

September 17th – A Cheerful Giver

*“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver...thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2 Cor. 9:7, 15)*

Everyone loves to receive gifts. Just think about all the occasions we get gifts – birthdays, Christmas, wedding showers, graduation, Mother’s/Father’s Day, etc. Most of us love to receive, but we’re not always quite as excited about giving. Yet, Jesus once said, “It is better to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). So then, it usually lights our fire to receive, but it also ought to make us just as happy to give to God and to others.

In today’s verse, Paul was instructing the Corinthians about a collection that was to be received for him and his missionary companions so that the work of the Lord could continue. Paul could have told them to give just because it was the right thing to do, but instead he appealed to their attitude. He instructed his readers to give, not just because they had to, but because they saw it as an opportunity to join God in His work. The word translated “cheerful” in this verse is the Greek *hilaros*, from which we get our English word “hilarious.” God loves a hilarious, joy-filled giver!

If we ever run in to trouble giving to the work of the Lord and to others who might be in need, we should stop to remember what God has given us. Paul provided the reminder – “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.” What was he talking about? The earth? Our houses? Our clothes? Our food? While all those are great gifts, the greatest Gift of all is Jesus Christ, freely given so you and I might be saved. God willingly sacrificed for us, now it’s our turn to joyfully give back to Him!