

THE WHOLE STORY

From Genesis to Revelation

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Introduction:

As we saw last week, when Christians give, they do so motivated by grace. Reluctant or guilt-driven gifts are not generosity. A generous lifestyle, however, produces a life of freedom, simplicity, joy, fruitfulness and purpose. A gift should be given with a smile, not with a reluctant grasp on the offering as we “hand it over.” For the Christian, giving is like a roller coaster ride: it feels adventurous and risky, but it’s really safe because God is holding tightly onto us no matter the twist or turn. Consequently, anything that much fun becomes contagious.

This Week’s Main Focus:

Christian generosity produces thanksgiving and worship of God.

Some have misunderstood this passage to mean that God “pays us back” when we give. Giving builds our relationship with God because it builds hope, trust, belief and commitment to him. The real “gain” is a closer walk with Jesus Christ, a greater union of your life with his. Paul affirms the converse to this as well: when Christians, individually or together, hold back, they damage their relationship with Christ.

When we bless others with our generosity, the praise goes to God (this is important). People who receive the generous grace of Christians are able to praise God “because of the surpassing grace God has given” (verse 14). We know that a financial gift comes from an even greater source - the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Sermon Response Questions:

1) For those who made a Multiply Faith Commitment, share what God taught you over the last year. What implications has it made within your family and lifestyle?

Bible Study Questions: Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

2) What words and illustrations are used to describe the attitude about giving that God will honor?

3) What does this passage list as the outcomes or fruit of Christian generosity?

4) What is God's purpose in providing the giver everything he or she needs?

5) "Giving is a tangible expression of our trust in God." Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?

Group Application Questions:

6) What giving experience has taught you the most about God?

7) Do I see money as a tool for God or as a tool for me?

8) Besides our financial resources, what other gifts should we use for God's glory? How do we see others using these gifts in our church? In our community? In other parts of the world?

Prayer: Read 2 Corinthians 8:9

- No discussion or reflection how we grow as cheerful givers can be separated from celebrating that Jesus has stood in our place.
- Break into groups of 2-3.
- Reflect together on the generous gift of Christ in your place.
- Pray for one another to respond generously in every area of our lives to his great gift.