

Cheerful Generosity

2 Corinthians 8:1-9; 9:6-8

INTRODUCTION

Cheerful Generosity—We will be joyful givers.

This idea comes from 2 Corinthians 9:6-8:

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

The Greek word for cheerful giver here is *hilaros*. Now this does NOT mean (as some have said) that God wants a hilarious giver but there is something of the root in this that is of joy and cheerfulness and happiness. It literally means that you are already persuaded or fully persuaded. You're already fully inclined because you're totally bought in.

So how am I to become fully persuaded? How can I become fully bought in so that when I give it's not grudgingly or sparingly? But rather, joyfully and generously?

Turn with me to 2nd Corinthians 8:1-9. In this passage I believe we will see how and why we may become fully persuaded to give joyfully and generously because of Jesus.

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches.

²In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

³For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people.

⁵And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.

⁶So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. ⁷But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

⁸I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

Notice that the commands/exhortations found in vs 1-8 are all built upon the theological Gospel truths summarized in verse 9:

⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion

1. What was the evidence of God's "grace of giving" upon the Macedonian church?
2. How does their example challenge you in your giving?
3. When you examine your spending habits, how fully persuaded are you that Jesus is worthy of your sacrificial giving?
4. Take some time and ask God for the "grace of giving" to be granted to you that you might give generously and joyfully to the work of the Kingdom.