



# GET GROWING

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## TALK IT OVER

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### The Proving Ground of Growth

Get Growing - Week 4

Pastor Andy Wood

June 6-7, 2026

If you would like to watch the weekend message, visit [www.saddleback.com/watch](http://www.saddleback.com/watch).

Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the questions provided or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions at the end of the document.

### Scriptures

2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV), 2 Corinthians 9:6–11 (NIV), Philippians 2:8–11 (NIV), Psalm 24:1 (NIV), 1 Chronicles 29:14 (NIV), Romans 5:8 (NIV), Psalm 23:6 (NIV), James 1:17 (NIV), 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV), Matthew 6:24 (NIV), 1 Timothy 6:17 (NLT), 2 Corinthians 8:3–5 (NIV), Romans 14:8–9 (NIV), John 7:38 (NIV), John 14:16–17 (NIV)

### Questions

1. Growth is God's will for you! As we "Get Growing," "The Proving Ground of Growth" can be found in 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV): *"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."* What does 2 Corinthians 8:7 say that the Corinthians "excel in"? According to the verse, what should the Corinthians "also excel in"?
2. There is no such thing as a mature faith without a generous heart of grace! Paul gives a theological treatise with regard to giving and generosity in 2 Corinthians 8–9. Read aloud in your group his conclusion encouraging generosity in 2 Corinthians 9:6–11: *"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: 'They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.' Now he who supplies*

*seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.*" In the first verse above, what does Paul specifically say is "the point to remember"? Discuss why "God loves a cheerful giver," and how sowing generously is linked to spiritual growth and thanksgiving to God.

3. In 1 Chronicles 29:14 (NIV), King David praised the Lord for the resources the Israelites gave for the temple Solomon would later build. He prayed, "Who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand." Psalm 24:1 (NIV) says, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." James 1:17 (NIV) says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father." Psalm 23:6 (NIV) says, "Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life." Romans 5:8 (NIV) says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." It's clear from all these verses that God is not the "taker" in our relationship with Him—He is "The Giver"—however generously we might give! How does this understanding shape your view of your possessions and change your perspective with regard to giving? If you truly believe that God is the giver of all things, why do you cling to what he has given you? Discuss how you can apply the truth that everything belongs to God in your choices and priorities. In what specific ways can you act as a better steward of the time, talents, and resources that God has given to you?
4. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 9:8 (NIV): "God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." Discuss how Paul uses the word "all" (three times) and "every" to emphasize the point that God "is able to bless you" so that "you will abound in every good work." How is God "The Replenisher" who replaces more than you can ever give to Him! According to the second half of the verse, what is the Lord's purpose in blessing you "abundantly...in all things at all times"? How does the verse encourage you to stretch your faith and use what God has given you so that you "abound in every good work"?
5. Jesus says in Matthew 6:24 (NIV), "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." What warning does Jesus give with regard to serving "both God and money"? Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV), "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." God is not after your money—He's after your heart! Speaking about Jesus in 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV), Paul writes: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Discuss how giving could be better considered as an act of worship—remembering Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who took your sins on the cross and gave you His righteousness!

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Are you interested in the Bible and in helping small groups benefit from the weekend message? Well, you are in luck! Saddleback members like you create these discussion guides each week. If you are interested in joining the team, please email [JasonW@saddleback.com](mailto:JasonW@saddleback.com).

6. Jesus said in John 7:38 and 14:16 (NIV), "Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them... I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth." Paul says of the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 8:3–5 (NIV): "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. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us." How does Paul describe the Corinthians' attitude with regard to giving? Discuss how a growing relationship with God through the Holy Spirit leads to a generous heart. How do specific descriptions of giving in the passage illustrate the principles of generosity and sacrificial giving?
7. As we "Get Growing" in our spiritual journey, one of the hardest areas to surrender is our personal finances—"The Proving Ground of Growth." Maybe we falsely see God, "who richly gives us all we need," as a taker rather than The Giver. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 6:17 (NLT), "Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment." Our giving is a spiritual discipline that leads us to spiritual maturity and a deeper relationship with God! Share in your group practical steps you can take this week to give your time, talents, and/or resources to God. For example, you can practice giving in a way that trusts God to replenish (one experiment). Or you can take your own personal step forward by: (1) Giving yourself fully to the Lord, (2) Giving something, (3) Giving consistently, or (4) Growing in your giving. Discuss your next step.

### Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message.

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

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