

Paul’s words to the people in Corinth are true as we gather today: “A few seeds make a small harvest, but a lot of seeds make a big harvest.” It seems simple enough - more seeds equals a bigger harvest. And what a blessing to know that small seeds make a difference and to hear the fruit of our Kingdom Assignment!

My favorite part of this is the creativity and excitement in engaging this - and the ways that God is at work in us and through us. You’ve heard about how \$5.00 has grown into hundreds of dollars, and I can’t imagine the total fruit and the impact - lives changed, ministries supported, and gifts shared in powerful ways because of God’s goodness and faithfulness.

We’ve been asking, “what does it mean to be blessed?” We’ve been reading through these letters written to the early church, and Paul encourages the Corinthians to continue in their generous spirit, he concludes that giving is proof or evidence of our love of God. Let’s be clear, though: God doesn’t require our generosity. And yet, when we truly accept the generous gift of God’s love, our response is to live and give generously.

We’re told in Acts 18 that Paul had been in Corinth for a year and a half. It was long time for Paul. While he was there, many people believed in Christ – both Jews and Gentiles. And at that time when Paul preached and taught there, Corinth was a big city – half a million people!

If you look at a map of Greece, you’ll see that Corinth is situated between two waterways with seaports on each side, which made it a major trade route in the Mediterranean. It was a crossroads, which meant that people from many places were coming and going through Corinth. That traffic was an opportunity for God to work through these Christians to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

(SLIDE) So, here’s the “tweet” from Paul’s letter to the church in Corinth: *God loves people who love to give. God can bless you with everything you need, and you will always have more than enough to do all kinds of good things for others.*

Friends, we are blessed to bless. That’s what we hear from the beginning – in Genesis when Abraham is “blessed to be a blessing” – and continuing. God’s blessings are never meant to be kept to ourselves. The intention behind God’s gifts to us is to invite others into relationship with God – that all may know the saving power of God to offer us new life and transform the world.

God’s call to us is not keep the blessings to ourselves. We have to share what we have and share what we know. We cannot be comfortable in simply enjoying God’s blessings in our lives. A life of faith in God who blesses calls us to always work so that

others may claim God’s blessings in their lives. Paul is clear that the generosity and giving of the Corinthians will encourage others to thank God, too.

If we want to be disciples of Jesus, faithful followers of Christ, then we have to be intentional and active in our faith. That’s one thing that the Kingdom Assignment reminds to do - that we literally have a part to play in building the Kingdom of God by what we say and what we do. We may not be able to do everything, but we can do something. And that matters!

Consider your blessings and how we pass on God’s blessings. What would happen if we didn’t? What if we didn’t pray? What if we didn’t show up here to worship and care for one another? What if we didn’t offer any of what we have? What if we didn’t give our time or share our talents? Hear this clearly if you hear nothing else: what you do, what you give makes a difference in the Kingdom of God! You are blessed to be a blessing!

I read this week: *You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. This is how prayer works.* For many of us, this seed money allowed us to be creative and act on the prayers of our hearts. We were able to give to others and serve others with our passion - whether it’s making caps for cancer patients, raising money for kids at a local elementary school, supporting Big Brothers and Big Sisters, giving food to the hungry, helping kids who need clothes, giving kids in Uganda school supplies, matching money to buy socks, or the many other things that we did.

On the front of your bulletin, there’s a small bird. I invite you to take that with you and put it somewhere that you’ll see it daily as a reminder that small things can yield big results - and that our witness together is powerful and truly does transform the world.

We are blessed to bless.

Let’s pray together:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE