

Sermon: “The Law of Grace-Full Giving”

(1 Kings 17:7-24; Mark 12:41-44; Philippians 1:3-6)

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The Law of Supernatural Supply

- + 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 – Macedonian Church offering out of poverty, not plenty
- + Faith Promise mindset – Decide what you believe God is calling you to give, and then trust God for the supply – Giving built on relationship with the Supplier.
- + Widow of Zeraphath, 1 Kings 17:7-24 selected verses –

Elijah: One of the speaking prophets who would go where people needed to hear the Word of the LORD and not merely what tickled their fancy. Elijah tried to do that and it brought him into conflict, this time with Jezebel and her husband Ahab, so he had to flee into the wilderness: not a particularly pleasant place, where God provided his food through ravens who brought bread and meat in the morning and evening, and he drank from a brook.

Then the LORD sent him to Zeraphath, to a poor woman living with her son, who was about to eat her last meal with the little she had left in the bottom of the canister and then die. Along comes Elijah the prophet, hungry from the long walk, who asks for food (not an inappropriate thing to do in that day). The poor lady says, “Too late! I was about to take the flour at the bottom of the canister and make a last meal for my son and then we’ll die of starvation.” Elijah has the audacity to say, “Go ahead and make the cakes, but give me the first one!”

She does it – though I do wonder what she was thinking as she made him that biscuit. Some of you know the story: Elijah got something to eat, and the woman, and her son; and not only for that day but for the days to come, as well. Each time she went to the canister of flour and to the jug of oil, there was something to prepare.

The Law of Supernatural Provision

- + God’s promise is limitless: God is able to make all grace abound toward us. God’s grace is relevant in all things at all times. God will supply all that we need. God will enable us to abound in every good work. There is no reason under any circumstances for us as believers to ever feel spiritually limited.
- + The law of supernatural supply says Christian living is not a natural thing.
- + We may base our promises on God’s promises.

The Law of Sacrificial Example

+ Mark 12:41-44 – That glorious story of “the widow’s mite.” It’s like the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” with Jimmy Stewart. I still like to see it each Christmas. I have read the story of Jesus’ attention to the heart of the poor widow so many times, and I don’t get tired of it. It’s a living story.

Jesus is sitting opposite where the people would put their offering into the temple treasury. He’s here with his disciples, just watching. What is he watching for? Rich people putting lots of money in? No. “Look, there she is. Do you see her? She has just put in the greatest offering of all!” The disciples look at him with eyes full of questions.

Jesus just says, “Guys, she just put it all in! All of these, they put in out of their abundance. She just gave it all out of her poverty.”

+ When your church has a major need, give to it sacrificially. I believed God has called me to turn in my mileage and then give the money back to the church. The participation of all of us is crucial.

+ When your neighbor has a need (he or she) really cannot meet, give sacrificially to meet that need – carefully, yet sacrificially.

+ When your brothers and sisters in Christ have a major need, give sacrificially to confront that need: UMCOR, missionaries on the field, uncovered medical expenses they just cannot pay.

The Law of Unified Commitment

+ Philippians 1:3-6 for “your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”

+ The church of those early days flourished because of that partnership. Believe me, it didn’t always function the way Paul the Apostle would have liked – but when it did, it changed lives. And often the ones who experienced the greatest were the givers rather than the receivers.