**Scott Crede**

**Executive Pastor**

**Habits – Stewardship**

***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God…”*** ***Ephesians 2:8***

 ***“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*** ***Romans 5:8***

1. Choose to give in Spite of Circumstances

***And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:1-2***

***Very severe trial + extreme poverty + grace = overflowing joy & rich generosity.***

***John D. Rockefeller “I never would have been able to tithe the first million dollars I ever made, if I had not tithed my first salary which was $1.50 a week.”***

1. Choose to give with an attitude of joy

***For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people. 2 Corinthians 8:3-4***

1. **Generously**

2. **Expectantly** ***"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will reap generously."*** ***2 Corinthians 9:6***

***Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. Malachi 3:10***

***Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full… The amount you give will determine the amount you get back. Luke 6:38***

3. **Willingly** ***"For if the willingness is there, your gift is acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have."*** ***2 Corinthians 8:12***

***"Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under pressure."*** ***2 Corinthians 9:7***

4. **Cheerfully** ***"God loves a cheerful giver."*** ***2 Corinthians 9:7b***

1. When we give it is an opportunity to be like Jesus

***And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 7 But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you-see that you also excel in this grace of giving.***

***8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:5, 7-9***

***This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:16-18***

 ***“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16***