probably knew this rich man’s name. Isn’t he somebody!
 - b. But Jesus says that guy, so far as eternity is concerned, he has no name, no status in the kingdom of heaven. He attached his name, his worth, his identity to his stuff and so when he inevitably had to part with his stuff, so too he lost his name.
 - c. But this poor man, whom everyone looked over throughout his life—to be sure, no one knew his name. Why should they care?
 - d. But because he was right with God, because put his hope in the grace of God, his name is known in heaven and his status is secure.
- F. Listen, if you know that your name is known by God, that you have right-standing with him in Jesus, that you are worth something to him, then you don’t need money to prop up your fragile ego or set you apart from others. You can give it away.
1. You matter to God. You don’t need to prove yourself to men.

Promise #2: Satisfaction

- A. Here's the second thing we come to money looking for: satisfaction. Now, of course, with this I'm not saying that we actually think money itself will satisfy, but we do see money as the key that opens the door to all the stuff that will. It unlocks the treasure chest. Money gives us access to whatever we want.
1. If we think that new car will do it, well we can buy it. If it's a luxurious vacation we need, well let's just book it. If I think being a little prettier will make me happy, I can get my hair done at that high end salon, or even get a little cosmetic surgery if I want to.
 - a. I've got the funds. Therefore the doors are open for me. So we think having money will lead to satisfaction. That's why we chase it. That's why we struggle to let go of it. We think it's going to fill us . . . but it never does.
- B. I thought of what Paul says in 1 Tim. 6:6-10: “⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”
1. Did you hear that? Often, we hold onto money to our own hurt. We think it's going to satisfy, but it's a snare—and we get trapped up in it.
- C. I remember when I was on the coast of South Carolina with my family, one of the things we did was go crabbing.
1. And here's the crazy thing (I wonder if you know this): you can actually catch crabs with just a string and a chicken neck. You attach the string to the chicken neck and then you drop it off the dock or whatever, and the crab, sometimes a few of them, will latch onto the chicken neck, and they won't let go. You just pull them up. There's no hook. They're not stuck. They just won't let go. They're greedy little crustaceans.
 - a. They think this chicken neck is going to fill me up . . . and it ends up with them in the pot. They think: “I'm going to get a meal” . . . but truly they become the meal! It's a snare. Going after it, they plunge into ruin and destruction and pierce themselves with many pangs.
 - i. And Paul is saying that's us with our love for money.
- D. This is the parable of the prodigal son right?
1. “Dad, I want my inheritance now, because I want to go experience the world, get all that money can buy.” So he gets the food, and booze, and the girls, and all this.
 2. And he's left utterly empty. He's down in the slop eating with the pigs, and he says: “What am I doing? I have a father who can actually satisfy me. I've been a fool.” And he goes home.

3. And when he gets there, the father doesn't shame him, he runs out, hugs him, washes him up, feeds him, and throws a party. He's goes to bed with a full belly and a full heart.
- E. It's grace! That's what satisfies. And when you get that in Jesus you don't need to hold onto your money so tightly. You're content with food and clothes and meeting your basic needs and that's good. Let's go help others with it.

Promise #3: Security

- A. The last thing I think we often come to money looking for is security. We struggle to let go of it because it's our cushion, our safety net.
1. What happens if we get caught in an emergency or something? If we have money we feel like we'll be okay. If I need something I can buy it. If there's a health problem, we can pay for the right doctors to come in and fix it. So money provides this sense of control, stability, and security.
 - a. It's interesting, we even call stocks and bonds "securities". Don't ask me why. Is there anything much less secure than the stock market these days?
- B. But you know here again I thought of yet another parable Jesus tells ([Luke 12:16-21](#)). Remember that guy who stores up all his stuff in barns and he gets it all full and finally he says: "Okay, now I can relax. Now I'm safe."
1. But he's not safe. Because all the money in the world can't keep you from death. And all the money in the world can't get you right with the God we're all going to face and give an account to someday. The judge of all the earth can't be bought or bribed.
 2. So when this guy gets all this stuff stored up, God comes to him and says: "You fool, tonight your soul is required of you, you're going to die, and you're not ready. You might have felt safe in a relative sense here on earth, but you're not safe in an eternal sense. You don't know me. You're not right with me."
- C. But you know, if you get right with God through Jesus, which can happen right now by grace through faith, you don't need money or stuff to feel safe.
1. This why Jesus comes down after telling this parable and encourages his disciples in [Luke 12:22-23](#) saying: "³² Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys."
 - a. Don't you see it? The grace of God frees you up to be a generous person. You don't have to store it all up in barns. You don't have to cling to your stuff like you're on your own. You're not. You're his. He's caring for you. He's keeping you safe.
 - i. He's your Shepherd. He's your Father. You're his sheep. You're his child.

D. We can't miss the connection between [Acts 4:32-37](#) here and what's come just before it in the verses we looked at last week. Do you remember?

1. The disciples are in danger. They're being threatened. They're scared.
2. And so they pray.
3. And God hears and pours out his Spirit upon them and they're made bold in him.
 - a. And, of course, this boldness is connected to their preaching of the gospel. They're not afraid to talk about Jesus.
 - b. But I would say the boldness also should be connected to this generosity Luke goes on to describe. There's a fearlessness in their speaking and in their giving.
 - i. Don't you realize, sometimes we don't give because of status or satisfaction—we want money for ourselves.
 - ii. But other times we don't give because we're scared to, because we don't feel safe without it.

(1) But when the grace of God is given, when the Spirit is poured out, when we see who God truly is for us in Jesus, we are made bold, and we're free to be radically generous.

* * *

E. So I wonder, which of these three (Status, Satisfaction, Security) seems most tempting for you and your approach to money? What is it that makes it hard to let go, to be generous?

1. I encourage you: trace it out. Identify any breakdown in your believing and experiencing of the gospel and fight for faith, confess our sin, trust afresh in Christ and his grace.
 - a. Money promises a lot, but it won't deliver in the end.
 - b. Only Jesus can, and he does!

Not Less . . . But More!

A. You know, the amazing thing in all this is that the end result for these Christians who are generous with their stuff, it's not like they end up with less. They actually, in one sense, end up with more—both now and in the age to come.

1. So right after the whole scene with the rich young ruler, where he goes away sad, because he can't let go of his money, Jesus turns and says to his disciples, [Mark 10:29-30](#): “²⁹ Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel,³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.”
 - a. I love how he adds that little note “with persecutions.” He's not sugarcoating it. It's hard to follow him in this world. You will face opposition and temptation and trial.

- b. But it's going to be amazing—both in this world and in the world to come. You become family—brothers and sisters in Christ. You share your life now with so many. You open your hearts and you open your hands.
 - i. When all are saying that their belongings are not their own and they're ready and willing to share with any who has need, at the end of the day, you don't have less . . . you have more.

(1) So v. 34: "There was not a needy person among them . . ."

- B. This is what gave Christianity such credibility in the early centuries. It's what made it so compelling to those looking in from the outside.
 - 1. Where does such a thing come from? It comes from God and his grace. It comes from Jesus.
- C. There's one quote I've had in previous manuscripts, but I've never been able to read to you due to time, and I thought I'd break it out today. It comes from a guy named Aristides, an Athenian philosopher, who himself was drawn to Christianity. And he writes this letter to the Roman emperor at the time, Caesar Hadrian. It would have been somewhere around 125 A.D.—which is about 90 years after this scene in [Acts 4](#). And we see they're still living like this. And it was compelling to him.
 - 1. Here's what he writes of the Christians he's witnessed: "[T]hey love one another, and from widows they do not turn away their esteem; and they deliver the orphan from him who treats him harshly. And he, who has, gives to him who has not, without boasting. And when they see a stranger, they take him in to their homes and rejoice over him as a very brother; for they do not call them brethren after the flesh, but brethren after the spirit and in God. . . . And if they hear that one of their number is imprisoned or afflicted on account of the name of their Messiah, all of them anxiously minister to his necessity, and if it is possible to redeem him they set him free. And if there is among them any that is poor and needy, and if they have no spare food, they fast two or three days in order to supply to the needy their lack of food. . . . Every morning and every hour they give thanks and praise to God for His loving-kindnesses toward them; and for their food and their drink they offer thanksgiving to Him. Such, O King, . . . is their manner of life. . . . And verily, this is a new people, and there is something divine in the midst of them."
 - a. I love that last line. Because of this strange and surprising generosity, he says: "God is here. He's on the move in this community." And that's how he personally came to know Jesus.
- D. And, you know, if we start to live more like this—especially here in Silicon Valley where everyone's making so much of money, if we're freely giving it away in love for God and others—people will come to know Jesus through us too!