



# Secret Rhythms

**The Generous Life**

## Recap

“**Consciousness** creates change”

Dr. Siegel

Prayer is the **intersection** of the natural and the supernatural

Prayer **invites** the presence of God



## Recap

Then Moses said, “If you don’t personally go with us, don’t make us leave this place. How will anyone know that you look favourably on me—on me and on your people—if you don’t go with us? **For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.**” **Exodus 33:15-16**



## Recap

“**Awake**, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” **Ephesians 5:14**

As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a **light** from heaven suddenly shone down around him. **Acts 9:3**

So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act **thoughtlessly**, but **understand** what the Lord wants you to do. **vs 15-17**

## Are We Generous, Really?

Most of us are good at **random acts of giving**. We can be easily persuaded, inspired, or even guilted into doing something to meet a particular need in the moment. Often there is some sort of sales pitch involved and we think, Wow, maybe I should give to that.

But what if the act of giving and a **lifestyle of generosity** are two very different things?



# Are We Generous, Really?

You see, actually being generous — **cultivating a lifestyle of generosity** — requires a plan. **It transcends inspiration and guilt.** It requires us to decide ahead of time how much we will give and to what we will give. In other words, generosity can be defined as **“the premeditated, calculated, designated emancipation of personal financial assets.”**



## False Generosity

“If you **love** only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you **do good** only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? **Even sinners do that much!**” **Luke 6:32-33**

“If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? **Even pagans do that.**” **Matthew 5:46-47**

# Giving Report, Canada Helps, 2017



Overall, Canadians give **1.5%**  
**(\$446 per year)** of their  
income to charity.

**Statistics Canada, Income  
Statistics Division, 2017**

# Giving Report, Canada Helps, 2017

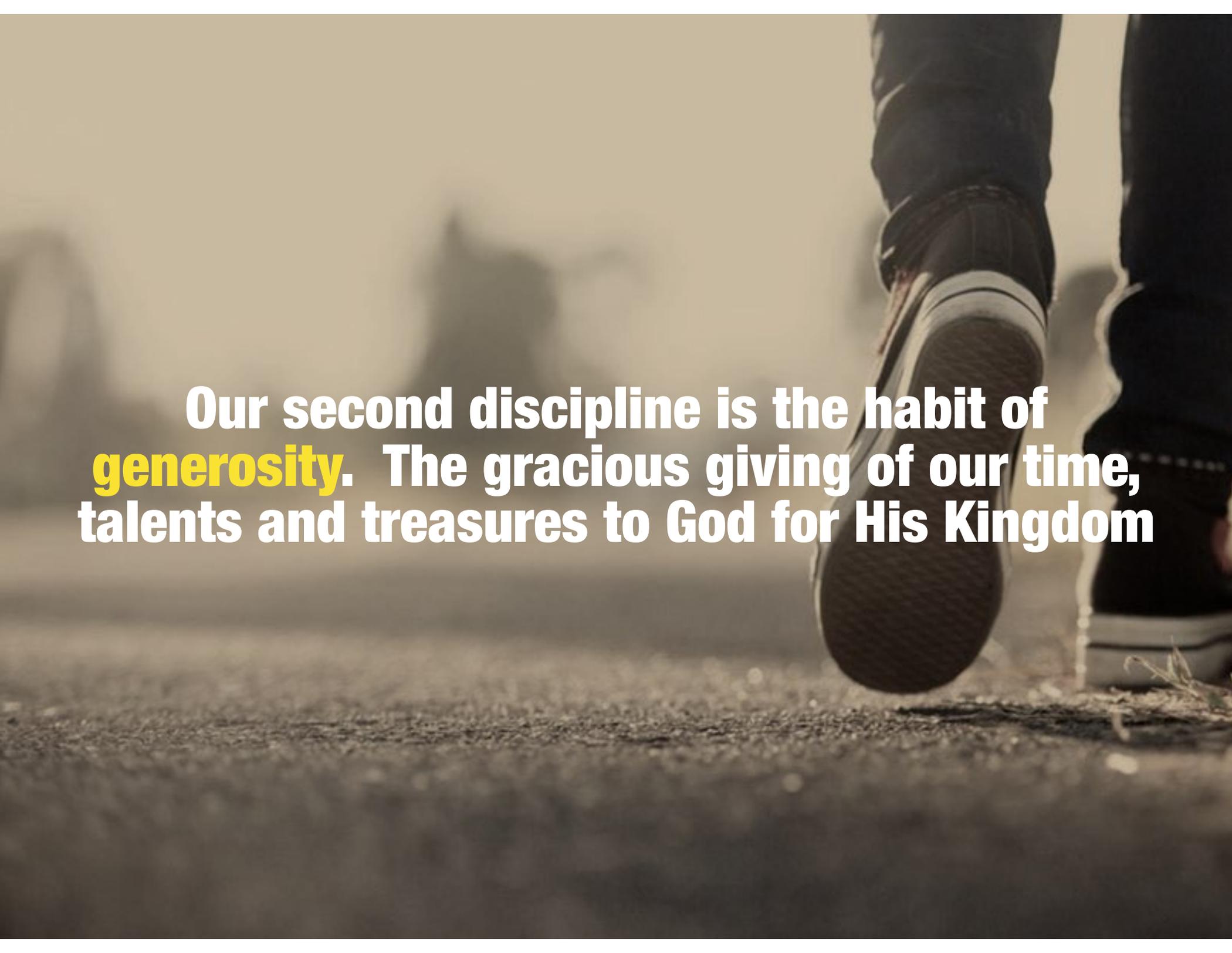
It is the **top three income** groups who have historically given the highest average donation amounts per family, but have **had the greatest giving declines** in average donations, over the past 11 years.



# Giving Report, Canada Helps, 2017

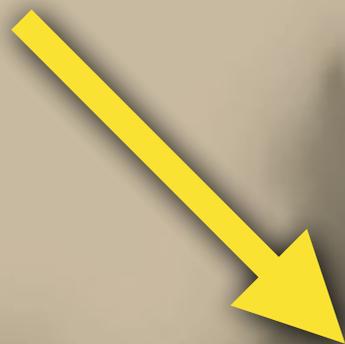
Lower-income families  
give **a higher percent** of  
their total income



A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's feet wearing dark sneakers with white soles, walking on a gravel or dirt path. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with trees and a bright sky. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Our second discipline is the habit of generosity. The gracious giving of our time, talents and treasures to God for His Kingdom**

**What you give to God  
you get back from God.**



**Prayer**



**But when you pray, go away by  
yourself, shut the door behind you, and  
pray to your Father in private. Then  
your Father, who sees everything, **will  
reward you.** **Matthew 6:6****

For a great **reward** awaits you in heaven. **Matthew 5:12**  
And your Father, who sees everything, will **reward** you.

**Matthew 6:18**

The servants who are ready and waiting for his return  
will be **rewarded**. **Luke 12:37**

Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will  
**reward** you for inviting those who could not repay you.

**Luke 14:14**

The one who plants and the one who waters work  
together with the same purpose. And both will be  
**rewarded** for their own hard work. **1 Corinthians 3:8**

Remember that the Lord will **reward** each one of us  
for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

**Ephesians 6:8**

I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I  
want you to receive a **reward** for your kindness.

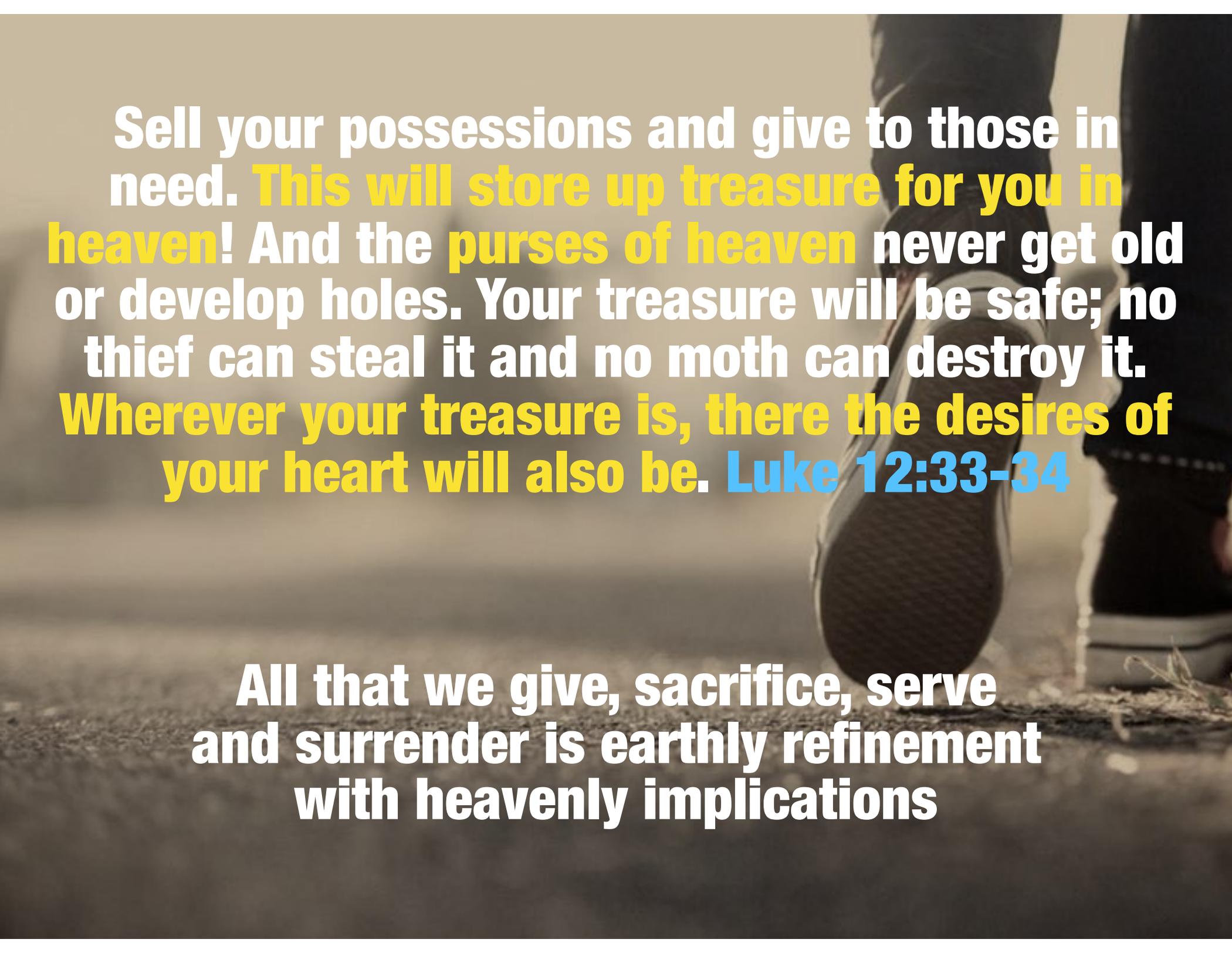
**Philippians 4:17**



**Caution:** God's rewards aren't a quid pro quo

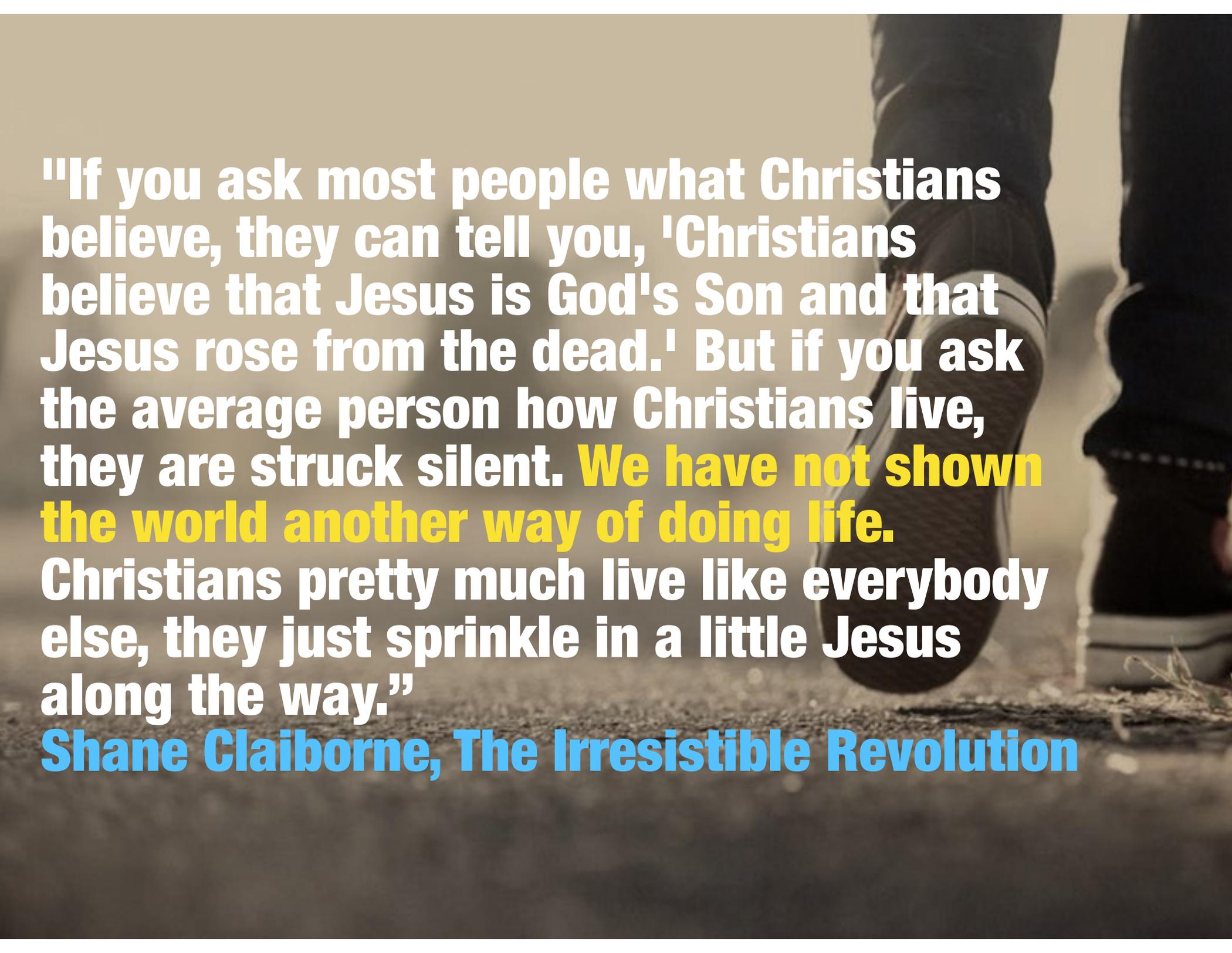
**Quid pro quo** is a Latin phrase that literally means "something for something." The phrase usually indicates an exchange of goods or services of roughly **equivalent value**.

In understanding God's rewards we must have a **heavenly** perspective rather than a earthly one



**Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. Luke 12:33-34**

**All that we give, sacrifice, serve and surrender is earthly refinement with heavenly implications**

A person's legs and feet in dark pants and sneakers walking on a dirt path. The background is a soft, out-of-focus natural setting.

**"If you ask most people what Christians believe, they can tell you, 'Christians believe that Jesus is God's Son and that Jesus rose from the dead.' But if you ask the average person how Christians live, they are struck silent. **We have not shown the world another way of doing life.** Christians pretty much live like everybody else, they just sprinkle in a little Jesus along the way."**

**Shane Claiborne, The Irresistible Revolution**



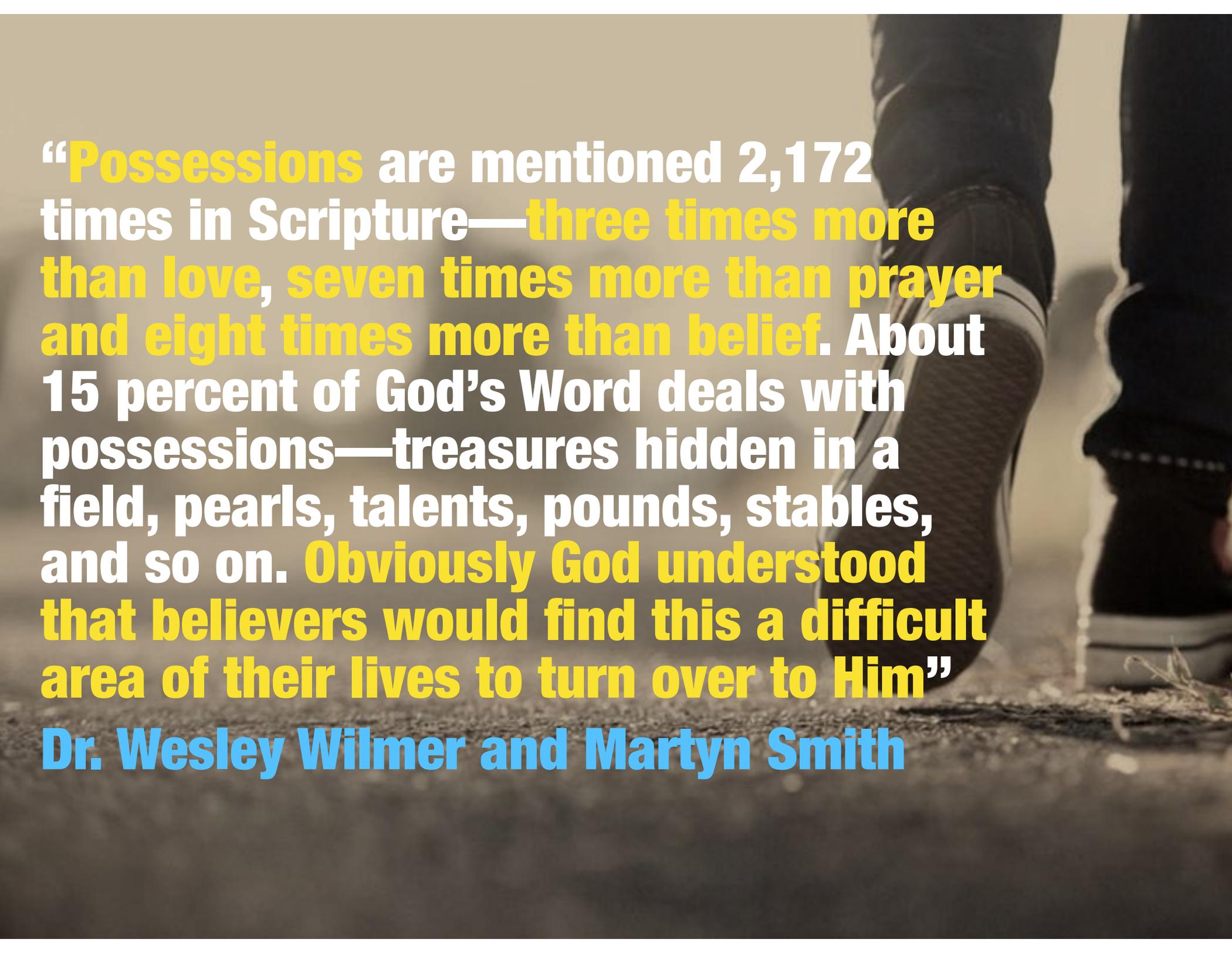
**we all want to be generous  
but we are **over-extended** in  
most areas of our lives**

**finances (treasure)**

**commitments (time)**

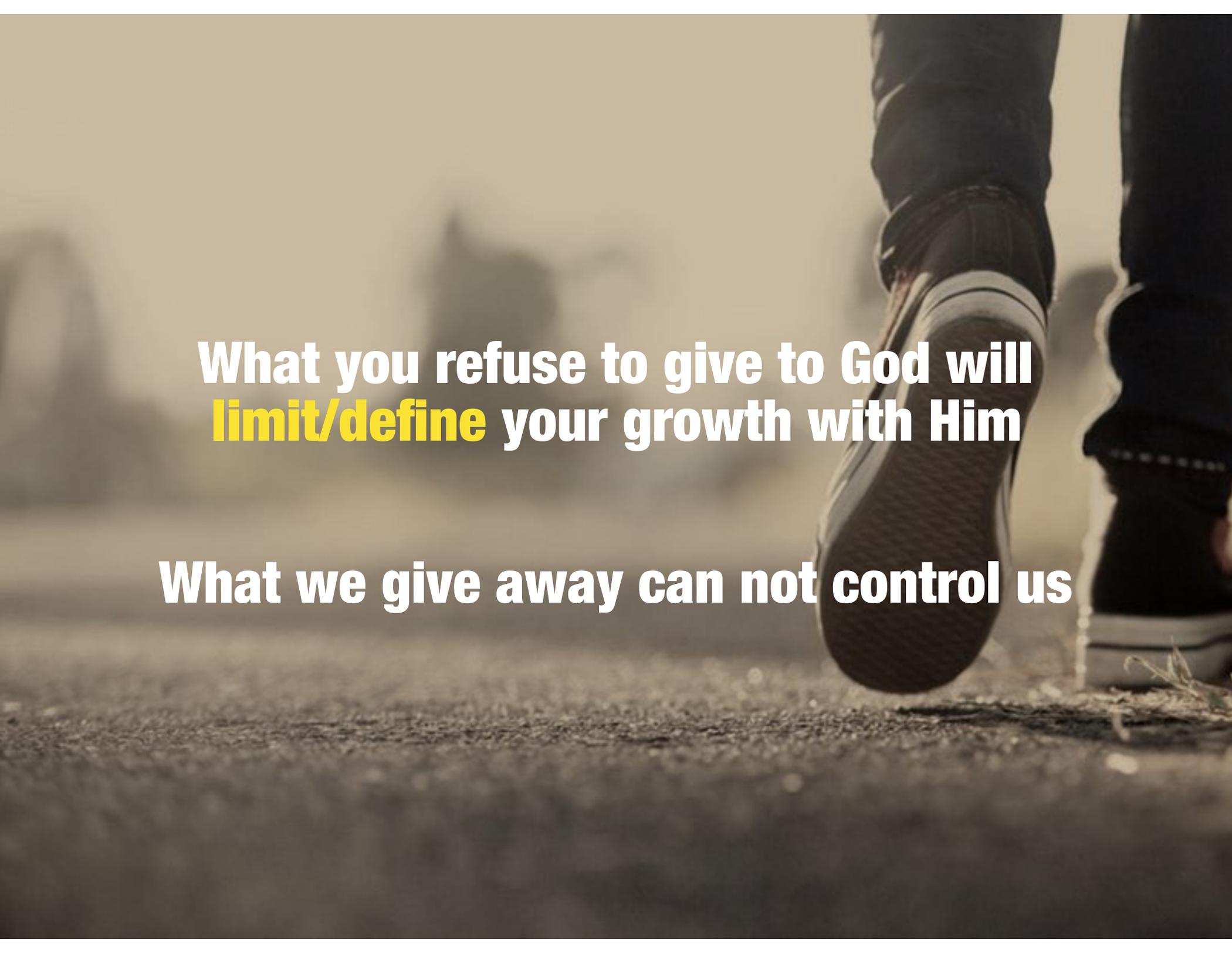
**relationships (talents)**

**The only area we don't  
seem to be overcommitted  
is in our faith**



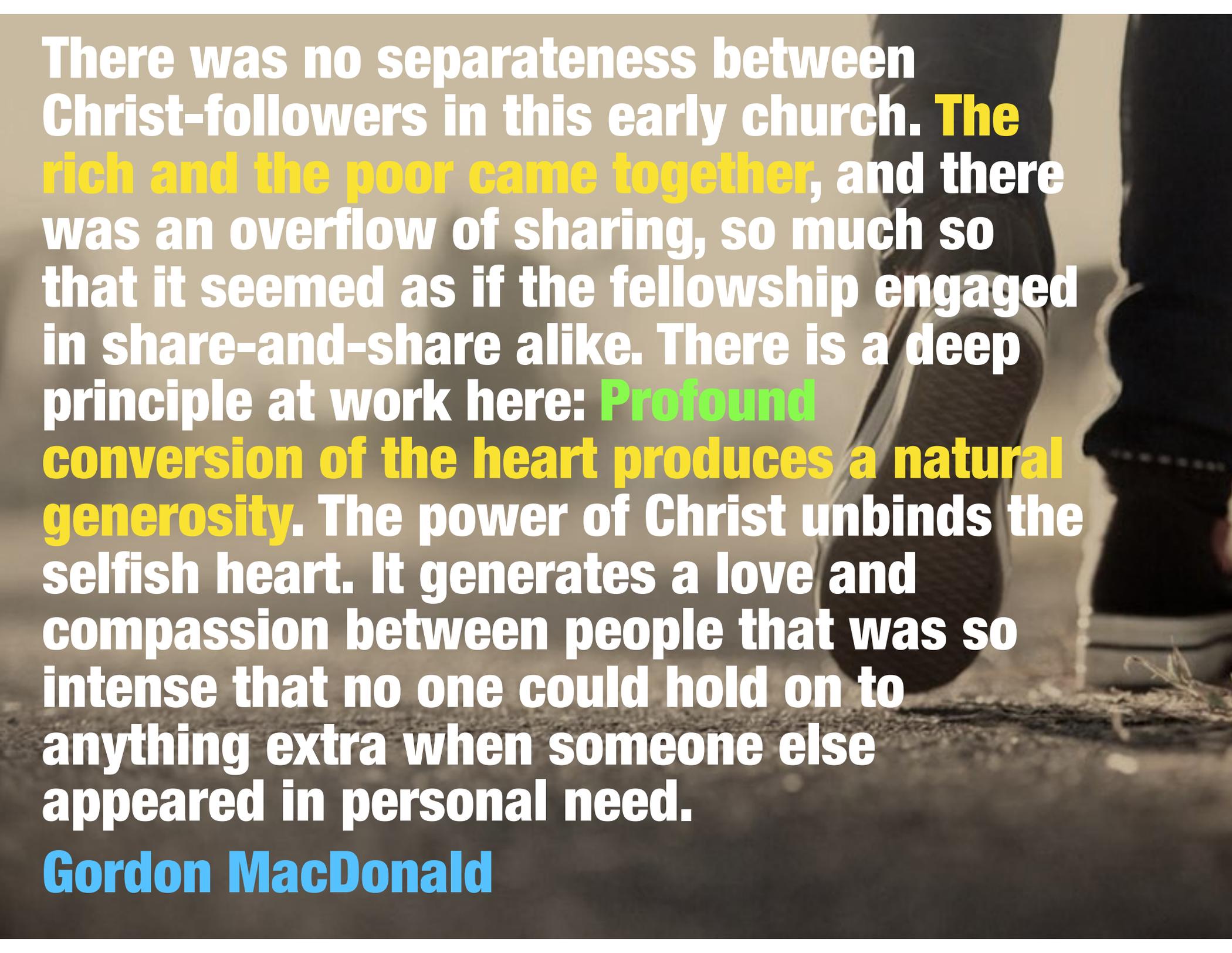
**“Possessions** are mentioned 2,172 times in Scripture—**three times more than love, seven times more than prayer and eight times more than belief.** About 15 percent of God’s Word deals with possessions—treasures hidden in a field, pearls, talents, pounds, stables, and so on. **Obviously God understood that believers would find this a difficult area of their lives to turn over to Him”**

**Dr. Wesley Wilmer and Martyn Smith**



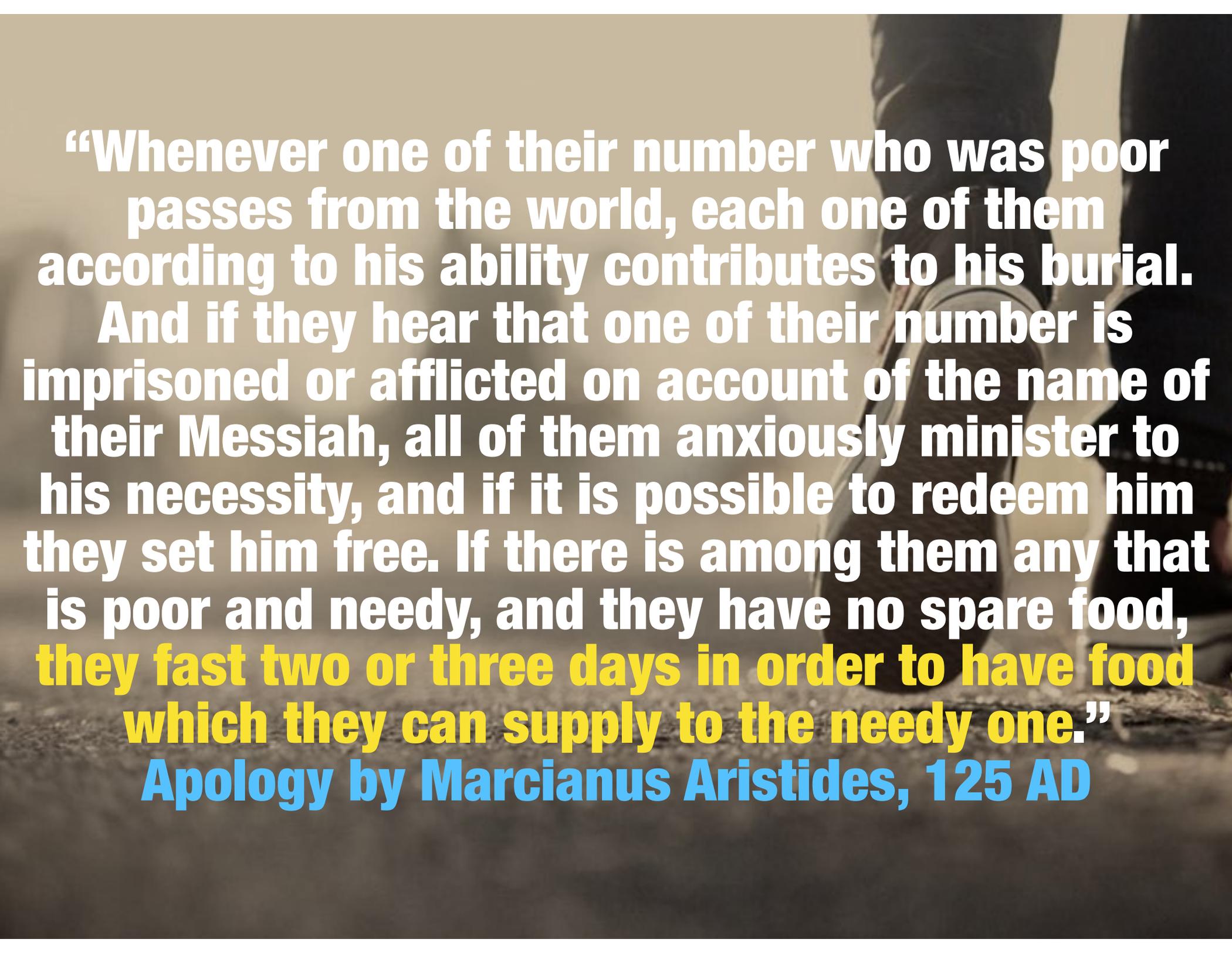
**What you refuse to give to God will  
limit/define your growth with Him**

**What we give away can not control us**



There was no separateness between Christ-followers in this early church. **The rich and the poor came together**, and there was an overflow of sharing, so much so that it seemed as if the fellowship engaged in share-and-share alike. There is a deep principle at work here: **Profound conversion of the heart produces a natural generosity**. The power of Christ unbinds the selfish heart. It generates a love and compassion between people that was so intense that no one could hold on to anything extra when someone else appeared in personal need.

**Gordon MacDonald**



**“Whenever one of their number who was poor passes from the world, each one of them according to his ability contributes to his burial. 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. If there is among them any that is poor and needy, and they have no spare food, they fast two or three days in order to have food which they can supply to the needy one.”**

**Apology by Marcianus Aristides, 125 AD**

## **Generosity in the book of Acts**

They sold their property and possessions and **shared the money with those in need.** Acts 2:45

He sold a field he owned and **brought the money to the apostles.** Acts 4:37

in the **daily distribution** of food. Acts 6:1

There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and **helping the poor.** Acts 9:36

And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'** Acts 20:35

## Generosity in the Churches

As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who **gave me financial help** when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. **Philippians 4:15**

For you see, the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have **eagerly taken up an offering for the poor** among the believers in Jerusalem. **Romans 15:26**

For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. **They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem.**  
**2 Corinthians 8:3-4**

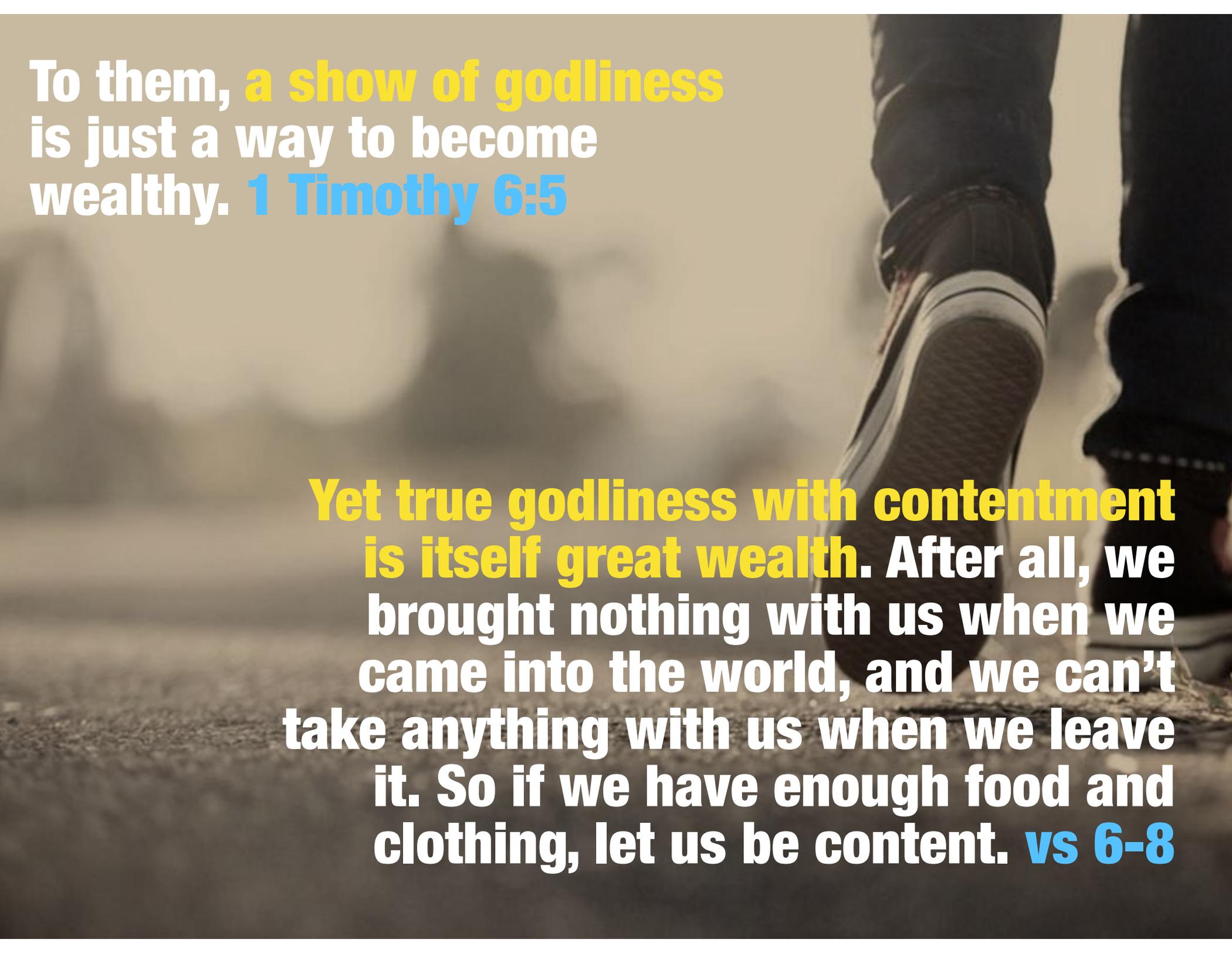
Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, **always being ready to share with others.** **1 Timothy 6:18**

# What Generosity Really Does

“Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins? This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies says: Look at what’s happening to you! You have planted much but **harvest little**. You eat but are **not satisfied**. You drink but are **still thirsty**. You put on clothes but cannot **keep warm**. Your **wages disappear** as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!” **Haggai 1:4-6**

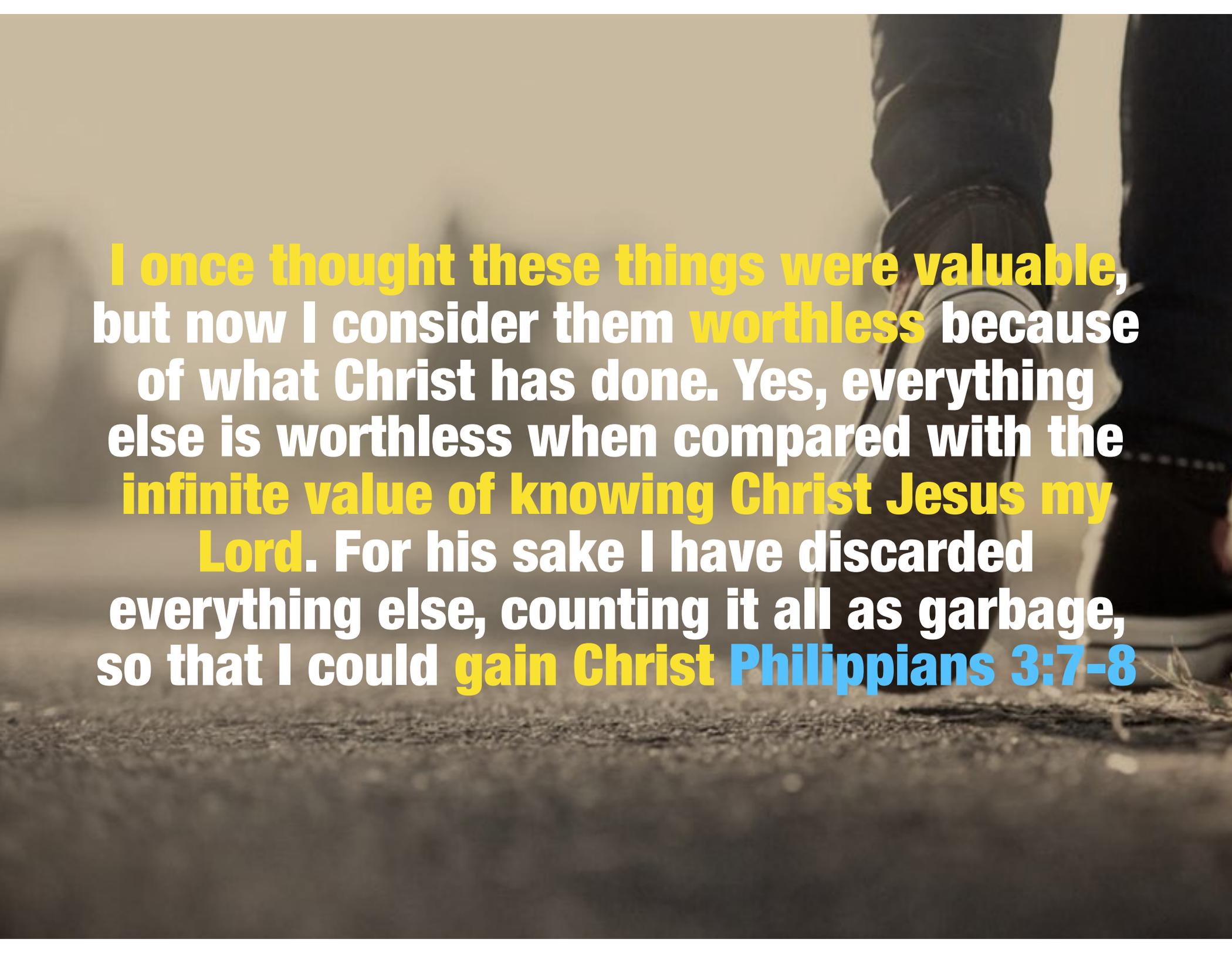
“I know all the things you do, that you are **neither hot nor cold**. I wish that you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth! You say, ‘I am rich. I have everything I want. I don’t need a thing!’ And you don’t realize that you are **wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked**.” **Revelation 3:15-17**

**Generosity breeds contentment within Christ-likeness**



To them, **a show of godliness** is just a way to become wealthy. **1 Timothy 6:5**

**Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.** After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. **vs 6-8**



**I once thought these things were valuable,**  
but now I consider them **worthless** because  
of what Christ has done. Yes, everything  
else is worthless when compared with the  
**infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my**  
**Lord.** For his sake I have discarded  
everything else, counting it all as garbage,  
so that I could **gain Christ** **Philippians 3:7-8**