

2 Cor. 9:6-9 "An Abundance for Good"

For the Children: You might have heard the story Jesus told about the poor widow who gave her last 2 small coins to the Temple in Jerusalem. Today, some people would probably say, "I can't give any money to the church. I need what little money I have to pay for food, electricity, clothing and so on. It would be very silly for me to give up what little money I have!" But if you trust the Lord to look after you, that makes it easier to offer your money and time to serve Him, without worrying too much about whether you're going to have enough to live on. We should be ready and willing to use what we have to serve the Lord, and help others – out of thankfulness for what He has given us, and trust that He will continue to look after us. **Questions:** Should we give away *everything* we have to serve the Lord? Why should our giving be generous? Why should it be cheerful?

Introduction:

First Point: The Consequences of Giving

- 1) Sowing Sparingly: Paul compares giving to a farmer sowing his seed. If the farmer sows sparingly, he will reap a smaller crop. The "giving" here is especially that of helping the needy – needy brethren in the Jerusalem church. But it applies to any kind of giving (time, energy, help, use of gifts and talents) to serve the Lord or help His people or others i.e., the text applies to "every good deed" (v. 8). The point is that if we build little on the foundation of Christ, most of what we have done will be destroyed on the last day (1 Cor. 3:12f) – even if we ourselves are saved.
- 2) Sowing Bountifully: If, on the other hand, we build much and give much on the foundation of Christ, there will be a gracious, undeserved reward at the end. Most importantly, our "sowing" will bring a greater harvest of honour to Christ, and blessing to others.

Second Point: The Attitude of Giving

- 1) Sowing with the Wrong Attitude: "Sowing bountifully" could be translated, "sowing for blessings." However, our motive should not be the desire for selfish gain. Nor should it be "grudgingly" (Literally, "out of grief"): with regrets or irritation at some loss we expect because of our giving. Nor should it be "under compulsion": due to pressure, a mere sense of obligation or out of guilt-feelings.
- 2) Sowing with the Right Attitude: Giving should be from the heart - "as he has purposed in his heart." It should also be done to please the Lord. Since the Lord loves a cheerful giver, it should be done with joy – joy that we have another opportunity to serve God and help our brother or our neighbour.

Third Point: The Basis of Giving

- 1) The Work of Christ: The fact that we receive both common gifts and special blessings arises from Christ's work on our behalf. We would not be able to give or receive without Him. Gratitude for this motivates our giving.
- 2) The Super-Abundance of His Giving: Because He has given us the greatest gift, in His Son, God will also give us all other things we need to build on Him. Note the language of super-abundance in this promise (v. 8; Rom. 8:32; Eph. 3:20). God Himself scatters His seed super-abundantly (Ps. 112:9). His liberality expresses His grace and His righteousness. Our giving follows His pattern, showing how thankful we are for His generosity.
- 3) The Freedom to Give: With this assurance that God will always give us all we need for every good deed, we can give freely without fear that our giving will cause us harm. Fear of loss often holds us back from giving help to others. By reminding us of the extent of God's giving to us in Christ, the Supper encourages us to a greater thankfulness and generosity in all our good deeds, including giving.

Conclusion: