

LOVE
&
AUTHORITY
2 CORINTHIANS



Sermon Series Notes

"The Grace of Giving, Part 2" (II Corinthians 9)

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I. THE TEXT

vv.1-2 This is a "pure" peer pressure to give. It is contagious giving, because one church is influencing another church in a very godly way.

* Once God plants the desire to give in your heart, the only thing left is "follow through."

* Have you ever had a desire to give, made a commitment to give, then not followed through on it? Paul wants to make sure this does not happen to these Corinthian Christians.

vv.3-5 What "arrangements" had been made for the offering the Corinthians had committed to?

* See I Cor.16:1-2

v.6 The principle of sowing & reaping is one that does not change. The more seed I sow, the more harvest I will enjoy.

v.7 The word cheerful in English does not adequately describe the Greek word used here.

vv.8-11 This text is used abundantly by prosperity teachers, and by TV ministers who want to play on a person's lust/greed.

* James 4: 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

* I Tim.6: 3 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching,

4 he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5 and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

* Eccl.5: 10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

vv.12-14 This is the fruit of our giving.

II. LESSONS

A. Give Systematically

* This will help to prevent "giving grudgingly." These Corinthian Christians had decided how much they were going to give, but if they did not set aside the money systematically, they would be potentially faced with "grudging giving."

* Prov.3:9

* If I do not honor God first with what he gives me - it disappears. And after it's gone, it's very difficult (if not impossible) to "make it up."

* The honest dilemma we may face: I get my paycheck, and I write my first check to honor the Lord. I feel great about it, then the next week the car dies. When I get the estimate on repairing the car, there is no way I can write the same check next payday and have enough left over to repair the car. What do I do?

* Options: Honor God *by faith*. Take the bus where you need to go. Carpool with a friend/work associate. Ride a bike. Walk?

* Note: Don't write a check to honor God, then use a credit card to pay for the car, unless you know you will be able to pay for the repair when the credit card bill comes due.

* Just like the widow of Zarephath and the widow at the Temple, we need to make God first in our giving, and keep God first in our giving, especially in times it requires real faith to do so.

B. Be A Generous Giver

* I Tim.6: 17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

* Our example is God Himself (v.15). The very nature of God causes Him to be, not just a giver, but a very generous giver! The fact that he gave His one and only Son shows us His infinite generosity.

* See Malachi 3:8-10; The tithe was mandatory, but the offerings were freewill. The bottom line here is that the Israelites had become selfish, greedy, rather than gracious & generous in their giving. And their failure to be generous not only caused God to accuse them of robbing Him, but they were also robbing themselves. God wanted to open the windows of heaven on their behalf, but He couldn't, because they sowed so sparingly.

C. Be A Hilarious Giver

* The Greek is "hilaros," from which we get our English word "hilarious." It suggests being merry, joyous, and eager to give. This kind of giving is a delight rather than a duty. It's giving, not because we "got to," but because we "get to."

* If you do not want to give, then don't give. And if someone is pressuring you to give, keep the money in your pocket.

D. Trust God To Meet Your Need (Give In Faith)

* The widow of Zarephath gave in faith; the widow at the temple gave in faith; whenever the Israelites gave their firstfruit offerings, they gave in faith; when Abraham offered Issac, he did so in faith; when Jesus offered himself, He did so in faith (see Psalm 16:7-11).

* Feeding of the four and five thousand reveals to us that God can take a little and miraculously multiply it.

E. Be Careful What You Do With The Excess When God Provides It

* John 6: 12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. ***Let nothing be wasted.***" 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

* This text is used abundantly by prosperity teachers, and by TV ministers who want to play on a person's lust/greed. They emphasize that God wants to make you rich "in every way." But that is not the whole sentence. Read the rest of it please - "so that you can be generous on every occasion "

* Note: He's given you more so you can give more, not so you can consume it upon your lusts!

* Simply look at what you give to the Lord compared to what you spend on yourself. If we're honest, some of us may realize that what we thought was generous is not really generous at all!

* See Luke 12:13-21

F. Never Forget That The Fruit Of Giving Goes Far Beyond Receiving Monetarily.

* Needs are met

* Thanksgiving & praise to God

* Prayers on our behalf

* Hearts that will go out to us

- Luke 16: 9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

CONCLUSION

* Give systematically (Prov.3:9); give generously; give hilariously; give in faith; when God gives back, be careful what you do with the overflow; and never forget that the fruit in the grace of giving goes far beyond finances.