

PROMISE KEEPER

Part 4. The Promise of Blessing

This week we're talking about our finances and the spiritual practice of Giving. The opening verses of Malachi 1 remind us that this all needs to be seen in the context of God's love for us.

- What is your experience of God's love? Are you confident in it, or is mostly theoretical? Can you identify with the Israelites' complaint – how have you loved us?
- Why is this an important place to start when talking about money? And what does love have to do with trust?

Read Malachi 3.10.

- Do we believe that God really is able to 'open the floodgates' and pour a blessing upon us too great for us to contain?
- How comfortable are you with the idea of 'testing' God?

Philip shared a story about his daughter learning to trust him by jumping into his arms, one step at a time. In the verse, God invites us to do similar and to test him to see if he really is faithful and provides for us when we give our money to Him.

- What would it look like and feel like for you to completely trust God with your money?
- Does anyone have a story about seeing God's abundant provision financially for them or their family?

Read 2 Corinthians 9. 6-8.

- Why does God want us to give cheerfully and not reluctantly or under compulsion?
- How does this link back to the idea that it should all be rooted in and come from a place of knowing God's love for us?

What's the appropriate response for you with this message?

- Taking the **First Step** (starting to give a proportion of your finance to church)
- Going a Step **Higher** (increasing the proportion you give regularly to church)
- **Persevering** (staying firm where you are and continuing to trust God to bless you)

BIG IDEA: Your Father loves you and wants to bless you more than you can imagine. If you find it difficult trusting God, first try testing God. For as sowing leads to reaping, so cheerful giving leads to blessing.

Take some time to pray for one another. Pray for faith as we set or stick to our Giving targets. Ask God to release us from any anxiety around money and to release His blessing on us. Direct those who need it to the Giving page on the website woodlandsmetro.com/giving. Anyone looking to change their giving can do that via the MyChurchSuite app.

If anyone in the group is struggling financially, pray and ask God for His provision for them. As a church we have a fund for those who are in financial difficult, so if there is someone who is really struggling, do let us know.