

## 2Corinthians – Week 36

### I. Review – 2Cor. 9:3-6

#### A. Two reasons for Paul sending the brothers to Corinth before his arrival:

##### i. Honor!

1. If the Corinthians fail to have the contribution ready, they would bring dishonor to Paul and themselves in the eyes of the Macedonians.

##### ii. Love!

1. Paul didn't want their giving to be something forced, but something given out of love, that is, given out of readiness of mind.

#### B. God blesses people in proportion to their blessing others:

##### i. Paul uses a well-known fact regarding farming:

1. If a farmer plants little, little will be harvested; but if he plants much, much will be harvested.
2. Paul's important lesson to the Corinthians is this:
  - a. To give is to sow!
  - b. When you sow generously, contrary to all appearances, a greater amount of harvest -- with many more seeds -- will come!
  - c. In other words, if we sow generously, God will provide a greater amount of goods (physical and spiritual) so that more people can be helped (physically and spiritually)!

### II. Continuation

#### A. 2Cor. 9:7 (ESV), *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

##### i. Here, Paul addresses each member of the church:

1. Acceptable giving starts with a heart that is totally surrendered to Christ!
  - a. A heart that retains God's word (cf. Luke 8:15)
  - b. A heart that loves the Lord (cf. Mt. 22:37).
  - c. A heart whose Lord is Christ (1Peter 3:15a)

##### 2. What does *“As he decided in his heart”* mean?

###### a. You can decipher its meaning by looking at what follows...

###### i. *“Not Reluctantly”*

1. This describes a person who gives unwillingly.
2. He *“grieves”* over that which he puts in the plate.
3. Such persons would be deemed as being covetous.

###### a. 1Sam. 14:17-23

- i. King Saul wanted to offer to the Lord the animals of the Amalekites as opposed to his own. (he had a lot of flock – cf. 1Sam. 8:17)

###### b. Acts 5:1-10

- i. Ananias and Sapphira held back part of the price of their possession pretending to give all.

###### ii. *“Under compulsion”*

1. This describes a person who gives out of necessity.
2. He really doesn't want to give but he gives because he knows it is the *“right thing to do.”*
3. Such persons give so they don't look bad.

###### a. Matthew 6:1-2

- i. Jesus warned people not to be like those who give just so that they could be seen by men and be praised by them.

iii. *“As he decided in his heart”*

1. This would be the antithesis of *“not reluctantly or under compulsion”*...
2. It describes a person who gives willingly and out of love for Christ and his neighbor.
3. It describes the one who sows bountifully in verse 6.
4. It describes the cheerful giver!
5. Here are some examples of those who gave according to what they decided in their hearts to give...
  - a. King David, a sacrificial giver, who refused to give to the Lord that which cost him nothing (2Samuel 24:24).
  - b. The Macedonians who gave generously because they gave themselves first to the Lord (2Cor. 8:1-5).
  - c. Zacchaeus who gave half his possessions to feed the poor without being asked (Luke 19:1-9).
  - d. The Samaritan man who gave without drawing public attention to himself (Luke 10:25-37).
  - e. God, the greatest giver of them all, who gave His Son, Jesus Christ, so that we might be saved from hell (John 3:16-17).
6. God loves it when a gift is given with gladness of heart!
  - a. No service is acceptable to God if it's not done with gladness and sincerity of heart!
  - b. We can understand this as well:
    - i. A gift given with gladness is deeply appreciated!
    - ii. But a gift given with displeasure we would rather not take.

ii. Does God really need our money? No!

1. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills and if he needed something, He would not tell us (Psalm 50:10-12).
2. But our heart's attitude is what is important to Him!
3. He loves to see a disciple who is so filled with the joy of the Lord that he wants to share what he has with others!
4. God loves a cheerful giver because cheerful giving is born of love and therefore, it is a Lover loving a lover and rejoicing in the fellowship!
5. Giving is the language of loving – for God so LOVED that He GAVE!

B. What type of giver are you?

- i. Meditate on this and allow the love of Christ overflow in your heart in your giving!