

WHAT DOES YOUR GIVING REVEAL ABOUT YOUR HEART?

2 Corinthians 9:1-15

WE SHOULD GIVE IN SUCH A WAY THAT OTHERS ARE INSPIRED TO FOLLOW OUR EXAMPLE

- “Now concerning the ministry to the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you. 2 For I know your eagerness, and I boast about you to the Macedonians, ‘Achaia has been ready since last year,’ and your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3 But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you in this matter would not prove empty, and so that you would be ready just as I said. 4 Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we, not to mention you, would be put to shame in that situation. 5 Therefore I considered it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance the generous gift you promised, so that it will be ready as a gift and not as an extortion.” (2 Corinthians 9:1-5)
- “Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving. 8 I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches.” (2 Corinthians 8:7-8 NLT)
- **Giving to the Lord and His work should never involve manipulation or coercion but should be done as the Holy Spirit convicts and guides us according to His word and His will.**
- **Your generosity doesn't just reveal what God is doing in your heart; it can inspire God to do something extraordinary in the hearts of those watching your example.**

CHRISTIANS SHOULD GIVE GENEROUSLY AND CHEERFULLY SO THE CHURCH CAN MEET AND EXCEED MINISTRY OBJECTIVES

- “The point is this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work. 9 As it is written: He distributed freely; he gave to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-9)

- **Sowing (giving) sparingly or generously determines how God responds with His blessings.**
- “[Jesus] looked up and saw the rich dropping their offerings into the temple treasury. 2 He also saw a poor widow dropping in two tiny coins. 3 ‘Truly I tell you,’ he said, ‘this poor widow has put in more than all of them. 4 For all these people have put in gifts out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.’” (Luke 21:1-4)
- **Mature Christians don't see giving as an obligation, but rather a privilege and an act of worship.**
- “...arrange in advance the generous gift.” (2 Corinthians 9:5)
- **Generous and cheerful giving was the normal attitude and practice of the early Christians.**
- **When giving becomes an obligation, we focus on what we're losing; but when giving becomes an act of worship, we celebrate what God can accomplish through our generosity.**

GOD IS GLORIFIED AND REWARDS OUR GENEROSITY AND FAITHFULNESS IN GIVING

- “Now the one who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will also provide and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the proof provided by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone. 14 And as they pray on your behalf, they will have deep affection for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:10-15)
- **Having a heart of generosity results in the blessings of growing in righteousness and impacting others for the glory of God.**
- “Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share, 19 storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of what is truly life.” (1 Timothy 6:18-19)
- **The greatest return on your generosity isn't measured by how much money comes back into your bank account, but by how many lives are changed, how many needs are met, and how much glory is given to God.**
- **Your bank account may reveal how much money you have, but your generosity reveals how much of your heart God has.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Observation:

- What does Paul say about the Corinthians' previous eagerness to give, and why does he send representatives ahead of time to help them prepare their promised offering? (vss. 1-5)
- What principle does Paul teach through the illustration of sowing and reaping, and what attitude does God desire from those who give? (vss. 6-7)
- What does Paul say God is able to provide for believers, and what purposes does God intend His provision to accomplish? (vss. 8-11)
- What results from the Corinthians' generosity beyond meeting the physical needs of the believers in Jerusalem? How does their giving affect the recipients' relationship with God and with other believers? (vss. 12-15)

Understanding

- How can we model generosity in a way that inspires others without drawing attention to ourselves or making people feel guilty about what they are able to give?
- Have you ever felt led to give, serve, or help meet a need but delayed acting on that conviction? What prevented you from following through?
- How does understanding that God's blessings may include spiritual growth, greater righteousness, and opportunities to impact others change our expectations about the rewards of generosity?
- Why does viewing generosity as an act of worship change the way we think about giving?
- How does connecting our personal generosity with the church's mission change the way we view our individual contributions?
- Why is generosity such a revealing indicator of our priorities, trust, and devotion to Christ?
- What is one specific step God may be calling you to take this week to become more intentional, willing, cheerful, or generous in supporting His work and meeting the needs of others?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

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