

Session 4: Oscar Castillo // The Generosity of Caregiving

...will be joining us on the stage. I grew up with a thwarted perspective of God,

I truly understood that God loved me unconditionally after understanding the true gospel. So you can ask him more about that and what that story looked like. But Oscar, you can come on up. Oscar is married to Brianna and is dad to Grace and Eva. And he is the pastor here of Watermark in Espanol, um, leading the group that meets here in the loft on Sunday mornings while the English speakers are across the way.

And as I introduce Oscar, I just want to let you guys know, not only is Oscar, Um, an amazing pastor here on site at Watermark, but he is also a dear friend of Watermark Health and to me as well. Oscar and a couple others and myself meet regularly to talk about what trends we're seeing in ministry, how we can serve better.

And so you're getting a chance when I thought through who could come in and Land the plane well for our two days together. I absolutely knew it had to be Oscar as he would just encourage you of why you're doing what you're doing and why the church cares about it specifically. So you guys welcome Oscar and you got the floor, friend.

OSCAR:

Thank you.

Como estamos familia? Probamos eso otra vez. Let's try that again. Como estamos familia? You can say bien, that means good. If you say mild that's not okay, we gotta have a conversation. Um, yeah, my name is Oscar Castillo and I'm just super excited to be here. Um, and, I mean, today I'm going to be speaking about the generosity of caregiving.

Um, a lot of this topic, what I'm going to share with you has been just a constant realization in my life with, uh, just walk with God and understanding that my beliefs, um, are what fuel.

Both my thought life and everything that comes out of anything that I do in any place where I go. Um, so my hope this morning is to encourage you, uh, to see yourself as God's child.

Um, to know that your vocation is super important to him, but what's even more important is that you remember that you're his son and you're his daughter. And that is what should be our identity. And out of the overflow of who he is. This is what we will take into our workplaces and you've heard some amazing tips and ways in which, uh, we can do that.

And so my, my prayer today is that you would be encouraged by who God is. And so before we keep going, let me pray and we'll, we'll dive in. Okay. Heavenly Father, I for who you are. We're here, God, because of your love. Without you, God, uh, we would be. In various places, perhaps in broken places, perhaps even would have probably destroyed ourselves because God, we're prone to wonder and prone to make ourselves God and want to control our life.

But because of who you are, we're here even contemplating the notion of being a blessing to others. That is only because of you. And so we come to you today as your children. We need you, God. We need you more than ever. I know some of us, Lord, are, are weary, are tired. We just need to hear from you. So at the end, God, that we would be strengthened and emboldened to fulfill your mission, God, which is what you desire.

So Holy Spirit, you know, the needs of every person in this room. I'm going to speak. Would I believe you have given me, but would you please nurture and care and hug those who need one today that just embrace that they would know that you, that they're their, they're your children. And that's what matters first and foremost.

So I pray all this in Jesus name. Amen. So I can remember in the 1980s, I was born in 1984 to do the math. I'll help you. I'm about to turn 40. Um, It's like 1987, 1988, and I can just barely remember. I was 3 or 4 years old, and I can remember curling in my living room, back in El Salvador, my birth country, and I could hear, Thunk, thunk, thunk, thunk, thunk.

Just bullets on the other side of the wall. They were ricocheting onto it, like they were being shot, and we were in the middle of a war. See, in the 1980s, um, there's a lot of proxy wars all over the world and one of those places was El Salvador. And I remember just, at any moment, gunfire could come off, uh, could start.

And I remember just, probably four or five years old, looking up to, to the sky and I could hear helicopters and then see them just nosedive. And then, toot, toot, toot, toot, toot, just, Spray bullets and what they're trying to show is the government against the guerrilla. There was an uprising But this little lady right here my mama I'm gonna cry

She'd leave us to go to the ER Because she was a nurse. I remember that she tells the stories but soldiers People of all walks of life, even those who were part of the uprising, would show up to the ER. She didn't make any exception of people, she just knew there was a human being on the other side who needed help.

And I just remember thinking I could probably lose my mom. Because she would tell us the stories of how she couldn't get to the ER because she'd get caught in the crossfire. And so, those were rough years of my life, and to be honest with you, they still impact me today. For example, um, I can't put my back, I have to be looking at the entrance every restaurant that I go to.

Um, cause I'm, I'm scared that somebody's gonna walk in. And so I kinda have to have some sort of control of the situation. I'm still going, I'm, I'm, I'm about to go into therapy and, and just to, cause those are, those are formative moments in our childhood that we don't pay attention to until later on you realize, man, that's impacted me a lot.

One thing that I saw all the time though was mom get up at 2 in the morning, she'd walk, and then she'd get on a bus, and she'd take her, you know, to go to the hospital, and then she'd come back, she was tired. So that's, that's, One of the connections, personal connections to me when it comes to healthcare.

Another one, um, was when I was about 15 years old, um, I had epilepsy. I was going on my way to take my driving test. Um, not the best time to have, um, I'm literally backing up. We're going to the DMV to try to get my permit. I'm 15 years old. And I, and I had, I just had an attack and, and then I don't remember.

I just passed out. I was, thank God at that time I'd parked the car and I'd gotten on the passenger side because I was going to drive and I passed out and less little that I know, um, you know, probably 24 hours later, I woke up in a Methodist hospital in West Dallas. So we'd now moved to the United States and that doctor, the neuro neuro neuro neurologist, um, Saw who we were as just a family.

And I don't know if he was a believer or not, if he would, his faith was, but I can remember my mom crying, um, in amazement because that neuro neurologist, um, had, um, taking care of all our bills. A hundred percent trying to have to pay a dime. And yet I saw another man, another example of somebody who.

Didn't pay attention to the person who was in front. Obviously they cared, but there was something bigger than them that they were a part of. Like my mom and then this doctor and I'm like, man, healthcare is kind of cool. Um, I'd like to be involved one day. I don't think I can, you know, do anything within the medical field, but God, if you give me an opportunity, I'd love to do it.

Well, he answered that prayer. And so in 2010, I left Watermark staff here, you know, And went to be a, uh, COO of a healthcare holding company, uh, that focused on end of life care and our main focus was hospice. And it was so such an eyeopening experience for me because you saw people at the end of their life, many alone, some didn't even have a connection to their family, but it was these healthcare workers and professionals that were there.

That we're family. It's crazy. It's crazy to see some of you and others who are not in this room, who will be here next year, right? We're having this next year or you're having this next year. Great. Okay. I just vision cast it for you guys. Um, it's so crazy to me because the only way you could do that, love another human being.

Is if you have some way or another God's love in you. Like it, there's, there's something that is just inspiring to me, uh, to see all of you and give so much. And I know, I know your pays are really low. I mean, I looked at RNs, I look at CNAs, I was like, man, the amount of work that those ladies do a couple of guys.

Cause usually it was all, all ladies. That's why I write these, guys were a bunch of wusses. They only stayed for like 4 or 5 days and they leave again and I'm like, come on man, let's go, we need you. Umm, I think it's the guys, I mean I love them and it's just hard, it's just hard work and they leave. But every single moment I saw healthcare professionals look across, you know, look at the person they were serving and they would see them with dignity.

So that has marked my life. And one even closer is that of my, my two daughters. Uh, this is my wife, uh, uh, Brianna and my daughter, uh, on the, on the right is grace and then Eva on the left. And both of them went through a hard time, um, in their early years. Uh, eventually grace, uh, was diagnosed with, uh, a Chiari malformation, which is also something with neurology.

Um, and then, and then Eva had hypotonia, so that led to a lot of breathing problems where we would have to sleep beside her crib because she had to be strapped to try to measure how many breaths she was having, and it would go off after it would dip to a certain number. It sounded like an ambulance was in our house.

Um, and so we'd have to get up and kind of shake her, and, but every moment, every time we'd go to Children's Hospital, uh, in Dallas. They made us feel like, Hey, we're here. We're here to serve. And it was just amazing And, and I'm so emotional this morning because it's like, it's so, so cool to see how God uses you guys.

God uses you so much to impact so many people in deep ways, and I'm standing in front of you telling you thank you. Thank you for doing what you do. Thank you for giving of your time for sacrifice and you're not getting paid what you do. And some of you are very weary and burdened, got a lot going on. So today I just, I want to speak about generosity because

once I understood generosity, I realized the only example I could come up with who is so generous with their time, their talent, their treasure, and who they are.

And it's just health care professionals. I mean, I'm not saying lawyers don't do that. They probably do, but you guys are just tangibly seeing that like it's palpable. You make the invisible love that people don't know you make it visible. And so you see that generosity. Uh, when you look at the old Testament, um, generosity is actually a concept that has to do with justice.

Most of the time, um, Um, when we, when we see generosity in the Bible, it's, it's not tied to just giving of money. It's actually tied to a cause that is bigger than what we give physically to somebody or even, even a word, but it's actually tied to a, a bigger cause. And so what you, what, what you see in the old Testament is that God is on a mission to heal the nations from sin and death.

Through his love and generosity. You see, many times when we think about generosity, we think about just giving away money. Right? Somebody who has money gives it away. But actually generosity is a concept that's actually a very Jewish concept. And when you ask a lot of rabbis and those who have grown up in Jewish homes, it's called Sadaka.

And Sadaka is about how do I use what God has given me to To give worth and dignity to all those around me. Actually, the word generosity itself is two, it's an amalgamation of two words. It's gene, which, you know, which is the root word also of Genesis, which means to create. And then genus, which means dignity or nobility.

Especially in the 17th century, 16th century, a lot of the people who were very wealthy, they were called the generous people because they had the dignity, but it was thwarted because when you, when you, when you look at it in the, in the biblical context, generosity is actually about lifting those who feel marginalized, who are marginalized, the poor, the broken, the widow, and the orphan, and lifting them up to a right status.

So when you're generous, You're creating a pathway for somebody to feel dignity. And I believe you guys do that and do that in such a way that really is, is, is impactful. And I'm not sure you can really grasp and really you won't grasp it until we get to eternity and eternity will be, you'll be able to see that the person that you served, you saw them as somebody who was an image bearer of God.

And many times we can grow weary because we lose perspective. And so what I'd like to do is remind you today of the gospel. Because the best gift I can give you and the best gift you can ever give any patient with your words, your actions, desires, and intentions is the good news that is found in Genesis and the story that you're a part of.

And that's one of the ways that it doesn't matter where you're at, when you're growing weary and tired, don't forget the story you're a part of. Because it's the story, it's that perspective that's gonna give you, uh, uh, significance and it's gonna give you an opportunity to see your actions as part of this bigger cause of God's redemption of the world and redeeming everything unto Him.

And so, this, this, uh, top right. Circle up here, it's, it's, it's a sign, it signifies or it, it symbolizes our world that we live in today. We all see brokenness, sickness, diseases, that's all part of a broken world. We all feel it. Pain that comes in and out emotionally, physically, mentally, what presses us down, that's pain because we live in a context.

Where we experience a broken world, but you see, God didn't leave us in a broken world just to make do and figure it out. You, what we see is that God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And that act of generosity is one that has changed billions of people throughout ages.

Because God didn't leave people in the brokenness and muck of this world, but he sent his only son so that whoever believes in him could return back to the genesis of everything, to the original design. And when we understand God's cause in God's heart, you see that he gives freely because of who he is.

Because he is love. Because of his desire to see that all creation returned back to him. He sends his son. And in that generosity, we see his love being displayed.

He sends his son so we can experience the worthy, the, the dignity and respect that he's always wanted us to have. But in a broken world is when you see an imbalance in a broken world is where you see the, the, the, the hurt and the pain that we can cause each other when we don't see each other as God sees us.

So what's the point I want to drive home to you today through our love and generosity, we're executing God's justice, which brings spiritual, emotional, and physical healing. In your giving, in your sacrifice, in you giving of your life, you are ushering in God's kingdom values and principles. You are the hope of the world because of Christ in your life.

You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world, says Jesus.

That identity on us because he say, Hey, I'm not standing back, just letting people kind of be victims of a broken world, but I am actively engaging and pursuing everyone. And it just so happens in moments when we are experiencing brokenness and, and especially physical pain and disease is a, there's a time when we can.

Really tune in and see, man, we, we, we're very fragile. And if it isn't for God and His intervention, we will truly experience despair. In Acts 20, verse 35, it says, In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way, we must help the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed, say it with me, it is more blessed to give.

Then to receive. See most of the time that, that verse is taken out of context and it's put up in such a way where we, we give so we can receive something in return of what we would like to see in return. In other words, how we would like to be repaid. But when we, when we understand that we are a part of a mission, that of an expansion of a kingdom, and that God is using people like you.

In moments of hardship and despair, you realize that the payment is actually greater than just receiving a paycheck every two weeks. The payment is actually the fact that you are restoring the dignity of somebody by your generosity. When you give and you give freely, you are showing a pathway for anyone to not be seen As somebody who lacks, but rather for somebody to be seen as somebody who is loved by a generous God, a God who seeks justice, a God who desires for all to experience him.

See, giving may seem like a loss on the ledger of our life, but in God's justice system, generosity is gaining and restoring everything back to how he intended it from the beginning. Generosity is better understood when we see that in this broken world, there is, there's no, there's no even playing field, but through Christ we can restore dignity back to everybody.

So what do we do with this? How do I, how could I encourage you? So how do we live a generous, generous, generously in our care, in caregiving? I want to encourage you to have a a prayer life that you don't take on your day unless you've spoken to your creator

because he wants to use you in such a way that you can't even imagine what you'll experience in eternity when you look back and you'll see wow that word of encouragement that that word of life because of what I heard from God and how I understood him I was able to give. You will only see that in eternity.

And so in your generosity, remember you have a greater reward beyond what you're getting paid today. Not only are people getting healed physically by your own hands, by your own knowledge, by own, by your own efforts, but also by your spiritual investment in their lives. By you being present. You too. can be an agent for hope, an agent for change in their lives, that they are able to see that God loves them unconditionally.

Second one is give. You might say, but what do you, when you say give, are you talking about money? No, I'm, I'm just talking about look for ways in which you can take God at his word in that when you give to those who don't have, or those who lack, he will repay in such a way. That you, you, you'll be speechless for how he returns back though whenever we, we give and we are generous.

The other one is speak and you've heard it today. Be bold, be courageous because you have the hope of the world. You have the hope of the world in your life. Christ in you is the hope of glory. Christ in you is what the true healing that we're all looking for. And fourth. Go. Today, you're at a place, at a company perhaps, at a hospital or a clinic, but I want to encourage you to ask an audacious question to God.

God, will you take me somewhere where I don't want to go, but I'd love to see your miracles? And just a mere question will put you in a very uncomfortable place, which is a place of dependence. And it could be that God could use you. To heal a nation because of your faithfulness. Going back to my story about mom and getting up in the middle of a war, go to work.

You see all over the world, there is a struggle. There is a fight, there is a battle, and it's between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. And you are called to be in the front lines of it. And I believe God could use you to heal the nations in such a way that only you could do because of your unique giftings.

Proverbs 19, 17 says, whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and he will repay him for his deed. So in Christ, everything balances out. So I want to encourage you today. To be bold and let the God's light shine in and through you. And the healing that all are desiring can be found and seen through you.

But that can only be done in a posture of dependency. So I believe we can all end today singing, Lord, I need you. Lord, I need you every second. I need you. And God, I want to construct my life on you because at the end of my life, I just want that your light be the one that is seen, that you be the one who heals people beyond the physical, but in the spiritual, and that we can all together celebrate when either he returns or he calls us home.

So be generous in your caregiving. Because God is using you to level the playing field for all to be loved by Him in an unconditional way. Let's pray. God, thank you so much for just this time that we get to, um,

just remember that our vocation, God, is, is but an instrument to what you're trying to accomplish all over the world. God, there's a story that's unfolding that is, many times we lose sight of it, but would you today remind us that, God, you're, you're working in and through us, not because of who we are, but because of who you are and you've gifted us in unique ways to fulfill your vision and mission.

You desire to heal all nations, all people, and in eternity, God, we'll be able to see the fruits of our labor. Please encourage Holy Spirit and empower all my brothers and sisters that are in this room today. We pray all this in Jesus name