

What Happens When I Give

Text: 2 Cor. 9:6-15

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6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Passage Begins with Three Principles

Where your pleasure is, there is your treasure;

Where your treasure is, there is your heart;

Where your heart is, there is your happiness. - Augustine

#1—sowing is proportional to reaping, giving to receiving. Generosity is a life matter; generosity determines life.

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Three kinds of givers: There are three kinds of givers—the flint, the sponge and the honeycomb. To get anything out of a flint you must hammer it. And then you get only chips and sparks. To get water out of a sponge you must squeeze it, and the more you use pressure, the more you will get. But the honeycomb just overflows with its own sweetness. Which kind of giver are you?

#2--Generosity is a heart matter, not regret, not grief, not requirements. Generosity is joyful.

7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Mazatec Indians: For forty years Eunice Pike worked with the Mazatec Indians in Southwestern Mexico. During this time she has discovered some interesting things about these people. The people seldom wish someone well. Not only that, they are hesitant to teach one another or to share the gospel with each other. If asked, "Who taught you to bake bread?" the village baker answers, "I just know," meaning he has acquired the knowledge without anyone's help. Eunice says this odd behavior stems from the Indian's concept of "limited good." They believe there is only so much good, so knowledge, so much love to go around. To teach another means you might drain yourself of knowledge. To love a second child means you have to love the first child less. To wish someone well—"Have a good day"—means you just given away some of your own happiness, which cannot be reacquired.

#3--Generosity is a God-matter; generosity is about God.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written:

"He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

When God's work is done in God's way for God's glory, it will never lack God's supply. --J. Hudson Taylor

Passage Continues with Five Benefits/Results

#1--Meeting needs results in thanksgiving. Are you thankful that you can give?

11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

#2--Supplying needs improves worship. Is your giving an indication of your gratitude, respect, attitude toward God?

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

#3--Increases prayer. Do you give enough to pray about what you give to?

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#4--Gives our confession integrity

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

#5--Increases affection

14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Conclusion

8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

9:15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Lloyd C. Douglas tells the story of Thomas Hearne, who, "in his journey the mouth of the Coppermine River, wrote that a few days after they had started on their expedition, a party of Indians stole most of their supplies. His comment on the apparent misfortune was: 'The weight of our baggage being so much lightened, our next day's journey was more swift and pleasant.'

"Hearne was in route to something very interesting and important; and the loss of a few sides of bacon and a couple of bags of flour meant nothing more than an easing of the load. Had Hearne been hole in somewhere, in a cabin, resolved to spend his last days eking out an existence, and living on capital previously collected, the loss of some of his stores by plunder would probably have worried him almost to death."

How we respond to "losing" some of our resources for God's work depends upon whether we are on the move or waiting for our last stand.

"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose." --Jim Elliott