

**The Church-Wide Benefits Of Grace Giving
2 Corinthians 9:11-12**

This weekend Americans are celebrating our declaration of independence from England. And this something that I am sure, as Americans, that we can on some level get excited about since this declaration led to formation of our country that has served us Americans very well over many generations and will hopefully continue to serve Americans over many generations to come.

But let me now introduce something that should get us far more excited, not as Americans, but rather as Christians, or in other words those who have been saved by grace through faith.

And what would that be? It would be when the God that loved us and who sent His Son to die for us gets praise and the honor that He is due. And God getting this praise and honor and glory that He is due is particularly sweet when we are used by Him to generate this very thing.

And this thought brings us back to our study of **2 Corinthians** and more specifically to the passage that we will begin to examine this morning: **2 Corinthians 9:11-12**.

But before we begin to examine this passage let us, for a moment, review what we have already considered beginning in **2 Corinthians 9:6-7**.

So, what did Paul make clear to us in these verses? There are two kinds of givers, the giver that God loves and the giver that God does not love. So let us go back and read these verses so that we might be able to see that this is in fact so. **“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (7) Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

So clearly, within these verses, Paul identifies two different kinds of givers: the giver that God loves and the giver, by implication, that God does not love. And what characterizes these respective givers? The giver that God loves, the one who is sowing bountifully, is characterized by generous and

cheerful giving, while the giver that God does not love, the one who is sowing sparingly, is characterized by restrained and grudging giving.

So, what is the basic heart difference between these two kinds of givers based on the broader context of **2 Corinthians 8-9** and the Greek word “EULOGIA” translated “bountiful” and “bountifully” in **2 Corinthians 9:5-6**?

The difference is that the givers who are sowing bountifully, and who are characterized by generous and cheerful giving, are giving in response to grace, as an expression of grace, and are sowing grace with the hope of reaping even further grace, or in other words they are grace givers. While those who are giving sparingly and who are characterized by restrained and grudging giving are flesh givers, or in other words their giving is being shaped by their fleshly impulses, their fleshly appetites and their fleshly beliefs rather than by the grace of God.

So how many kinds of givers are there? There are only two kinds of givers: the givers that God loves, or in other words the grace givers and the givers that God does not love, or in other words the flesh givers. Everyone in this room, no matter how much money we may have or may not have, is either one or the other.

So then where did we go in our study of **2 Corinthians**? We went to **2 Corinthians 9:8-10**, a study that we concluded last week.

So, what did Paul make clear to us in those verses? The givers that God loves, or in other words the grace givers, who in response to grace, as an expression of grace, in the hope of reaping further grace, give generously and cheerfully to others in the time of their need, have nothing to fear, either in this life or the life to come, in light of the personal benefits that God has promised to them.

And what were those personal benefits that God has promised to grace givers? The first personal benefit of grace giving that God has promised to grace givers according to Paul in **2 Corinthians 9:8** was sufficiency. So now let me read for you **2 Corinthians 9:8** and see if this is not so. **“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good**

deed.” In this verse, I believe, Paul made it very clear to the Corinthians and to us as well that grace givers, through God’s abounding grace, will never at any time, under any circumstances, ever come to the point that they would feel as if God has not supplied them with sufficient material resources to meet their basic needs or the basic needs of others.

And will this be because God will make these grace givers financially rich? No! At least not necessarily! Rather it will be because God, in pouring out His abounding grace upon the grace givers, will produce in the grace givers such a level of contentment that they will feel rich regardless of how much or how little material wealth they have, or in other words they will, at any given point in time, feel as if they have more than enough material wealth to meet their basic needs as well as enough material wealth to help meet the basic needs of others.

This is a level of contentment that the world has no real ability to comprehend or to appreciate. But it is a level of contentment that hopefully everyone in this room, by the grace of God, is presently experiencing as God continues to abundantly pour out His grace upon us.

So, what was the first personal benefit of grace giving that Paul identified for the Corinthians and for us? Sufficiency!

So, what was the second personal benefit of grace giving that God has promised to grace givers? The second personal benefit of grace giving that God has promised to grace givers according to Paul in **2 Corinthians 9:9** was righteousness. So now let me read for you **2 Corinthians 9:9** and see if this is not so. **“As it is written, ‘He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, his righteousness endures forever.’”**

So how should we understand this second personal benefit of grace giving that I have referred to as righteousness and which is captured in Paul’s words, **“His righteousness endures forever?”**

Those who in response to grace, as expression of grace, in the hope of reaping further grace, give generously and cheerfully to the poor, can know that their acts of generosity, or in other words their acts of righteousness will in fact endure forever or perhaps better said, their acts of generosity will

forever testify to the genuineness of their salvation, not only to others but to themselves thus providing them the assurance of their salvation.

So, what were the two personal benefits of grace giving that Paul introduced to the Corinthians, as well as to ourselves, in **2 Corinthians 9:8-9**? The two personal benefits were sufficiency and righteousness. So based on these two personal benefits that God has promised to grace givers through His apostle, what should be our conclusion? Our conclusion should be that grace givers have nothing to fear in this life or the life to come, for they are materially and spiritually secure.

So, what about **2 Corinthians 9:10**? **2 Corinthians 9:10** was a summary of what he had just said in **2 Corinthians 9:8-9**. In other words, the first part of **verse 10**, “**Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing,**” once again points to the first personal benefit of grace giving which was spelled out for us in **2 Corinthians 9:8** and the second part of **verse 10**, “**And increase the harvest of your righteousness,**” once gain points to the second personal benefit of grace giving that was spelled out for us in **2 Corinthians 9:9**.

But it is also important for us to note that this reference by Paul at the end of **verse 10**, to God “**increasing the harvest of their righteousness,**” is not just pointing backward to the second personal benefit of grace giving in **2 Corinthians 9:9** but it is also pointing forward to the potential beneficial impact of the grace giving on other believers church wide, as will see in the text that we will begin to study this morning in **2 Corinthians 9:11-15**, which leads us to the question that we will seek to answer over the next several weeks.

So, what is that question? What are the church-wide benefits of grace giving based on 2 Corinthians 9:11-15? So this is the question that we will be seeking to answer over the next several weeks.

So now let me read these verses for you. “**You will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. (12) For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. (13) Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel**

of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, (14) while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you. (15) Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.” Within these verses there are three distinct church-wide benefits of the Corinthians grace giving. This morning we will only consider one. So, what was the first church-wide benefit that Paul identified?

The first church-wide benefit of grace giving that Paul identified was thanksgiving to God (2 Corinthians 9:11-12). So now let us read these verses and see if this is not so. **“You will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. (12) For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.”** So clearly within these verses Paul is detailing for the Corinthians what they should expect to happen church wide if they were to give in the manner in which he hoped that they would give. And what should they expect if they were to give in that particular manner? They should expect that there would be thanksgiving to God. He mentioned this particular benefit in **verse 11** and then he mentioned it again in **verse 12**.

So now let us now take a closer look at these two verses. And we will begin with **verse 11**. **“You [or in other words “you,” the grace givers in Corinthian church] will be enriched in everything.”** So in what way would the Corinthian grace givers be enriched in everything?

When Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:11 told the grace givers in Corinth that they would be “enriched in everything,” he was talking about enrichments of grace and not about material enrichments per se (2 Corinthians 6:10). We have already seen this emphasis on grace already in this chapter but it has also been an emphasis throughout this epistle.

This should be clear to us based on the fact that though Paul, throughout this epistle, has been eager to detail for the Corinthians and for us all that he had suffered in the name of Christ, including material deprivation. And he has also been just as eager to testify of how God, in the midst of all these sufferings, including his material deprivation, had graciously supplied him with everything that he could possibly need in order to do the things that God had called him to do. This thought I believe was captured by Paul very

succinctly in **2 Corinthians 6:10** when he said in referring to himself and to others like him, “**As having nothing yet possessing all things.**”

So in what way would the Corinthian grace givers be “**enriched in everything?**” When Paul in **2 Corinthians 9:11** told the grace givers that they would be enriched in everything, he was talking about enrichments of grace and not about material enrichments per se.

So now we come to another question. What did Paul mean when he told the Corinthians that the purpose for them being enriched in everything was “**for all liberality?**”

When Paul told the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 9:11 that the purpose for them being enriched in everything was for all liberality, he was speaking of their ongoing ability to be generous in whatever circumstances that they might find themselves. In other words, as grace givers continue to give and to continue to reap further grace, they will not lack the ability to continue to supply for others in the time of their need.

And in this case, what was the specific need that had been placed before the grace givers in Corinth by Paul and his associates? It was the need of the poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem for the basic necessities of life. And what did Paul believe would be the church-wide benefit of their generosity directed toward these poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem? Once this need was met? Thanksgiving to God!

Let us go back to **verse 11** and see if this is not so. “**You** [the grace givers among the Corinthians] **will be enriched in everything** [in all the enrichments of grace, for what purpose?] **for all liberality, which through us** [or in other words, through our present efforts to bring about the completion of collection for the poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem] **is producing thanksgiving to God.**” He was so positive that of this outcome of thanksgiving to God that he stated as an already present fact.

This is the inevitable consequence when people in the name of Christ reach out to others in the time of their need and this is particularly true when those “others” are in fact fellow believers in Christ.

And this is a confidence that we can share with the Apostle Paul in respect to our recent and very generous gift to Hamadera Bible, in Osaka Japan. For the fact is that the elders of Hamadera Church are presently and earnestly seeking a church in Sendai through which our gift can be distributed. As this unfolds I believe that we, like Paul, can be very confident that not only will thanksgiving go up to God from the members of Hamadera Bible Church and the members of whatever church they establish a relationship with in Sendai, but whatever individual Japanese people ministered to through our gift in the area of Sendai.

And is this exciting? Absolutely! It is extremely exciting for this is what those who have been touched by God's grace truly desire; they desire that thanksgiving and praise be lifted up to God.

And Paul in seeking to make this church-wide benefit of thanksgiving to God even more clear then goes on to say in **2 Corinthians 9:12** these words, **“For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgiving to God.”**

The human race is like a thankless child, and God is deeply grieved and offended by those who do not honor Him as God or give thanks according to **Romans 1:21**. On the other hand, giving thanks brings glory to Him according to **2 Corinthians 4:15**. In verse 12 Paul described the Corinthians' ministry of giving with the word “service” LEITOURGIA, which refers to priestly service. In other words, the collection was not primarily a social program but a spiritual service to God.

And what was Paul's expectation as the Corinthians, in response to grace as an expression of grace in the hope of reaping further grace, extended themselves in this spiritual service to God? He expected that basic needs of the poor saints in Jerusalem would be met. But even more importantly than that, he once again goes back to the church-wide benefit of grace giving that he introduced in **2 Corinthians 9:11**, **“But is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.”**

May we by the grace of God, as grace givers, be blessed with the opportunity to see the harvest of our righteousness manifest itself in overflowing thanksgiving to God.