

"Investing in Eternity"

Part 8

2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15

Introduction: Last week in our study of 2 Corinthians we looked at 9:6 and it was in this verse that we looked at The Blessings of Giving.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:6

Here in this verse we looked at how we will be blessed according to how we give. Paul used the illustration of the farmer here to make his point. The more we sow the more we shall reap. Now I need here to also point out the measure of our gift is not in HOW much we give in a dollar amount. But it is measured in how much we give out of what we have, meaning it is measured proportionally.

Mark 12:41-44

⁴¹ And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

⁴² And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

⁴³ And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

⁴⁴ For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

This means that someone who gives \$5.00 may actually be giving more than the person who gives \$100.00. The gift is measured by God based upon the proportion of the gift.

Now before we move on tonight there is something else which I need to touch upon one more time and that is the fact that we are not under the Law. Therefore, we are not required to give a tenth of our finances nor are we free from obligation after we give a tenth of our finances. I point this out because there are many churches that have been led to believe you must give your TITHES (a tenth) of your earnings to the church.

Those who teach this are guilty of attempting to place the church under the Law and if they chose to teach we are to give one tenth then I want you to know that under the Law

Israel was required to give far more than a tenth. Let me show you how and what they were required to give:

1. They were to give 10% to support the Levites.

Numbers 18:20-24

²⁰ *And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.*

²¹ *And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

²² *Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.*

²³ *But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.*

²⁴ *But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.*

2. They were to give 10% to help maintain the feasts.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23

²² *Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.*

²³ *And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.*

3. They were to give 10% every 3rd year to replenish the fund for the poor.

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

²⁸ *At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:*

²⁹ And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

Looking at all of this we can conclude that if someone tells you that you must give 10% of your income based upon the Old Testament they need to understand that Israel really gave 30%. Again I remind you we are not under the Law but we are under grace. This then raises a question, "How much should I give?" This brings us to where we are tonight.

I. **The Liberty of Giving**

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:7

The word "PURPOSETH" here means "TO MAKE A CHOICE TO BRING FORWARD FROM THE STORE HOUSE". The idea here is that we are NOT obligated to give any certain amount when there is a need. We have the LIBERTY to give the amount which we purpose within our hearts to give.

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:7 again.

Paul list 2 negatives here to show we are NOT to give.

1. **We are not to give grudgingly.**

This means we are not to give if it grieves our hearts, if it annoys our hearts, or if it feels like we are afflicted when we give. Let me show you how Israel was to treat the poor under the Law.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

⁷ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

⁸ But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

⁹ Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

¹⁰ Thou shalt surely give him, and **thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him**: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

¹¹ For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

The bottom line for you and I is that if we cannot give cheerfully then the gift is not accepted by God.

2 Corinthians 8:12

¹² For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

2. We are not to give out of necessity.

The word "NECESSITY" here means "to imposed either by the circumstances, or by law of duty regarding to one's advantage, custom, argument". The idea here is that we are not to give because we feel it is our duty, or because we have been pressured into giving.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:7 again.

God loves it when we give out of cheerful hearts. We are to give because we want to give. This attitude of giving occurs when we are walking by faith in the power and the provisions of God. The opposite of the cheerful giver would be the greedy person who holds tightly to the riches of this world. Jesus warned about this in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 6:19-24

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²² *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single (generous), thy whole body shall be full of light.*

²³ *But if thine eye be evil (greedy), thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

²⁴ *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Let me show you what James said about those who lay up treasures on earth neglect to give to those who are in need.

James 5:1-5

Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

² *Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.*

³ *Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*

⁴ *Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.*

⁵ *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.*

The word "witness" here speaks of someone who testifies. James personifies the "rust" or decay here. The "rust" or "decay" of all these people hoarded will testify that they never cared about the person who had no food. It will testify that they never cared about the person who was cold and did not have the proper clothing. It will testify that they did not care about the person who did not have enough money to pay his or her bills. If they would have truly cared they would have not have hoarded the grain, the garments, and the gold. If they truly cared they would have used them to help those who were less fortunate.

II. The Promise for the Giver

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:8

When we live by faith and when we are generous with what God has entrusted to us we can be sure that God will make sure of 2 things:

1. We will be supplied with all we need.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things...

2. We will always have enough to give when there is a reason to give.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

Now let me place some emphasis on some of the words in this verse.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

As we live by faith in the power and the provisions of God He will make ALL GRACE abound toward us. This means He will use whatever means He chooses to place in our hands that which is needed. He will ALWAYS be sure we have ALL SUFFICIENCY in ALL THINGS. He will also be sure to give to us that which we need to complete EVERY GOOD WORK.

There is NO REASON why we should be greedy with what we have. God promises ALL GRACE, ALL SUFFICIENCY in ALL THINGS for EVERY GOOD WORK and He tells us He will ALWAYS do this. When the motive is right and the attitude is cheerful then we can be sure we can NEVER out give God. The more we give away the more He will supply.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:9

Here in this verse Paul reaches back to Psalm 112:9 and he points to the faithfulness of God. God has always cared for the poor and throughout His Word He has made many provisions for them.

Leviticus 19:9-10

⁹ *And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.*

¹⁰ *And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.*

Leviticus 23:22

²² And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

We could point out many verses where God made provisions for the poor.

But in all of this I want to raise a question, "Why does God entrust His children with the responsibility to minister to the poor?"

We are His representatives here on this earth. When we are generous with what we have our generosity brings glory to our Father in Heaven. If God just dropped the blessings into the lives of the poor without working through His church we would lose a very important part of our testimony. You see when we walk by faith and give when there is a need our faith and our giving magnifies and glorifies God.

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

*¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and **glorify your Father which is in heaven.***

Conclusion:

It is a privilege to be used of God as a channel to distribute HIS blessings. When we neglect to give generously we are the ones who are missing out the blessings.