

"Investing in Eternity"

Part 9

2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15

Introduction: In our study of 2 Corinthians Paul has much attention to the subject of giving to those who were in need. He has devoted 2 chapters of this letter and they are chapters 8 and 9. Now in all which Paul recorded here it was not his desire to squeeze money out of the Corinthians. He was not pressuring them to give for that would have been totally against the will of God. God's desire for all believers is to give out of a willing and a cheerful heart.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:7

There were really 4 reasons why Paul spent so much time addressing this subject.

1. There was a great need in Jerusalem.
2. There were great blessings awaiting those who would freely give of their finances.
3. God would be glorified through their giving.
4. Their faith would be strengthened when they were able to see that how God would bless what they would give.

When we stopped last week we were looking at verse 9 of this chapter.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:9

Both verses 9 and 10 are a parenthesis in which Paul extends his previous thoughts. This verse is pointing back to Psalm 112:9. When we looked at this verse last week I interpreted it completely out of context so I want to help you to see the true meaning here. Last week I had said that this verse was pointing to God and how He provides for the poor through those who are generous.

But that was not accurate. This verse is not pointing to God but it is pointing to the believer who is generous.

Tonight we shall look at two points, **The Results of Giving**, and the **Reason for Giving**. Let us get to the first point in the outline tonight.

I. The Results of Giving

Now to help us to understand verse 9 I want to show you Psalm 112 so that we can see the context.

Psalm 112:1-10

Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, [This man is the subject of the Psalm] that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

² His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

⁴ Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

⁵ A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

⁶ Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

⁷ He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

⁸ His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

The next verse is the verse which Paul points to in our text.

⁹ He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

¹⁰ The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:9 again.

I want you to notice that Paul states that HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS REMAINETH FOR EVER. The Psalmist tells us HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURETH FOREVER. The "righteousness" here is the act of giving to those who have a need. The TRUTH which God is setting forth here through Paul and the Psalmist is that when we give to those who have a need it will NEVER be forgotten. In other words when we give to those in need or even when we give to the Lord's work it is an investment into eternity.

Now there is another thought which we can connect to this and it is seen in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 19:6-8

⁶ And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Verse 8 is very interesting. We are told here that when we return with Jesus Christ after the Tribulation we will be clothed in fine linen, clean and white and the fine linen is the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE SAINTS. This means the righteous acts which we do THROUGH JESUS CHRIST here (Like giving to the needy) will make up the wedding garment which we wear there. Notice the words of Ryrie on this thought:

"The good works of believers will constitute the wedding garment when the congregation of the faithful are joined to Christ in marriage."

This is possibly why Paul can say that our righteousness will remain forever. The bottom line is that when we give to those who are in need whatever the amount may be it will never be forgotten in eternity.

Matthew 10:40-42

⁴⁰ He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

⁴¹ He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

⁴² And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:10

Now in this verse Paul points to our Heavenly Father and he tells us that when we give God promises to do 3 things:

1. **Minister bread for our food. This means we need not to worry about giving and not having enough later for God will take care of our needs.**

2. **Multiply the seed that is sown.** This means we can never out give God for He will see that we always have what is needed to give again. He will provide for our liberality.
3. **Increase the fruits of our righteousness.** I want to focus on this thought for a few minutes.

When a farmer plants his seeds in the ground he does not get just one fruit for every seed but instead one seed will produce much fruit. This is the very thing which God is able to do when we give to the poor. But the question in my mind is, "How does God increase the fruits of our righteousness? This does not mean that when we give to the poor and the poor places the gift in his pocket God performs a miracle and turns \$20 into \$50.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:10 again.

God will increase the FRUITS of our righteousness. When we give that is an act of righteousness and righteousness produces FRUIT. But what is the FRUIT that comes from our act of righteousness which God increases. The answer is in the verses which follow.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:8, 11-13

Here is how God increases the FRUIT of the believer's righteousness. When we give it causes others to glorify God with their words. There are many who, because the believer gives, then offer their praise to God. Remember what the writer of Hebrews exhorted his readers to do in the midst of their society?

Hebrews 13:15

¹⁵ *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

When we give to the needs of others God is praised and this praise is the INCREASE OF THE FRUITS OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Let me show you the desire of the psalmist recorded in Psalm 107.

Psalm 107:8, 15, 21-22, 31

⁸ *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

¹⁵ *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

²¹ *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

²² *And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

³¹ *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

Four times he calls on men to praise the Lord for His goodness. God longs for His people to praise Him.

Psalm 50:14a, 23

¹⁴ *Offer unto God thanksgiving;*

²³ *Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*

Psalm 69:30-31

³⁰ *I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.*

³¹ *This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.*

Let us get back to 2 Corinthians again.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:12 again.

Here we see that giving to the needy accomplishes 2 things. It supplies the poor with what they need and it causes many to give thanks unto God. Let me show you again what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:14-16

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.*

When we are controlled by the Spirit and we are involved in God's work reaching out to those whom God places in our lives, it is then those people glorify God through their praise and thanksgiving. This is again the INCREASE OF THE FRUIT OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Not only does our liberality glorify God in the increase of or fruits of righteousness but there is another way in which God is glorified.

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:14

When believers help other believers the unity between us is strengthened. This also glorifies God. Let me show you just how important this is to God.

John 17:20-23

²⁰ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

²¹ That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

²² And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

²³ I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Our unity and our love for one another is a major part of our testimony. When we are there for one another when there is a need you can be sure this speaks loudly to those who are watching. Let me also just say that it is only natural that as believers we reach out to one another.

1 Corinthians 12:25-26

²⁵ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

1 John 3:14-18

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

II. The Reason for Giving

Notice 2 Corinthians 9:15

The word "unspeakable" here is only used this one time in the Scriptures. The word means "indescribable". The reference is to God's gift of His Son to be the Sacrifice for our sins. There are no words to describe the Gift which God gave for it is beyond description.

Let me show you what JFB records concerning the thought here.

"If we have received from God "His unspeakable gift," what great thing is it, if we give a few perishing gifts for His sake?"

It is so fitting here in this verse which ends the discussion of giving to point his readers to what God has done for us. We were spiritually bankrupt, completely in over our heads in sin debt and unable to rescue ourselves. It was God who stepped in and met our need and paid our sin debt completely with the blood of His only begotten Son. Now since we have received this gift from God that cost Him so much should we not be willing to give to our fellow man that is in need? To not be touched by the needs of others is to have forgotten what our prior situation was before we knew Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

I will end with the words of Martin Luther on giving and keeping.

"I have tried to keep things in my hands and lost them all, but what I have given into God's hands I still possess."

Martin Luther.