

The Generosity of Grace – Part 5

Introduction and Review

- Christian zeal is a deep concern for or devotion to meeting the financial needs of other believers (2Co. 9:1-5) – **from grace**.
- Even with Christian zeal, believers still must be encouraged to give as they have done in the past (v. 1-2a) – **reminders**.
- Christian zeal of one church giving generously stirs up other churches to do the same (v. 2b).
- The initial zeal for benevolent giving can deteriorate over time such that believers need to be motivated to fulfill their commitments (v. 3-4). *The reputation of individuals, the church & Christ are at risk and people need us to keep commitments...*
- Believers must fulfill their commitments to benevolent giving willingly to please God & experience His blessing (v. 5).

I. God Encourages Generosity (v. 6-7)

A. Encouragement through nature (v. 6)

The size of the harvest is dependent upon the quantity of seeds planted. The farmer does not consider planting seeds generously a waste, but rather it is a wise decision.

B. Encouragement through the heart (v. 7)

*God places conviction in the heart of a believer to give generously. A believer responds to that conviction willingly out of love for God. **Convictions about giving should come from the word of God & the Holy Spirit...***

II. God Supplies for Generosity (v. 8-10)

A. God supplies the grace (v. 8)

By His grace, God gives the believer the desire & ability to be generous whether wealthy (Corinthians) or poor (Macedonians). God provides everything necessary to do all of His will all the time.

B. God supplies the financial means (v. 9-10)

*Giving generously to the poor is a sign of righteousness & right relationship with God who provides (v. 9; Pr. 19:17; Mt. 6:1-4). One of the reasons for these financial blessings is to help other believers in need & extend the effect of righteousness (v. 10) – **described in verses 11-15.***

III. Believers Benefit from Generosity (11-15)

A. The one who gives is blessed (v. 11, 14)

Believers who give are made to be the means of financial blessing – “enriched” (v. 11a). Believers who give generously motivate praise to God, a desire for fellowship & intercessory prayer from those who receive (11b, 14).

B. The one who receives is blessed (v. 12-15)

*Believers who receive financial help have their needs met as God promised (v. 12a). They also thank God as the source, pray for the generous giver as the means & desire fellowship with the giver as a believer (v. 12-14) – unity, praise, prayer & God is glorified. And Christ made it all possible (v. 15; 8:9). **He is a gift to us from our heavenly Father; thank the Father for His love; thank Jesus for His humility, sacrifice, righteousness, life, death, resurrection & His grace; thank the Holy Spirit for His convictions, teaching, guiding, help, comfort & His fellowship (2Co. 13:14). What God has done for us cannot be fully expressed in words “inexpressible” & this should motivate us all to give generously!***

ILL: Paul & James refer to believers as athletes, soldiers & farmers.

Lessons from the farmer are illustrated in this text. A wise farmer does not consider it wise to sparingly plant seed in order to save seed that may rot, be eaten by insects or destroyed some other way. Nor does he consider it a waste of seed to plan bountifully because he is considering the harvest.

APPL: The same is true with the believer & money. It is not wise to meagerly support godly Christian ministry while you selfishly save money that will be eaten away by bad investments, poor interest rates, bank closings, etc. But believers considered it a wise use of money to generously support godly Christian ministry as we consider the true righteous harvest...

CONCLUSION

So then my beloved brother or sister, how does the inexpressible gift of Christ impact you today? How does the love of God affect you? How does the humility, sacrifice, life, death & grace of Jesus affect you? How do you respond to the teaching, guidance, exhortation, comfort & convictions from the Holy Spirit? Can God who has given so much have such little impact on you? Paul is no longer pleading with the church members at Corinth, Macedonia & Achaia. The Holy Spirit has brought the matter home to the St. Louis area; North County, South County, West County, City, etc. Jesus is worthy of excellence in every aspect of our lives, including the generous use of our money for the kingdom of God.

And if you are not a Christian, Jesus is worthy of excellence from your life too. Excellence means that you must first surrender your life to Christ in faith. If want to experience deliverance from your sins & have the undeniably most excellent life, then you must come to Jesus in faith first; you must believe in Jesus...

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