

2 Cor 9:1-5

1 Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; 2 for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. 3 Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; 4 lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. 5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

As Paul opens chapter 9 he's going to give some final thoughts on the preparation of giving.

It wasn't necessary that he mention their support to the Jerusalem church.

The Corinthians wanted to help

- they just hadn't done it.

Paul boasted to the churches in Macedonia of Corinthian congregation

- the enthusiasm encouraged the churches in Macedonia
- to get involved in giving as well.

Paul sent a few men ahead to be sure the collection was taken.

Paul had already boasted to the churches up north

- that the Corinthian church was eager to help.

However, the Corinthian church was somewhat immature and hadn't given to the Jerusalem church.

- The Lord matures each of us at a different pace

That's why the body of Christ is so important.

- Older isn't necessarily wiser,
- nor is younger better.

The churches of Macedonia

- were excited to see these young believers in Corinth
- who seemed ready to jump into the fire
- and support the Jerusalem church.

2 Cor 9:6-15

6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Paul employs this biblical principle of sowing and reaping.

- This is consistent in the word of God
- and Paul uses a farmer as an illustration.

Every farmer or every gardener recognizes that the size of the harvest,

- is contingent on what he has sown in the field.

In the spiritual realm the same principle applies.

- If you don't sow to the Spirit
- You won't reap of the Spirit

Gal 6:8-10

8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

If someone sows to the flesh, Paul says he will reap corruption.

- We don't need to be taught how to live as a sinner.

But when I became a believer,

- I had to read so that I could learn
- to live a life that was foreign to me.

I had to learn to sow to the Spirit, Paul says

- those who sow to the Spirit will reap everlasting life.
- A small sacrifice for such a great return!

2 Cor 9:7

7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

We can give one of two ways.

- One is good the other is not good.
- When you give grudgingly that's a wrong way to give.

The phrase "not grudgingly" is "ek lupēs, "out of sorrow."

That's when you're giving out of compulsion,

- I don't really want to, but I will.

Another way we shouldn't give is out of necessity.

- Oh, they've been saying the church is going to fold
- so I guess I'd better give.

If the Lord is going to keep the doors opened in a church,

- He's the one that is going to keep them open.

The Corinthians hadn't followed thru with their oath,

- they'd be better off keeping their offering
- than giving out of sorrow

He didn't want them to give if they felt pressured.

John Philips:

God has no need of anything from us. It is impossible to give Him anything, except, indirectly, by giving to the needs of His children. Giving does not benefit Him. It benefits us. So, giving grudgingly is really insulting. We don't like receiving gifts given mean-spiritedly, given out of a sense of duty. Nor does God.¹

God loves a cheerful giver:

- The Greek word is "hilaros."
- We get our English word, "hilarious" from that Greek word.

Exodus 25 gives us a peek into the first offering to God by His people.

Ex 25:1-2

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.

In Exodus 35 & 36 Moses says that the Lord commanded

- that he take an offering from among the people,
- from those who had a willing heart
- for the purpose of the building of the sanctuary.

Because of the amazing response, Moses had to tell them to stop!

2 Cor 9:8

8 And God is able to make all grace (a synonym for financial resources) abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Three times Paul mentions "all."

¹ Phillips, J. (2009). [*Exploring 2 Corinthians: An Expository Commentary*](#) (2 Co 9:7a-c). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.

God may not always bless us monetarily, but He does bless us!

For Example, God said to the Ephesians in chapter 1:
He has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Paul uses a principle in verse 8 that God is able to make all grace abound toward you.

This principle has at times

- been misunderstood
- and misused
- and even abused

But it's good to be refreshed by this principle from time to time:

Phil 4:15-19

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. (Paul was reminding them that they were the only church who supported his ministry of evangelism) 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. 18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. 19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Oh don't we love to hear those words, God shall supply all your needs.

This section of Philippians is a statement to the believers

- who had given to the ministry of the gospel thru Paul.

Paul didn't write this to the other churches,

- it was to the Philippians

Paul says in verse 18, "I am full," the Greek word is "plēroō."

He uses the perfect tense to describe the Greek verb.

- "I have been filled full and at present I am well supplied."

Paul completes verse 18 of Philippians by saying:

having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

The word "sacrifice" is a great example of an English word

- derived from the Septuagint

- which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew.

In the OT it speaks of the odors of the Levitical sacrifices,

and the Greek translation speaks of

- “an odor of a sweet smell.”

So it seems that a gift to an apostle or to

- a spiritual teacher in the early Church,
- would have been regarded as an offering to God²

Philippians 4:19:

19 And my God shall supply “plēroō” all your need

- The same verb as verse 18.

In verse 18 he was saying, “I am full”

He said that because his needs were supplied:

Now in verse 19 he’s saying:

- as you have supplied all of my needs for me
- God will supply for you!

This is also the idea in 2 Corinthians 9:8.

8 And God is able to make all grace (a synonym for financial resources) abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Then Paul says, verse 9:

9 As it is written:

“He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever.”

He’s quoting from Psalms 112:9 where

- a man is described as generous and gives to others.

And in this giving,

- he blesses others then
God blesses him even more.

Promises of Giving:

² Wuest, K. S. (1997). [*Wuest’s word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader*](#) (Vol. 5, p. 116). Eerdmans.

10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

(Again, he's using the principle that Jesus used in Luke 6, give and it shall be given to you.)

12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,

13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,

14 and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you.

What are some of the provisions that come out of our giving?

- It increases the fruit of our righteousness vs 10.

Then Paul says in verse 12 that our giving supplies the needs of the saints,

- resulting in people thanking God for what we do.

15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

- This is one of those, "I don't deserve this" moments.

It seems this is what Paul was doing, thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

What's the gift? Jesus!

He's the language of love! You don't have to speak someone else's language, just love them.

There are two bodies of water in Israel which are supplied by the Jordan River.

One of the two bodies,

- the sea of Galilee is filled with life.

The sea of Galilee is the lowest fresh water lake on earth and the second lowest lake in the world right at 700' below sea level. The depth of the lake is roughly about 140'.

The second body of water supplied by the Jordan River is the dead sea. It's called the dead sea because it's dead!

- You don't see people fishing or playing in the water.
- There is no plant life in the water.

Here is the difference between the two bodies of water.

- The Sea of Galilee has an inlet and an outlet.
- There is fresh water coming in from the Jordan River
- and exiting as well.

The dead Sea however has only an inlet. There is no outlet. So it's dead because it only takes in and never gives out.

If you want to be a blessing to others

- and you want to be used by God,
- don't just take in, but start giving out.

Something else for us to know. Giving is the only thing that the bible commands us to test God with.

Mal 3:10

10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,"
Says the Lord of hosts,
"If I will not open for you the windows of heaven
And pour out for you such blessing
That there will not be room enough to receive it.

2 Corinthians 10:

We're now entering the last section of the letter, chapters 10-13.

In this section Paul challenged the rebels in the church—

- the false teachers—
- those who maligned him,
- those who questioned his
- his apostolic ministry.

In these 4 chapters Paul

- refers directly to his accusers
- and answers their false charges.

He doesn't hide the fact that the Judaizers in the church

- are ministers of Satan

- who want to destroy the work of God.

Again, Judaizers were.

- a people group that didn't mind
- identifying with the church
- as long as they didn't need to identify with the cross.
- They were more concerned for their safety
- than they were their salvation.

Paul's tone with the Corinthians changes now compared to what we've seen.

I think the reason for the change was because of the accusations and criticism from false teachers.

Later, Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians with 4 things in mind.

- 1) He wanted to explain why he didn't visit them earlier as he said he would.
- 2) He wanted to encourage them to receive the repentant brother that committed incest.
- 3) He wanted to enlist the help of the Corinthian church.
- 4) He wanted to establish his apostleship in the church.

Some were accusing Paul

- of being courageous in his boldness
- when he was miles away from them
- yet they accused him of
- being weak and timid while in their presence.

Imagine Paul's boldness in the early church and the continuous opposition.

Any believer today that is telling people that their sin separates them from God will be face similar opposition.

In fact, Jesus said in Jn 15:20, if they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.

As we study thru these next 4 chapters

- we're going to see the word's "glory or boast" 20 times
- which could lead one to think that Paul is boasting of himself;
- but that wasn't the case at all.

Paul's boasting was on Jesus,

He could have boasted of his own achievements, but he didn't.

Paul opens chapter 10 with meekness and gentleness:
2 Cor 10:1-6

1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ – who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. 2 But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Paul was a peacemaker. He understood the words of Jesus,
Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called the sons of God. Mt 5:9

I believe the best approach when you're going to speak to someone about something difficult is first, prayer and love.

Undoubtedly Paul's approach was thru prayer and in meekness and in gentleness. Jesus' ministry was marked by humility as was Paul's, and so should ours be as well.

Jesus said to the impenitent in:

Matt 11:29,

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Gentle is the same as (meek) - it implies balanced.

- Jesus doesn't carry more than necessary to strengthen us
- nor does He carry less to overburden us.

We need to put on His yoke so that He can share our burdens.

And because the yoke is level, then

- each individual carries his part of the load
- according to his own strength.

The Pharisees burdened people with unbearable yokes,

- Jesus is willing to bare your load completely.

Unfortunately, people interpreted Paul's meekness for weakness. They thought he lacked genuine authority but that couldn't be further from the truth.

2 Cor 10:2

2 But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Paul was requesting in advance that when he arrived,

- they wouldn't force him
- to engage in bold confrontation.

No one who really knew Paul ever thought he was weak. On the contrary, his ministry was marked with boldness and by God's power.

For example:

During his first missionary journey Paul, Barnabas and John sent by the Holy Spirit arrived in a place called Paphos, there they found a sorcerer whose name was Bar-Jesus, translated it was Elymas the sorcerer.

While there on Paphos, the proconsul Sergius Paulus, wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer stood in the way.

Acts 13:9-11

9 Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him
10 and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? 11 And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time."

So Paul was meek and he could be stern if need be.

Notice also in verse two that some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Paul's response is that we're in the flesh in that we are flesh and blood

- but we don't minister according to carnal methods.

Romans 8 tells us if we live according to the flesh we will die, but if by the Spirit you will live.