

# 26-0215p Transcript

## 26-0215p - *Areas of Divine Intervention - Financial, Steve Cain*

Bible Reader: John Nousek

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## Areas of Divine Intervention - Financial

### Scripture Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading (0:04 - 1:09): John Nousek

**Mark 12:28-34:** (0:04) Hello. For this evening's scripture reading, God's Word comes to us from the book of 2 Corinthians (0:13) chapter 9, verses 6 through 9. But this I say, He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, (0:23) and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposed (0:33) in his heart, not

### Continued

grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves the cheerful giver. And God is able to (0:42) make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, (0:51) may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written, He has dispersed the broad, (1:00) He has given to the poor. His righteousness endures forever. Amen. (1:09)

## Transcript (0:04 - 41:38), Preacher: Steve Cain

(1:14) As I mentioned this morning, God's divine intervention in Providence is something that (1:20) we need to always recognize. He has complete control of this world in everything that it (1:28) does.

No matter what we want to talk about, whatever subject you want to talk about, (1:33) God has His hand in it. Divine intervention, Providence, and preservation. He has more to do (1:42) and more to say about our finances, either independently, individually, or even as a (1:51) nation, or as a world.

He has His hand in it, and it revolves around His will. (2:01) One of the things that I like to think in terms of, and I would like to bring out, (2:05) is Paul's talking about God's involvement in our lives. And we talk about that in Acts, (2:12) the 17th chapter, where you may be familiar with the fact that Paul is in Athens.

He's been given (2:21) the opportunity to speak to the Athenians on Mars Hill. And he's been aroused a little bit, (2:36) dismayed perhaps, because as he is preparing his talk with them, and the opportunity to present to (2:44) them the message that he wants to present, he's noticed all of the particular idols that were (2:52) offered and made for the various gods that the people of the many nations have worshiped. (2:58) And they're very familiar with all of those gods, and he stumbled upon a statue that was (3:05) dedicated to the Unknown God.

And so Paul's going to be speaking to them about this Unknown God, (3:13) and he wants to share with them this God that they ignorantly worship. So we're in Acts, (3:20) the 17th chapter, and if you would like to follow with me, I'll be reading from the New (3:27) International Version, starting with verse 22. Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus (3:40) and said, People of Athens, I see that in every way you are very religious, for as I walked around (3:48) and looked carefully at

your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription, (3:56) to an Unknown God.

So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship, and this is what I am (4:04) going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven (4:13) and earth, and does not live in temples built by human hands, and he is not served by human hands (4:22) as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

(4:32) From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth, and he marked out (4:40) their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. Notice he's pointing out the fact (4:47) that he even established where you're going to live, where the Chinese are, where Africa is, (4:58) where South America is, and the people who live there, they're living there because (5:04) God chose them to live there. And you, me, us, living in the United States, aren't we thankful? (5:14) Should be anyway, because I don't want to live in very many parts of the world.

(5:22) This is a beautiful point of the world. So, verse 25, he is not served by human hands as if he needed (5:31) anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

From one man he (5:38) made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth, and he marked out their appointed (5:44) times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him (5:53) and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us, (6:03) for in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, (6:12) we are his offspring.

You can read the rest of the speech that Paul gave to them at another time. (6:22) But the point I want to make is that Paul is acknowledging the fact that God does determine (6:30) anything that involves finances. And the way he moved people around in those days, (6:38) and perhaps the way he moves people around today, and I believe he moves people around today.

(6:52) In times past, he used famines and he used circumstances. He used Abraham (7:04) with his personal being with his nephew Lyle. And he got Abraham to move to a certain area in which (7:15) he wanted to show and give Abraham's, and assure Abraham's descendants that they would have this (7:22) land as an inheritance.

But when it came time for Jacob to fulfill the prophecy that God made (7:29) concerning the Israelites living in Egypt, it took more than just that. It took more than just (7:37) Joseph being moved and sold as a slave into Egypt. It took more than that.

That was the preparation (7:46) that God made in order to get Jacob to move to Egypt. It took not only the fact that he realized (7:55) that Joseph is alive now and he wants to see his son, but that means he may have to move to Egypt. (8:04) But what's going to be the determining factor? (8:08) Famine.

A huge famine took over the place, didn't it? And it took the famine to get Jacob to even (8:17) think in terms of moving his family to Egypt. And God had to assure him that he needed to go, (8:27) he wanted him to go, because he had made a prophecy. And what was the prophecy? He made (8:33) a prophecy to Abraham that his family would be in Egypt in a land where they would be strangers, (8:41) and that they would live there for 500 years, and then they would come back and come out (8:48) and live in the land that God wanted to give to him and his family as an inheritance.

It took (8:55) a famine. But God moves people around. We lose jobs.

We get jobs. Ford Motor Company, (9:06) just to name one that I'm very familiar with because I live in Lorain, and Ford has (9:11) had a large facility back there, and they still have some. They're in cahoots with Mazda, and (9:17) they're making pickup trucks and what have you there in Avon or Sheffield, rather.

(9:25) But in order to get people to come to Lorain, there had to be jobs. And Lorain has what they call the (9:34) International Festival. And why do they call it the International Festival? Because people come (9:43) from all nations—Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Romania—and they're all living in that area, (9:53) and jobs brought them there.

Ford decided that they were going to open up a plant there, (10:00) and people from the South decided that they needed a job. So they came in numbers, huge numbers, (10:08) to take on the jobs that Ford was going to establish. And then all of a sudden, (10:16) after several years, many years, Ford decided they didn't need that plant anymore.

(10:23) So they closed it down. But they gave the employees the opportunity to relocate. (10:32) God moves people in various and many ways, and especially financially, too.

(10:41) As I was on the way up here with Scott and Jean this afternoon, we got to talking about how (10:49) God involves Himself in crops, the farmers, and how He involves Himself with their cattle, (10:59) their herds, how He makes it profitable for them to increase their profits or to (11:06) decrease their herds in order to force the market to go certain ways. (11:12) God divinely intervenes in our lives. (11:18) Just as a point, take a look at Job.

If you're familiar with the story of Job, (11:25) you know that God blessed him. And that was one of the points that Satan made when God says to (11:33) Satan, Have you seen my servant Job? He eschews evil. And what was the thing that Satan said to (11:43) God? Wouldn't you, if you were blessed like you blessed him all the time? I'll bet you (11:51) he would, if you would take his finances away from him, he'd curse you.

And God took Satan up (11:59) on that. Then Satan comes back again. And God says, Where have you been? I've been out traveling (12:08) around the world.

Have you observed Job, my servant? He eschews evil. Again, if you will just (12:16) let me take his health away from you, he'll curse you. And so God allowed that to happen to him.

(12:24) So we have examples after examples about how God divinely intervenes in our lives. (12:32) And the main thing is that we're talking about today is finances. One of the things that (12:42) attracted me to work with the congregation here, especially the first time was the location.

(12:51) I love this location. And I still love this location. And I still think that God has got (12:57) plans for you, plans for us, perhaps, who knows.

But I think that God in his infinite ways (13:09) is going to bless this congregation. And it's going to bless him very well. I really believe (13:15) that.

I shared that with Scott when Scott asked me if I would come up here and throw my experiences a (13:23) little bit this way. And I said, Yes, I will. Because I believe there's life here.

And I believe (13:31) God is going to bless this congregation. And I think that's because of the

history of this (13:40) congregation and its history and benevolence. When I was preaching here the second time, (13:50) the benevolence was just fabulous.

Brother Fouts was involved in it at that time. (13:58) We were helping the various families attend. This congregation is noted for its benevolence.

(14:06) And so I think that God is going to bless this congregation in many, many ways. (14:12) And I think that it is something that we need to stop and think about. God involves himself in (14:21) our lives.

And in this particular case, he wants us to be beneficial. And he wants us to have (14:30) programs of benevolence. But we're helping individuals, not only those of our number (14:36) who are in need from time to time, but also those that we come across.

And so this is one of the (14:45) reasons why I asked us to take a look at 2 Corinthians and chapters 8 and 9 in particular. (14:57) Because chapters 8 and 9 talk about benevolence. It talks in chapter 8 about Israel's (15:18) specific need for finances, for financial help.

And I don't know if we have the time to read both (15:26) chapters in its entirety and for me to make a comment on it, but I'd like to make an attempt at (15:32) it. Let's take a look at chapter 8, and then we'll go into chapter 9 and finish up with that (15:41) scripture that was read in your hearing. Chapter 9, verses 6-9, or 6-15 in particular.

(15:55) So Paul is talking to the Corinthians, and he wants them to be benevolent. And he's going to (16:07) be using Macedonia as an example for their benevolence and their desire to help Israel out. (16:15) And Paul wants to take a collection to help the Christians in Israel, in Jerusalem in particular, (16:24) because they're experiencing a famine themselves.

And I don't know if you're familiar with times (16:31) past, but farmers in the south will help farmers in the north when they're needing. Farmers in the (16:39) north will help the farmers in the south when they're needing. And the concept is that God is (16:47) going to bless one area so that they can help the one.

God is going to bless the other area so that (16:51) they can help this one. And so they're constantly balancing each other out. And now, picking up the (17:00) verse 1. And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given (17:06) the Macedonian churches.

And the reason is, is because they're willing to be benevolent. (17:14) There are poor congregations. There are poor people.

And Paul is going to be talking about (17:19) lifting them up about how they were so generous. So, brothers and sisters, we want you to know (17:28) about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Remember the word grace, because God (17:36) is blessing them because of the things that they've done.

God will bless this congregation (17:43) because of the things that it has done. So, verse 2. In the midst of a very severe trial, (17:50) their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify (18:00) that they gave as much as they were able and even beyond their ability.

(18:08) Entirely on their own, they urgently pled with us for the privilege of sharing in this service (18:17) to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations. They gave themselves first of all (18:26) to the Lord and then, by the will of God, also to us.

So, we urged Titus, just as he had earlier (18:36) made a beginning to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in (18:44) everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness, and in the love we have (18:52) kindled in you, see that you also excel in this grace of giving. Paul is really going to emphasize (19:04) how God is going to bless people and make it possible for us to be benevolent.

(19:11) And he's just expressed that about Macedonia. Verse 8. I am not commanding you, but I want to (19:21) test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know (19:28) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, (19:35) so that you, through his poverty, might become rich.

And of course, he's making reference to (19:41) the fact that Jesus left heaven to take on flesh and to be that sacrifice on the cross for yours (19:48) and my sins. So he, through his, yet for your sake he became poor, so that through his poverty (19:58) might become rich. And here is my judgment, verse 10, about what is best for you in this matter.

(20:07) Last year you were the first not only to give, but also to have the desire to do so. (20:15) Now, finish the work so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it (20:23) according to your means. Notice that, according to your means.

He's not asking them to excel, (20:33) to be comfortable about it. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to (20:41) what one has, not according to what one does not have. Our desire is not that others might (20:51) be relieved while you are hard-pressed, but that there might be equality.

At the present time, (20:58) your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn, their plenty will supply what you need. (21:08) The goal is equality. As it is written, the one who gathered much did not have too much, (21:16) and the one who gathered little did not have too little.

Thanks be to God who put into the heart (21:24) of Titus the same concern I have for you. For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is (21:31) coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. We are sending along with him the (21:39) brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel.

What's more, he was chosen (21:49) by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering which we administer in order to honor (21:56) the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. We want to avoid any criticism of the way we (22:06) administer this liberal gift. We are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the (22:14) Lord, but also in the eyes of man.

In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often (22:23) proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence (22:31) in you. As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker among you. As for our brothers, (22:40) they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ.

Therefore show these men (22:48) the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you so that the churches can see it. (22:57) Chapter 9. There's no need for me to write to you about the service

to the Lord's people, (23:08) for I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians. (23:15) Telling them that since last year, you and Achaia were ready to give, and your enthusiasm (23:22) was stirred most of them, and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.

But I am (23:31) sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, (23:38) but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. For if any Macedonians come with me (23:46) and find you unprepared, we, not to say anything about you, would be ashamed of having been (23:55) so confident. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish (24:04) the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised, and it would be ready as a generous (24:11) gift, not as one grudgingly given.

Here I want to just make an observation in the brotherhood, (24:19) and that is during the years of my growing up and my experiences in the brotherhood, (24:27) missionaries would come by and they would ask for support, and congregations along the way (24:36) would say to them, sure, we'll support you, say like \$200 a month, maybe better, maybe a little (24:44) less, but they would say yes. And then maybe a year later, they would write them and say, I'm sorry, (24:52) but we can't continue the \$200, so we're going to drop out. And so a lot of times that happens, (25:03) and that did happen to Paul, and that's one of the reasons probably why he wrote what he wrote here (25:09) concerning them, is because when you look in the Philippian letter, Paul is writing to the (25:15) Philippians and he's saying, thank you for renewing your help to me, for you were the first ones to (25:22) really become a service to us and in supporting us in our work.

But for some reason or other, (25:30) you had to discontinue it, but I'm so glad. This is found in chapter 4, the very last part of the (25:38) letter of the Philippians. He says, I'm so glad that you're able to renew your interest in us.

(25:46) So he knows what the brotherhood does, and he knows that from time to time, we do renege on (25:54) some of the promises that we make, and so that's one of the reasons why he wrote there, not to say (26:00) anything about you, but would be ashamed of having been so confident. So I thought it necessary to (26:08) urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift (26:14) you had promised. Then it would be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

(26:22) That's what he's talking about. He's talking about the fact that they may renege on their promise. (26:30) Verse 6, remember this, and here's the important thing for us, and this is what Paul wants us to (26:40) realize concerning God's divine intervention and providence in our lives.

Remember this, (26:49) who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. (26:59) He's talking to an agronomy community. They're grain raisers, and so when he's talking about (27:08) sowing sparingly, he's just going like this, and what do you expect for return? (27:15) Bigger returns, but he says if you go out and you sow generously, what do you expect? (27:25) Bumper crop, something very beautiful, and that's what he's trying to point out to us.

(27:32) You want to give generously, then God will bless you generously. That's what he's sharing with us (27:43) about that. So whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will (27:49) also reap generously.

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, (27:58) not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver, and of course we (28:05) quote this scripture constantly whenever we're about ready to take up a collection on Sunday (28:12) mornings, and this is endorsed by God, and then what we do is endorsed by Paul, and Paul is just (28:21) telling us what the Holy Spirit shared with him. So God loves a cheerful giver, (28:27) and God is able to bless you abundantly. This is verse 7. Each of you should give what you (28:36) have decided in your heart, give not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful (28:41) giver, verse 8, and God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things, at all times, (28:51) having all that you need, you will abound in every good word.

Let's stop there for the moment (29:02) anyway. What is he sharing with us? What is Paul telling us? He is guaranteeing us that (29:16) whatever we give, say like I open up my billfold and you take a collection, and all I got in there (29:23) is a \$20 bill. What am I going to do? Reneg and not give it? Or do I give it? If I give it, (29:35) then I don't have the ability to help anybody else down the road, do I? (29:41) I don't have the ability to give to anybody else.

What Paul is telling us is that even if you give (29:49) the very last shilling out of your pocket, the next opportunity to do good, you will be able to (29:58) do it because God will make sure that you can fulfill their need too. Read that. See if that's (30:08) not what he's saying.

Every time you have an opportunity to do good, he wants you to do good (30:16) to the ability that you have. And if you give the \$5 bill to him, you still have \$15 left. (30:24) Somebody else comes along, and they need help.

You give him a \$10, you got \$5 left. (30:31) Somebody else comes along, you still got \$5, but if you give that \$5, you don't have anything to (30:38) eat on them. You can't stop at McDonald's.

You're going to be hungry before you get home. (30:49) Paul is telling us if somebody comes up to you, even after you've given your last \$5 out, (30:57) that somewhere along the way, if that person has the need, (31:01) you're going to be able to fulfill it. You're going to be able to fulfill it.

(31:08) Read it. Now, verse 10. Now, he who supplies seed to the sower, that's you and me, (31:25) our income that we have, the amount of money that we've earned from our jobs, (31:32) from our investments, whatever way we have, he is able to supply the seed to the sower (31:40) and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of (31:49) your righteousness.

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous (31:57) on every occasion through us. Your generosity will result in thanksgiving. (32:09) Let's, it's reinforced again.

Let's go back up to verse 8. And God is able to bless you abundantly (32:17) so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (32:29) As it is written, they have freely scattered their gifts to the poor. (32:34) The righteousness endures forever.

Now, he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food (32:41) will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. (32:50) And I love the book of Job because I believe that that's exactly what Job did. (32:59) You read that book of Job, you'll see that he's depending himself from his friends who are accusing (33:06) him of sinning because that's the reason why he's experiencing all of this stuff.

Surely you sinned (33:13) and God is punishing you for this. Job says, no, I haven't sinned. There's no way that I can sin.

(33:22) And he talks about how that he helps the needy and he goes out of his way with his benevolence (33:28) and he talks about feeding everything. I guarantee you, God knows what you're going to do with your (33:36) money. I guarantee you that God will give you what you intend and enable you to do what you intend to (33:50) do with it because he knows your heart.

He knows your heart. So if you're not getting very much (33:59) money, he knows your heart. But I guarantee you that if you're making money, he knows your heart (34:06) because you're going to give it to somebody.

You're going to be benevolent. You're going to (34:11) help somebody. He's going to bless you.

Look at all the things God blessed Job with. He helps us (34:23) in doing these things. So verse 12, the service that you perform is not only supplying the needs (34:33) of the Lord's people, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God because of the (34:41) service by which you have proved yourselves.

Others will praise God for the obedience that (34:49) accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ and for your generosity in sharing with (34:56) them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you because (35:05) of surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift.

And what (35:15) Paul is pointing out is God is working with us to help us to be benevolent. (35:22) And when we're able to be benevolent and bring ourselves to that point of being benevolent, (35:31) God is being glorified. God is being glorified.

That's what Paul wants us to realize. And that's (35:42) one of the reasons why God is helping us in our ability to be benevolent is because he knows (35:50) that when we help somebody, they're not only going to say, thank you, brother, (35:55) but they're also going to say, thank you, God. And when they say, thank you, God, (36:04) he's being glorified.

And we're glorifying God through our benevolence. (36:12) There's one thing that puzzles me and troubles me from time to time, (36:18) and that is, where does the Christian believe that the source of income is going to come from? (36:24) Source of money that's going to come and enables him to be benevolent? I want you to know this. (36:37) God is your source.

And why do I say that? Because so many people want to think that God is (36:47) blessing them through gambling. So many people want to think that if they go out and buy a lottery (36:54) ticket and they win, God is blessing them. So many people think that if they're walking down the (37:01) street and they find a lottery ticket on the ground and it's a winner, that they will promise (37:07) God, I'll give you 10%.

No. God wants to be the source of our income, and he wants that source (37:18) of income to be from industry. He wants you to earn.

He wants to be able to give you a blessing. (37:29) And he does not want Satan to get the glory. He doesn't want to share his glory with Satan.

(37:38) Why do I say that? Because the lottery ticket is the works of Satan. It's not the works of God.

(37:47) The lottery does not give God's blessing.

God does not want us to go out and spend money (37:54) on a lottery ticket or gambling, going to the racetracks, going to casinos. He doesn't want us (38:01) going there. He wants us to get our money from him through his benevolence and through industry.

(38:15) He's enabled us to work. He's enabled us with abilities. He's enabled us with a brain.

He's (38:24) enabled us with talent, and he expects us to use it for one another. And not only just one another, (38:32) he wants to use those talents to bless us. And he blessed you with your talents, and he doesn't want (38:43) your income to come from anybody else except him, as that sank into your mind.

So God doesn't want (38:54) us to be blessed in any other way than the way he has chosen, and for us to be able to say, (39:01) thank you, God. He wants us to say and realize that our ability to support our families, (39:11) and not only the ability to support our families, but to be able to be benevolent and help other (39:16) people comes from him. Even Satan knew that because he's told God, why does Job do what he (39:28) does? It's because you're blessing him in everything that he does.

Satan wasn't taking (39:36) any credit for it, was he? He knew that the blessings that Job was experiencing (39:42) is coming from God, and the blessings that you and I experience is coming from God. (39:54) God enables us to be benevolent, and he wants us to be benevolent. (39:59) There may be someone in the audience this morning or this evening that (40:03) perhaps has never given any thought to those things, (40:07) and a lot of that has to do with our relationship with God, too, doesn't it? (40:13) And if we are denying God in our lives, and God knows whether or not we're denying him (40:20) in our life by the way we live, and he wants us to change our ways.

He wants us to repent (40:27) in those things, and he wants us to come back to him and recognize him and give him the glory, (40:36) and he's done that for giving us the ability to come back to him and being reconciled to him (40:43) through Jesus. I sent Jesus to die on the cross as propitiation for our sins. (40:50) A death penalty for sins was needed to be paid, and Jesus paid it, and he's willing to pay that (40:59) death penalty and use his death penalty and credit his death penalty that he paid anyone (41:05) who would like to come to him and become his disciple and to bring their lives around to (41:14) what God would like to have them do.

And so he says, (41:19) take disciples of them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, (41:25) and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of their sins. (41:30) And if there's anyone here that needs to do that and comply with that, (41:34) we'd like to extend to you the opportunity to do so. (41:36) Come together we stand and sing the psalm of the Lord.