

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Enriched Life” 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 May 20/21

Getting Started

The expression of generosity is more about faith than it is about finances. It is in the spirit of benevolence that the early church made such a profound impact upon a culture saturated in greed. Therefore, to live a life with a loose grip on every earthly possession, because of a heavenly perspective, is to believe that we are not owners of anything, but instead stewards of everything.

The Corinthian church was challenged by the example of the churches of Macedonia to take an offering for impoverished Christ-followers dwelling in Jerusalem facing extreme persecution and poverty. Therefore, the Apostle Paul exhorts them to excel in their spiritual gifting to give out of grace, not guilt.

Share with us about a time when you received an unexpected gift at just the right time.

What do you think it means to be an owner of nothing, but a steward of everything?

Going Deeper

The Enriched Life understands:

- I. The Priority of Investment: **Read** 2 Cor. 9:6
 - A. Contrast of Terms: Sparingly vs. Bountifully
 - B. Calculated Trust: Sow vs. Reap

Proverbs 11:24: One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.

We know that in the world of money and investments, if we put a little away, we only get a little back, but if we invest a lot in the right

places, it can produce a great profit. In this verse, Jesus is letting us in on an eternal investment. He is letting us know that far beyond monetary wealth, there is something even better we can invest in. When we choose to see ourselves as stewards of all God has entrusted to us, we start to see our possessions as gifts that we can appreciate and as gifts that we can give to others. Choosing to share what we have and to give to the work of Jesus through our local church and other Christian non-profits gives us the chance to invest in eternal souls. Our money can actually be used to help others come to know Jesus!

What are some ways you are, or are considering, sowing your generosity into? What outcome are you hoping for?

What do you think it means that 'if I give freely, I grow all the richer?'

II. The Principle of Intent: **Read** 2 Cor. 9:7

- A. Discerning Decision: "as he has decided in his heart"
- B. Motives Matter: "not reluctantly or under compulsion"

Some people take this to mean that if I can't give without reluctance, I should just give the amount that I am comfortable with. Do you think God would agree with that view? If I have a greedy heart, that could hold back my generosity, so what really needs to happen to my heart?

III. The Pleasure of Imitation: 2 Cor. 9:7

- A. Divine Initiative: "for God loves"
- B. Divine Invitation: "cheerful (hilarious) giver"

Read 2 Corinthians 8:9: For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

From my experience, it's very rare to see people look cheerful or hilarious when giving their offering. Many seem somber and others

look like they are in pain watching that money pass through their fingers. How does understanding 2 Cor 8:9 allow us to be overwhelmingly cheerful (to the point of being hilariously happy) when we give financially to the work of Jesus Christ?

IV. The Provision through Intervention: **Read** 2 Cor. 9:8

A. His Power: “God is able”

B. His Precision: “all grace...all sufficiency...all times”

When we give, it can feel like we're losing something valuable. But in this verse we have a promise from God that He will do something supernatural in us. When we give generously from a cheerful heart, His grace will allow us to have everything we need, and even an abundance to keep giving more away as new opportunities to do good come to us.

How might God change your priorities to make this happen?

How might God change your appetites to make this happen?

How might God clarify your needs and reduce your 'wants' to make this happen?

How might God give you contentment to allow this to happen?

Take-Away: “Giving is not something we do, but something we are. Giving is a way of life for the Christian who understands the grace of God” – Pastor Warren Wiersbe

Group Prayer Requests

Pray for the family of SA Firefighter Scott Deem as they grieve his death in the line of duty fighting a 4 alarm fire in the early hours of Friday morning.

Pray that God will begin to do a supernatural work in your heart so that no matter where you are now, you will grow into a generous, cheerful, purposeful, gracious giver.