

**TITLE: GOD'S GUIDANCE FOR GIVING – PART 2**

**TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 9**

**INTRO:** In ch. 8 we saw command & example in giving. In ch. 9 we see attitude. Our giving is an important part of our worship. Maybe more than anything else, it reveals what's in our hearts...not to others, but to God, and to ourselves (if we'll let it).

**I. READINESS (DESIRE & PREPARATION) IN GIVING (v. 1-5):**

**(v. 1-2)** *For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.*

1. Regarding this “ministering,” he first says it’s superfluous (excessive) to write about to you about it. Why? Because he already has (**1 Cor 16:1-2**) & because they’d already expressed their earnestness (readiness) about giving. They’d already said yes!
2. Paul obviously believed them, because he boasted of them to the Macedonians. *Their zeal provoked many* (the Corinthians’ initial interest & desire to give may very well have been one of the reasons the Macedonians gave as they did—**8:1-5**). So we can see why Paul is a little pushy with the Corinthians about this giving (**8:11**).

**(v. 3-4)** *Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: Lest haply if they of Mac. come with me & find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this...confident boasting.*

1. Paul is coming there, & possibly with some of the Macedonians (the ones who gave liberally, partially because of *your* example—your expressed willingness to give). So don’t embarrass & shame me, and, more appropriately, yourselves, by not being ready!
2. “I’ve sent the brethren” (Luke? Titus?) – these brethren delivered this letter to them, then encouraged them in this giving.

**(v. 5)** *Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, & make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, & not as of covetousness.* These brethren are coming to prepare in advance your bounty (gift), which was “previously promised” (NAS; not “whereof ye had notice before”- KJV). - It should be “as a bounty” (blessing), not of covetousness/greed (sincere). You should *want* to do, not *have* to give.

**II. LIBERALITY IN GIVING (v. 6-11):**

**A. Command for our giving (v. 6-7)**

**(v. 6)** *He which soweth sparingly (stingily) shall reap also sparingly; & he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

1. Very obvious regarding farming—sow little seed, get little crop. If you’re stingy in your giving, don’t expect spiritual growth!
2. But if you give bountifully (a blessing; sincerely, from the heart) you’ll reap bountifully (physically *or* spiritually):
  - a. Physically, God will take care of you (**Psa 37:25**—*I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread*). And He does this through His people, who are much more willing to help those who haven’t been stingy in the past!
  - b. Spiritually, money can easily be one of biggest deterrents to growth (**1 Tim 6:9-10**)! So don’t increase your giving just to see if you’ll grow (monetarily *or* spiritually)! Give because you *want* to, **THEN** you’ll recognize spiritual growth!

**(v. 7)** *Every man...as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.* Let every man give (nobody is excluded from this). How are we to give?

1. As we’ve purposed in his heart (prepared in advanced). We don’t usually give appropriate if it’s at the last minute!
2. *Not* grudgingly (sad, sorrow) – Don’t make the basket passers pry it out of your hand!
3. *Not* of necessity (*our* necessity; i.e., giving because we *have* to give). We should *want* to give to the Lord’s work!
4. Instead, we’re to give cheerfully (prompt, willing, merry) –this is what God loves!

**B. Example of God’s giving (v. 8-11)**

**(v. 8)** *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:* God will always bless you in doing good works (i.e., those things *He* defines as ‘good’ – His commands).

**(v. 9)** *(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.*

Quote from **Psa 112:9** – qualities of a godly man as they apply to his giving & God’s ability to bless him: He disperses abroad, specifically He gives to the poor. This giving is part of his righteousness (as it is for us), and God will bless this person.

**(v. 10)** *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, & multiply your seed sown, & increase the fruits of your righteousness;)* A prayer of blessing on the liberal giver: that God will continue to bless him – personally, & with the ability to continue giving. It’s easy to see that all this applies to much more than just this specific need in Jerusalem.

**(v. 11)** *Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.* If the parentheses (added by translators) are correct, then this verse is a continuation of **v. 8**. You give, God blesses you, God is thanked & praised!

**III. RESULTS FROM GIVING (v. 12-15):**

**(v. 12)** *For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;* Now back to the specific situation: not only are the brethren’s needs met, but the giving doesn’t stop there...it continues to God through many thanksgivings. The poor brethren are so grateful for the gift, and give thanks to God for His help.

**(v. 13-14)** *Whiles by (through) the experiment (test, proof) of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, & for your liberal distribution unto them, & unto all men; & by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.* They glorify God because they see your Christianity in your liberal giving to them **& to all**. This shows that the saints-only doctrine is false (belief that the church is not allowed to use money for non-Christians). See also **Gal 6:10**.

**(v. 15)** *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable (indescribable) gift.* Paul is obviously speaking of more than just the money they were giving to the brethren. He’s also talking about all the resulting benefits (from God & the brethren – perpetual blessings). In a cost/benefit analysis of being a Christian, the benefit is indescribable (words can’t describe it). There is no cost that will outweigh it!

**CONCLUSION:** Our giving should be prepared in advance (not a last minute, “what do I have in my pocket that I can spare” attitude)! And it should be liberal (showing your concern for the church, and the lost). If your checkbook (credit card) could talk, what would it say about your priorities? Where do you give the most money? House, car, food? Where does your giving rank in the pie chart? Does it even have its own piece of the pie, or is it included in that little “all other” sliver? This will reveal a lot about your spiritual level.