

**"Investing in Eternity"**

**Part 7**

**2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15**

**Introduction:** Tonight we return to our study of 2 Corinthians and as we do we are stepping back into the section where Paul is addressing the Corinthians about the subject of giving to help meet the needs of the saints at Jerusalem. This section began in 8:1 and Paul continued this thought through 9:15. In our study so far we have looked at 8:1-9:5 and in those verses Paul returned to the opportunity that had been presented to the Corinthians a year before this. Paul first addressed the subject of giving to the saints at Jerusalem in 1 Corinthians 16 and when the opportunity was presented the Corinthians pledged to give to the need. Paul encouraged them to lay up an offering on the first day of the week until he or those appointed could come to Corinth to collect what they had set aside to give.

**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**

*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.*

*<sup>2</sup> Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

Now this subject was set aside while the "sin issue" was being addressed as Paul wrote 2 Corinthians but once the sin was confessed and dealt with Paul came back to the subject of giving to the saints at Jerusalem who were in need. The last time we were together we looked at how Paul planned to send Titus and 2 other men before him to collect all the finances before he arrived. There was a chance some of the saints from Macedonia would travel with Paul and he had boasted to them of the pledges which the Corinthians had made and this then encouraged those people to give also. Paul's concern was that when he arrived there would be very little given because it seems as though they did not do as Paul had encouraged and that was to set aside a specific amount WEEKLY and lay it up in store. They seemed to be scrambling to get the finances together and he did not want to be embarrassed when he arrived with some of the saints from Macedonia.

**Notice 2 Corinthians 9:3-5**

Now as Paul continues on with his pen he will now touch on some basic principles of giving and this will be for the purpose of encouraging the Corinthians and you and me to give when there is a need set before us.

I. **The Blessings of Giving**

**Notice 2 Corinthians 9:6**

Here in this verse Paul uses the illustration of a farmer to make his point. If a farmer goes out to sow his seed and he does so sparingly then he cannot expect to harvest an abundant crop. He must sow generously with his seed if he expects to reap an abundant harvest. Now as the farmer sows his seed in a generous way into the field he may feel as though his is losing his seed as it passes through his fingers and his hands but in time he will harvest far more than what he cast upon the ground. If we plant 1 tomato seed we do not just get one tomato but we get many from the vine that grows from the seed. If it is a cherry tomato or a grape tomato seed then there will be as many as a hundred tomatoes which will come from the vine.

The idea for you and I as believers is when we are generous with our finances and use them to help those who are in need then will receive many blessings in return. We may relate to the farmer at times when he feels as though he is losing his seed as it falls to the ground, for we may feel like we lose what we give away to those in need. But the Truth is that when we give to those in need there will be great blessings in return. Therefore, like the farmer who sows in expectation of a future harvest so we should have the very same outlook as we give generously when there is a need.

**Proverbs 19:17**

*<sup>17</sup> He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

**Proverbs 28:27**

*<sup>27</sup> He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*

**Proverbs 11:24-25**

*<sup>24</sup> There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.*

<sup>25</sup> *The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

Let me show you the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes.

**Ecclesiastes 11:1-6**

*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*

Here Solomon has the idea of sowing seed from a boat in the back waters of the river. The seed would be cast out and when the waters receded the seed would take root and grow in the rich soil. It would appear to be forever lost but after many days the seed would produce a harvest. Now Solomon makes an application.

<sup>2</sup> *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.*

The "EVIL" which he warns about here are the situations which can come upon us. Today we may be surrounded by riches and wealth but tomorrow may be a different situation. In a moment life can change and we could be the people in need tomorrow. Therefore let us use what we have today to invest for the day that may come when we will be the ones in need. This is the very concern that keeps the covetous from giving (namely that evil may come) but God tells us the possibility of "evil" days is the very reason we should sow while we have the ability to sow.

**Luke 16:1-9**

*And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.*

<sup>2</sup> *And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.*

<sup>3</sup> *Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.*

<sup>4</sup> *I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.*

<sup>5</sup> *So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?*

<sup>6</sup> *And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.*

<sup>7</sup> Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

<sup>8</sup> And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

<sup>9</sup> And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

**The idea in this parable is to use the resources which we have to advance the Kingdom of God. Let us get back to Ecclesiastes.**

<sup>3</sup> If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

**There are 2 points to consider here: First we must understand that the storms of life can happen at any time. So we could find ourselves in a difficult situation tomorrow. When the clouds are full the storms will come. The second point is that when a tree falls there is no standing it back up for it is done. In the same way when our life is over there are no more opportunities to sow the seeds of generosity, there are no more opportunities to invest in eternity.**

<sup>4</sup> He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

**If we allow the circumstances around us to control our generosity then the time will never be right to give and we will miss many blessings.**

<sup>5</sup> As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

**This verse means that God is not dependent upon a thriving economy in order to meet our needs. God works in ways we cannot understand so our responsibility is to walk by faith and to invest into the lives of other people.**

<sup>6</sup> In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

This is the conclusion of the entire matter. We are to sow the seed in the morning and in the evening and then let it with God. He is the One who gives the increase. Our responsibility is just to use what the Lord has entrusted to us.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:6 again.

Now there is something very important here that we MUST understand. We must guard against the deception of giving to receive. We do not give to get for that is the lowest of motives. There is much teaching today that says if we give generously then we will receive great blessings of MATERIAL WEALTH. I heard a man this past week speak on a passage from Haggai and Malachi. Let me show you the passages.

### Haggai 1:5-7

<sup>5</sup> Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

<sup>6</sup> Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

<sup>7</sup> Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

### Malachi 3:8-10

<sup>8</sup> Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? **In tithes and offerings.**

<sup>9</sup> Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

<sup>10</sup> Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

The Preacher used this passage to say to his people that they did not have much wealth because they had not given their TITHES and OFFERINGS and for that reason they were struggling in their lives.

This sounds great but it is NOT accurate. Those in Haggai and Malachi's day were under the Law and WE ARE NOT. They were under the dispensation of LAW and we are under the dispensation of GRACE.

The people of Israel were an EARTHLY people and their blessings were MATERIAL. We however are HEAVENLY people, therefore our blessings are SPIRITUAL.

## The Old Testament principle is seen in Deuteronomy.

### Deuteronomy 28:1-112

*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:*

<sup>2</sup> *And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.*

<sup>3</sup> *Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.*

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*

<sup>5</sup> *Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.*

<sup>6</sup> *Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*

<sup>7</sup> *The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.*

<sup>8</sup> *The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

<sup>9</sup> *The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*

<sup>10</sup> *And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.*

<sup>11</sup> *And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.*

<sup>12</sup> *The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.*

## The New Testament principle is seen in Matthew 5.

### Matthew 5:3-12

<sup>3</sup> *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

<sup>5</sup> *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

<sup>6</sup> *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

<sup>7</sup> *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

<sup>8</sup> *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

<sup>9</sup> *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

<sup>10</sup> *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>11</sup> *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

<sup>12</sup> *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

We who are New Testament believers are never promised wealth, health, long life and freedom from suffering, adversity and pain. We are promised spiritual blessings because we are heavenly people not earthly people and we are under GRACE and not LAW.

### Conclusion:

In closing tonight there is one more point which we need to grasp. When we are generous and we give to the further the Kingdom of Jesus Christ God will be sure we have what we need as we face our own needs in life.

### Notice 2 Corinthians 9:8