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## Refreshed

### Part 1 – What Drives Your Giving?

Pastor Ted Cunningham

Good morning, church! One of my favorite things to do is... We're talking about refreshing others for the next five weeks. In the back of my truck I keep a cooler always iced down and always ready to go in the summer. How many are with me. I'm as redneck as they come when it comes to coolers.

I love just pulling up to random people, parking in a parking lot, seeing someone and saying, "Hey! Can it get you a drink?" It's always met with a hostility to begin with. I pulled up in Branson this week to two older guys sitting on a bench, smoking and talking about life. They're not in the shade, which I can't understand when it's 95 degrees. They didn't find shade; they were in the blazing hot sun. I pull my truck in and I jump out and yell to them, "Hey, you guys want something to drink?" Both of them just looked at each other and look at me and then this was the guy's answer, "Why?" Because it's hot. It's 95 degrees. But when they come over and realize I'm not trying to sell them timeshares, they realize that it can really be fun. They look in the cooler and they're like, "Oh, okay," and they start to lighten up.

So, I'll do it this morning. Some of are like *Preacher's passing out drinks*. Everything in here is non-alcoholic, so don't get excited. The 11:30 service will be ready to go. It's bottles of water. Some of my favorite summer drinks: Dasani Black Cherry, Dasani Lime. These are iced down. Who wants Dasani Lime? (shakes the can) You let me know when you think that's ready to be opened.

By the way, these do not fit in our cup holders. A lady in the first service dropped it down through the cupholder. Who wants black cherry? Alright, I'm going to give it to second row. I don't know how you pronounce it, but Bubly Grapefruit has become one of my favorite flavors. But this is the drink of the summer – Lemon Seltzer water and Raspberry Seltzer Water. I know it's a screw top, but it doesn't get any better more redneck than absolutely having the opener attached to the cooler. You were very excited it, blue shirt. Raspberry or lemon? Raspberry. You be very careful because it shoots back up in your nose it's so seltzery.

I don't know if you get a kick out of randomly surprising people. Maybe with this series, you just find random ways to surprise people with generosity. Get five-dollar gift cards, show up to work with no purpose. No birthday. No anniversary. No nothing to celebrate. Just, "Hey, I thought I'd get this for you." And watch the people get all excited. Go to Starbucks and get drinks for other people. Carry around a cooler in the back of your truck.

Here's the key. Do it without posting it on social media. Because Jesus says very clearly in Matthew 6, "If you do it to get attention from others, you've already received your reward." So, I'm not being blessed by sharing this illustration this morning; I've already received my reward; I told you about it. As part of our worship, we take an offering. And whenever you talk about giving... We're going to be talking about generosity for the next five weeks. There are guests here that your family has been inviting you for years and today is your first day. "A money talk at church; what do they want?" In no clearer way can we explain it to you than this: We don't want something from you; we want something for you. You're like, *Okay they've got a building project coming up.* We do not. We're not raising money to move this... We're not buying Shoji Tabuchi. Don't let that get out there. A lot of times when money is talked about in church, we can begin to think they are having budget problems. We're not.

We say thank you for your generosity every week because we mean it. You truly are a generous church. That's what we're going to looking at today. I also want to encourage you and we want to challenge you towards generosity as a church.

Today, we're going to be looking at the big idea of **what's driving your generosity?** Then the next four weeks, we're going to look at four specific drivers of generosity. Here's the verse we're going off of as we answer this question today and over the next five weeks – Proverbs 11: ***25 A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*** We want you to experience that refreshment. That "I refresh somebody else; I'm now refreshed" and here's the key. The key is not that you're refreshed just for yourself, but that you are refreshed to go and be more refreshment to someone else, to be a blessing.

As we kick this off, we're going to start in the Book of Acts, but we're going to spend most of our time today in 2 Corinthians 9. If you have your Bible's, you can turn there. In Acts 2, we read about the First Century Church. The church is just getting started. We read about all the activity of the church. The apostles are teaching. And they are meeting together in one another's homes. They're breaking bread together. The Lord is adding to their numbers thousands those who are being saved; those who are hearing about the gospel of Jesus. They're hearing about the resurrected Jesus. In this, you get this passion that the church has to help one another.

You go two chapters from Acts 2 to Acts 4 and here's what we read – ***32 All the believers were one in heart and mind.*** They were together. ***No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.*** ***33 With great power the apostles continued to testify...*** We're going to start this message today with Jesus and it ends with Jesus. ***...to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all...***

This is where their generosity flowed from. It flowed from God being at work in them and through them. That's what we want for this church: to always be, in Stone and Taney Counties, a church that reaches out, not just taking care of the people within our church, but reaching out into Southwest Missouri, up into Springfield and down into Arkansas, and then even beyond there to the nation and to the nations of the world. We want to go beyond here, as we are going to see in 2 Corinthians 9 today. But it's because of God working in each one of us, being of one heart and one mind, working together to meet the needs of this congregation and to see the gospel spread to all nations of the earth.

***34 ...that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.***

Here's where we're going to start it off. As we talk about a generous person today, we're going to look at it in the context of a generous church, that we would continue to be a generous church. Here's one of the things I love about you and I love about how God is working in you and through you.

**A generous church is eager to help.** A generous person, a generous church is looking for needs, or when they see a need, they have this eagerness to do something about it, not just walk by and be like, "I've already done enough." "I gave at the office." "I have no more to give." No, they see the need and in them is this, "we must do something."

I've heard this several times as our church... Through benevolence here at Woodland Hills and into the community, I've heard people say this: "Hey, I just want you to know the stuff that you're doing for people in the community, you've got to be careful because it's getting out."

I have to dig a little deeper. I'm like, "Well, what do you mean by that?"

"If you're not careful, people will start showing up. Yeah, people with needs are going to take advantage of the church's generosity."

I just want you to know we don't stress over that. We don't worry about that. It's not like, "Oh no, Lord, the needs are too great; we can't do anything." We're going to continue, as we say around here, to do for one what we can't do for all, but we're going to continue to be eager to help as we see need. And, yes, people will show up and they are showing up and we're good with them showing up, so long as we don't go to a fourth service. That's all we've been saying around here. So long as we can contain it in three service times, we'll continue to be eager to help, but at some point... No that's not true.

That's where we want to jump into the text today in 2 Corinthians 9. Paul is writing to the Corinthian Church in Achaia. ***1 There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the Lord's people.*** What is the service to the Lord's people? It is a collection. We use the term *offering*. It is an offering that's being collected for the destitute Jewish believers back in Jerusalem.

You can read about this in the second missionary journey as it begins in Acts 15. The Jerusalem counsel is brought up again. You read it in Galatians 2, where Paul is told "Do not forget the poor. Remember the poor." So, this is very important to understand. He's talking about taking a collection for Jewish believers and he's speaking this to Gentile believers. As he goes throughout the Gentiles, everywhere he's going, he's collecting this offering.

***2 For I know your eagerness to help...*** The Corinthians church earlier had stated they want to help, they want to be a part of helping the believers in Jerusalem. What Paul is going to explain a few verses later is, "Hey, make sure your offering is ready so that you're not embarrassed or ashamed when I do show up to collect it. Be gathering that now."

**...and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians...** That's where Paul is at while he's writing this letter. **...telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give...** Eager to do something about the need you heard about. **...and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.** I think it's good here that we see it doesn't say all of them but stirred most of them to action.

That's one thing I love about generosity, it's contagious. When you see someone operating out of a benevolent heart, a generous heart, it sparks something in you to say, "Well, what can I do?" This is what's great about the church as we are going to see it today. I don't have to do everything, but I get to be part of what God is doing through his people here.

One of the things I love about taking an offering is I get to give in secret. Sure, the people counting the money know what I give, but I don't have to boast and brag or let people know what I'm giving; I can just give, and it becomes part of a large collection. And then we're able, from that collection, to meet needs in our church and in our community and to the nations of the earth.

I don't use maps a whole bunch, but Alex Himaya inspired me a few weeks ago to use a map and so if you would, turn in your Bible to the book of maps. It's right behind Revelation; it's the 67th book of the Bible. This is very important, I think this really helps us understand where he's coming from, who he's writing to, and what he's writing about.

Okay, he's in Macedonia, writing to Corinth. Corinth is an impoverished group of believers. As we are going to see in a second, he describes the Macedonians as in extreme poverty and back here in Jerusalem, to the Jewish believers, they're destitute. So watch this. He's writing from a group who is inspired, that's in extreme poverty because of what they are hearing about coming out of Corinth. And the collection is being taken for a group. This is what I love about the church. You and I get the opportunity to give to people far outside of where we are right now. That's very important to understand.



Last year, after the duck accident, churches and pastors from all over the country started calling and asking, "What can we do?" In a lot of ways, it's just, "Can we give a financial gift? We would love to help you, your church minister to the needs in that community." At that time, we were mourning, but we didn't have a lot of financial needs. I couldn't think of any. With insurance and all of that later down the road, families were being cared for, but at that moment, everything was being taken care of here.

Just with the floods recently, the same churches are calling, “Is your church involved in helping people with the flood? What can we do?” I directed them to friends I know in Arkansas that were helping people get out of their houses, fix their houses back up, and move back in. That’s the church. Outside of what we just read in Acts 4 where they were taking care of each other in the community, now this has spread through the whole church.

While this map is up here, I was in Crete in May and I went fishing there. I’m here to report there are no fish in the Mediterranean Sea. I just want to make sure everybody knows that. I fished hard and I caught a mullet about that big, using a fly that was bigger than that.

Look at the language Paul is going to use. Go back one chapter to Chapter 8. Here’s what he says about the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8 – **1 And now, brothers and sisters...** To the church in Corinth. **...we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.** Just to put it in perspective, the words that are used here to describe extreme poverty, you can probably think of it in our day and the term we would use would be day laborers. They literally were working that day to eat that day. They weren’t thinking about tomorrow or the next day. It’s like, “I’ve got to do whatever I can do today to survive.” That’s who he’s talking about when he says “rich generosity.”

**3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.** For some of us, this is what we want to really address over the next five weeks. This has been brewing in our church for about two years, since we started The Family Project. Just addressing the scarcity mindset of our community. Addressing the scarcity mindset of the one who says, “I don’t have enough, I don’t make enough; I’ll never have enough, I’ll never make enough. I can barely provide for my family. I’ll never be able to give to the level you’re talking about.” In their extreme poverty, they were generous. They gave as much as they were able, and they went beyond their ability.

I want to say, first and foremost, because we say it every week, thank you for your generosity. For others, for the next five weeks, that you would pray and ask the Lord to prompt in you a heart of generosity. That you would become one to be generous. There are some roadblocks for some of you. Financial analysts would call this a mindset, but we are going to use a biblical term *heart*.

This mindset has crept into your thinking and so here are some of the things you might say that have kept you from generosity. “I don’t have much to give. Why bother?” “My amount just doesn’t mean that much.” In that mindset, you also have, “If I give this amount right now, I won’t have enough for \_\_\_\_\_.” Fill in the blank: utilities, car payment, the rent... “I’ve got to get these other things taken care of first.” Some of you with this mindset, you know you’ve been saying this your entire adult life because this is always there. The bills are always there.

How about this. Even if you do give some, you're simply saying it won't make a difference. “What I give, if you compare it to others...” And this is the next one. I think this all builds. “When you compare it to what others give, my gift won’t make a dent.”

I had this mindset in May. I was with Chad Phillips in Florida. I was invited to a fund raiser to do comedy. We go to this resort, and Chad and I are there and we're going to go fishing after. I might as well come clean. By the way, there are no fish in the Atlantic either. I don't know. The disciples caught it all out of the Mediterranean and the Wicked Tuna guys caught it all out of the Atlantic. But I'm getting better. I'm definitely getting the cast down. One day, I'm going to catch fish in these places. But it was a fund raiser with high capacity people at this event. It's a great ministry called Samaritan's Feet. They have put about seven million pairs of shoes on kids' feet around the world. I've watched the videos and listened to the stories. Chad and I both are super inspired by what's going on.

I don't know why... We've never sat down... Seventeen years ago, our church never sat down and said, "We should really get into shoes. Shoes should be our thing." I don't know how it happened, but next month, we'll give out \$12,000.00 to \$15,000.00 worth of shoes for kids going back to school here in our community. Through Care for Kids, shoes are given to young people all the time in our two counties.

Just listening to this vision, I'm just like *this is it*. So, our church gave a gift to Samaritan's Feet. This is outside of Woodland Hills, outside of Southwest Missouri. Its shoes being placed on kids' feet all over the world. We as a church gave \$2,500.00 to this ministry. I remember getting in the car and Chad and I driving away and both of us thought, *It won't make a difference*. Because we knew that in that room, checks were being written to the tune of six figures. We didn't know for sure, but Chad felt like he was sitting next to somebody who owned an NFL team, which he probably gave more than \$2,500.00. We just start making up the narrative. I know there were people in that room that have given... They've given out seven million pairs of shoes. There were only about 40 people in the room. I'm like, *there are people in here that have probably given a million dollars; does our gift even matter?* The answer is yes.

A few years ago, I remember a lady and her husband that came to town to meet with me for lunch. He had just sold his business, a very successful business. It was all over the world and he cashed out a lot of money and he flew here, and we had lunch. I'll never forget that after eating, I grabbed the bill and then he grabbed it and then I grabbed it. We went way beyond that awkward back and forth; we were on each other. My personality says we're going to sit here until one of us is dead if you don't give me that bill.

I'll never forget his wife grabbing his arm and saying, "Hey, Hey..." and says his name. I'll never forget his expression of humility. She looked at me and I'll never forget these words. She said, "Ted, I'm trying to get him to understand that he needs to receive just as well as he gives. He needs to allow you the opportunity to be generous towards him. He never allows people to be generous toward him." I'm just wondering what word that is for some of you in here. I think sometimes we think the person who makes the most money at the table should pick up the bill. Who came up with that rule?

I don't know if you remember this article from 2009 in Sports Illustrated – *How And Why Athletes Go Broke*. Have you and your family ever had a conversation where you can't even understand how someone who made millions and millions of dollars in a short period of time goes bankrupt? It's always kind of baffled us. According to this article... I know it's ten years old so I don't know if it's changed or if it was after the recession that there were issues with this, but according to this article, 78% of NFL players go bankrupt or they are in financial stress within two years of leaving the NFL. In the NBA, the

stats were 60% of NBA players filed bankruptcy within five years. Why does that happen? Well, one, maybe no one told them, no one coached them or helped them. Or, maybe they did, and they just didn't listen. They were thinking in the short term; they weren't thinking about the next 20 years. They weren't thinking that *hey, I may not be able to play five years from now. I may have an injury. Contract might not get renewed.*

Here's what we know, and most people would agree with this statement right here. **More money won't solve your problems.** You see these shows on television. Why do Lotto winners have such a struggle and why do they fall apart? Why did the Lotto winner end up declaring bankruptcy? It's because it's about what's in the heart. This is what's driving a person's spending, and this is what's driving a person's generosity.

We've all been inspired by the NFL and the NBA stories. I cry at more videos... I just wept at a video of a guy giving his dad a truck. Did anybody see that one on social media? He shows up with a used truck for his dad. The dad melts down in the road and they're hugging and hopping around. It does something to you, so I love when I hear the story of a young man in his early 20s signing a multi-million-dollar contract with the NFL or the NBA and the first thing he does is buy Momma a house. We all go. "Yes! That's exactly what you should do." And all the mom's said... Amen. Buy mom a house.

If we're not careful... Watch. If we're not careful, we fall into the mindset (really the heart) where we say, "You know what? If I come into a million dollars, I'm buying mom a house." I'm here to tell you that for a lot of you, no you ain't going to buy her a house. Your like, "Well how do you know?" Well, because you won't buy her lunch. I'm going to let it sit in for a little bit because some of you are like, "My mom has a lot of money." What does that have to do with anything? More money won't solve all your problems.

**More money won't make you a generous person.** You're generous whether you have little or much. It flows from the heart, not how much you have in the bank. It's that mindset people get into. To me, this is the statement of a non-generous person: "If I ever come into some money..." You probably won't. And if you do come into some money, you probably won't automatically become generous because it's what you do right now with what you have. More money won't make you a generous person. I want to buy my parents a house, but for now, I buy them lunch. It's what I can do.

By the way, if you were to put my dad's asset list with my asset list (he loves me sharing this with the internet) he has more than I do because he's been living a little while longer. He taught me this growing up. He said, "The problem with you young people today (this was a real world, Ron Cunningham talk right here) is you want in three years what we spent 30 years accumulating."

So why don't you develop the heart of generosity in those three years and not think something is going to change at the 30-year mark? Start doing something now. By the way, this has been studied. Research shows us in Thrivin, out of Minnesota. Thousands of financial analysts all over the country researched all of the folks that they support. They wanted to find out "Does income increase generosity?" The answer is no. The more you make will not make you a more generous person.

I've got a chart. Man, I've got maps and charts today; we're hitting every enneagram number in the room today.

So, this is \$50,000 up to \$200,000 – 2% to 7%, so this is the income donated and this is how much a person makes. Watch what happens when you hit a certain amount. The more you make, you actually start giving less as a percentage. Now this is a whole new heart set. "I've given enough." "They don't need anymore." Now there are some people in the room right now making \$50,000 that are thinking *I'd like to test your theory. If I could just have a year where I make \$200,000, I bet things in my life would change completely.* Don't wait. You can do it right here. You can change your heart right here. You could become generous at \$50,000. That's actually what Thrivin has found.

Here's what Thrivin says, "Across all incomes, a healthy relationship with money is driven by what people do with what they have." We're going to explore this in a few weeks. But in other words, whether you make \$50,000 or \$200,000, it's what you do with what you have. When you look at this chart, this is truly what drives giving and drives generosity. I'm just touching on it this week. We're going to talk about it more next week because we actually have the numbers from our congregation and from our community.

But this would be those who are surviving and struggling. They say, "I just don't have enough money to pay my own bills. I can't take care of my own family." They need help from others. Those who are stable say, "I've got enough; I can take care of my family, but that's it." Secure would say, "I'm at a place in my finances where I can meet the needs of my family and I'm even actually able to put a little bit away for emergency funds and retirement and all of that." But it's Surplus that is the person who says, "I have plenty to meet my family's needs and I've got enough to help other people too." By the way, this has nothing to do with income.

When they researched this, there were people making \$30,000 - \$40,000 a year that say, "We're in surplus. We've got plenty." Why? Because it's what you do with what you have. By the way, there were people who made \$200,000 a year who said, "We're barely making it." Look at you judging right now. They didn't take Financial Peace University. Let me tell you, I've been listening to Dave Ramsey for the last six years and if they'd listen to Dave, they'd know they are morons. That's what he tells people all the time. But you understand it's what's in the heart, it's not what's in your bank account. In other words, your heart, not your income drives your generosity.

We're going to talk about your mindset and my mindset more as we move... hopefully not just this church, but boy wouldn't it be great to move a whole community out of this scarcity mindset. I think if we can remove the scarcity mindset from our community, we wouldn't have this big debate going on between the shows and the attractions. We won't talk about that right now. We're going to move onto this... I will talk about it because I think that is important. A scarcity mindset says, "The pie is this size and I have to get my slice." The abundant mindset that we're going to be talking about says, "What if we all work together and make the pie bigger?" It's flowing from your heart. It's now this mentality: it's I believe God can do anything. I believe God can do anything for my family. I believe he can do anything for this community and for this town.

Jumping back into 2 Corinthians 9. We want to be excited to give. Not just eager to help, but excited to give. These are Paul's words. **6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give...** This has caused Baptists angst for so many years. I'm a tither, but there is nowhere in the New Testament that gives you a percentage or an amount. I live by that as a principle that comes to us out of the Old Testament. I'm not bound to the law; I know that, but I'm also here to tell you, and I think this is true for a lot of folks in here, 10% of my income is not generosity. I'm saying that for me.

I was thinking about it this week. What would Paul's letter to America look like. I don't think he'd say extreme poverty. I think he'd say, "I'm going to look at you compared to all the other churches in the world and you guys are stinking rich. You have a lot. The problem is what you do with what you have." For some of you, you've been taught tithing and that's great. But for some of you, you've stopped there and that's the cap of generosity. Well, let's read what Paul says about that. ***...not reluctantly or under compulsion...*** Don't be giving with an "I have to do this amount." That's not that joy that we're talking about. It's not the cheerful giver that God loves. ***...for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly...***

So, we're not going to stop where the prosperity gospel lot of times stops. We're going to keep going because when you're blessed, it's for the purpose to give you more opportunity to bless others. Don't let it stop. He who refreshes others will be refreshed, as we are going to see in this text, so that you can continue to refresh other people. You'll continue to give. ***8 And God is able to bless you abundantly...*** We're going to talk about a sense of abundance in this series and some will think we're going prosperity gospel. No, we're not; we're just getting out of this "God can only do this..." When I believe he wants to bless abundantly ***...so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.***

**A generous church gives as an act of worship.** That when we give... And when a church is generous and a person is generous, it should cause all of us to celebrate and give thanksgiving to God. Now the last few verses of this chapter. ***10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.***

You might wonder if you should clap after a worship song. If it's about patting us on the back, no. But if it's about giving thanksgiving to God, sure! Should we clap when we say we're taking an offering? If it's to clap to bring thanksgiving to God, absolutely!

***12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.*** People are worshiping because of this generosity. ***13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ...*** Again, there's the overflow: God at work in us and through us. ***...and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone***

**else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.**

He ends this section on giving with where we started in Acts 4 this morning. **15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!** And who is the indescribable gift? It's Jesus. Jesus in our hearts, working through us individually, and then working through us as a community of believers to be generous to those in this church, in this community, in this nation, and to all the nations of the earth. In other words, as we sum it up, here's what we're saying. **Our Generosity is an overflow of the Gospel of Jesus, but will never compare to God's sacrifice for us.** Keep going, keep giving, do more. When you think you've given all you can, go past it. May we all be challenged in this series to give not just of our money, of our finances to help those in need, but also of our time.

I sent my kids to camp yesterday for two weeks. If you don't send your kids to camp, you're crazy. Anyway, we are so excited for what God's going to do in their lives in the next two weeks. We know it's going to be a big time for them... and us. But we wanted to do something special before they left, so Friday night, we sat down and we built the Saturn 5 out of Legos. We couldn't get it all done on Friday night.

I've been obsessed with the Apollo 11 mission. I don't know if anybody else has, but I've spent time studying it this month. I went to the Alamo there in Springfield. They serve you dinner. We watched a documentary called Armstrong. I loved every minute of it. Then they have Apollo 11 here still, I believe, at the Imax, so we watched both of those. I am totally into it.

This is my favorite picture of the astronauts because their expressions tell you what their roll was on the mission. It's true. I don't think anybody has ever really thought this through. You know who the first man on the moon was. Neil Armstrong; he's smiling, going, *Yeah that's me.* Buzz Aldrin was the second man on the moon. He's got a smirk because if you've watched these movies, you know he's thinking *If I wasn't so cocky, they may have let me be the first man on the moon.* That's from the movie. But Michael Collins has the best expression in this picture because he's saying *I don't even get to go to the moon. I have to stay on the ship.*

But every single man up there was important to the mission. These three guys could have done nothing without thousands and thousands of people who worked in the 1960s and even earlier than that to get them to the moon.

This set took us a while. Do you know how many pieces are in this Lego set? There are one thousand, nine hundred and sixty-nine pieces – 1969. Blew my mind. That's what we're celebrating – 50 years ago. I played a little YouTube clip. It's a three-hour long YouTube clip with them when they were on the moon talking back to NASA. I played it while I was putting this together. I'm 100% into this experience. Then I played this one for the kids. This is less than a minute, but this is Neil Armstrong's last communication back down to earth. I get emotional every time I see it. It's not like it's one of the best speeches I've ever heard, but he understands why he's there and he understands how important the mission is and he knows it would never be accomplished without these folks.

[Video plays]

How many of you remember where you were when it took off? In the first service, it was everybody. "I watched with my grandkids." Can I say as important as that mission was, it doesn't even come close to the mission that you and I have been called to. Our mission comes to us from Matthew 28 where Jesus says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit." And that's not a job for a few people, it's a job for each and every one of us. And every single time you give, you're giving to that. Every time you serve, you're serving to that. Not just here in this church, but into the community, into our nation, and into the nations of the world. It's where we are called.

It takes every single one of us. And that's why this morning we have the Sweet Spot set up. We don't share this lightly, but some of you have been observing for a very long time and we want you building. We want you a part of a very important mission. The 10:00 is our busiest service and there is a lot of sacrifice that you could make. You're like, "Man I'm ready to go. What are we doing?" We're going to the moon. Some of you, we are going to encourage you to go to 11:30 and serve. That's our service of greatest need.

All we're asking you to do today is if you're not serving, there are three tables set up out there for the Sweet Spot. And we just want you to stop by and talk to somebody who's standing there. Julie is out there and Stephanie is out there. Find out where you can serve. Some of you come to our church and you're like, "I need a little break. I got burned out at the last church." We're always good with you taking a little break. We want you to call it a season, not the new normal. As you heal or whatever you're working through, as you come here, we want to encourage you to pray through where God has you in this church and find out where you can serve. Where to serve, when to serve... For some of you, we're asking you to take a move to 11:30 and serve in that service.

I want to say, just as Neil Armstrong completely understood and gave his last farewell from space to the folks who got him there. He could have said, "Man, it was great being here. I..." But no, he understood what it takes and what it took. So, that's our encouragement for you. For those of you who serve week in and week out, on behalf of this church, we say, "Thank you! You're investing in the next generation. You're helping new people find parking spaces. You're greeting people at the door. You may get the mindset or the heart set that says it doesn't really make a big difference and I'm here to tell you it makes a huge difference. So, would you please stop by and find a place to serve in this church. Would you stand with me as we pray?"

Father, we are grateful for the work that you have called this church to. May we always, always prioritize generosity to those in need in our community over buildings and programs and projects.

May we make it the priority to meet the needs of those in this church and in this community and in this country and then with our missionaries all over the world and the needs that they have in feeding and clothing and providing housing.

May this church always be a church that's eager to help, excited to give each and every week as an act of worship. For that we are grateful.

For those who have never placed faith in Jesus, that the one right now would confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe that He has been raised from the dead that they will be saved. For that we are grateful, and we celebrate today as a church

It's in the name of Jesus that everyone agreed and said... Amen.