

SERMON SUMMARY

In Message #2 of the Break the Cycle series, Gene challenged us to break the cycle of scarcity by embracing the counter-intuitive principle Jesus teaches in Luke 6:38: what we receive is determined by what we give. Drawing on the image of a harvest basket filled to overflowing and the childhood memory of priming an old water pump, Gene unpacked why so many of us live with a scarcity mindset — always waiting for the right moment to be generous — and why that moment never comes. Through personal stories of financial sacrifice and God's faithfulness over four decades, he called us to trust God with the first 10% of our income, reminding us that the tithe isn't primarily a financial strategy but a spiritual discipline that keeps God first.

ICEBREAKER

Growing up, did your family talk openly about money and giving? What's one habit or attitude around generosity that was modeled for you — positively or negatively?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Gene said we naturally come into the world as "takers," not givers — and that generosity goes against our natural inclinations. Where do you most feel the pull of a scarcity mindset in your own life? What does that inner voice sound like? [Proverbs 11:24 \(NIV\)](#)
2. Jesus describes God's return blessing as a harvest basket "pressed down, shaken together and running over." What does that image tell you about the character of the God you're being asked to trust? How does that challenge or encourage you? [Luke 6:38 \(NIV\)](#)
3. Deuteronomy 14:23 says the purpose of tithing is "to teach you always to put God first." In what practical ways does giving the first tenth accomplish that spiritual goal — not just financially, but in terms of trust, priorities, and other areas of life? [Deuteronomy 14:23 \(TLB\)](#)
4. Gene shared transparently about seasons of financial sacrifice — selling homes, cutting back, depending on God — and the unexpected ways God provided. Have you ever taken a faith-based financial risk? What did you learn about God (or yourself) through it? [2 Corinthians 9:6, 11 \(NIV\)](#)
5. Jesus says in Luke 12:48 that those given much have much required of them. How do you think about the resources God has entrusted to you — whether a little or a lot — in light of that responsibility? What might it look like to be more intentional about using them for kingdom impact? [Luke 12:48 \(NIV\)](#)

PRAYER POINTS

- Ask God to reveal any areas where a scarcity mindset is keeping you from trusting Him — and invite Him to replace fear with faith.

BREAK THE CYCLE | Message #2: Break the Cycle of Scarcity

- Pray for courage to take a tangible next step in generosity, whether that's starting a tithe, increasing giving, or responding to a specific need.
- Thank God for His faithfulness and the ways He has already provided in your life — and for the privilege of participating in His work through Summer of Serving.
- Pray for those in your community and around the world who face hunger and food insecurity — that the meals packed this summer would communicate God's love and remind them they are seen and not forgotten.