

## 2 CORINTHIANS

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### Lesson 7

2 Corinthians 8 - 9



In this lesson, we will be studying giving, generosity, and the role of both the local church and the individual in giving to support the work of the Gospel and Christ's church worldwide. We will look at the role of the individual giver, charities in general, and the many blessings that come with being a generous "happy" giver.

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*Please read chapters 8 and 9 of 2 Corinthians - the story of the offering Paul was collecting for the church in Jerusalem, and Corinth's role in that offering.*

1. In reading the story, there are many principles we can identify that teach us about giving as individuals and as a local church. I can find at least seven, maybe more; how about you? Here are a couple answers to get you started. See if you can find at least seven:
  - a. ANSWER 1: Churches should give to support the work of Christ outside the local area
  - b. ANSWER 2: Christ is the model of a giving person all should follow
  - c. ANSWER 3:
  - d. ANSWER 4:
  - e. ANSWER 5:
  - f. ANSWER 6:
  - g. ANSWER 7:
2. In Chapter 8:17-23, Paul is concerned that his handling or management of taking the offering be above reproach. What are the steps in these verses that he takes in order to make this happen? How many can you identify? Are these the steps that we should be using today when we handle the Church's offerings?
3. How do charities today reassure us of their honesty? What should we be looking for before giving to a charity?
4. Paul speaks very highly of an unnamed man in these verses. In verse 23, he refers to him as "an honor to Christ". What does that mean? What would the characteristics be that would make a person "an honor to Christ"? Can that be said of you?

5. In reading through verses 17-23 of Chapter 8, what can we tell about the reputation of these men from Paul's statements? Are these qualifications that we would want to see in those entrusted with money and property given in support of the Gospel? Should we be looking for these qualities in the men that our local churches place in positions of trust? Do such people exist today?
  
6. In reading Chapter 9:1-5, is it fair to say that Paul is introducing "accountability" to the church at Corinth?
  
7. What are the indicators in these verses that Paul is using positive reinforcement as an accountability tool? How many examples of positive reinforcement - yet holding them accountable - can you find in these verses? List them.
  
8. What promises have you made that you need to be held accountable for? (Financial management/goals, lifestyle changes, diet, stewardship, time management, family matters.) Do you have someone holding you accountable? Have you made a plan and are you sticking to it, or do you need a Paul in your life? If you are the Paul in someone's life, are you using his example of positive reinforcement and building up rather than tearing down and criticizing?
  
9. In Chapter 9:6-11, Paul talks about being a "cheerful giver". Are you?
  
10. According to the Bible, are we ever allowed to test God? Before you answer, have a look at Malachi 3:10.
  
11. Is Paul promising in Chapter 9:6-11 that all cheerful givers will be wealthy? What is he telling us in these verses?
  
12. Read Proverbs 11:24 then Luke 6:38. How do these relate to Christian generosity?

13. Finally, why do you suppose that it is so hard for people to freely give to the work of Christ, whether at home or far away?

I pray that this study will help you to see that all that we have comes from Christ, and it comes for specific purposes. By giving of the things and money that Christ has given us, we honor him, we help spread the gospel, we help meet real needs of real people, and we grow closer to Christ. If you are not currently a cheerful giver, turn this over to Him in your prayer time. You are missing unimaginable blessings!

I would also encourage you to look within and determine if you need an accountability partner, or if you can be one for someone else. All of us need encouragement from time to time, particularly in those areas of our life that seem difficult to change. This week seek out someone that you can encourage, or who can encourage you, as we commit together to grow in God's grace, in our knowledge, and in our walk with Him.

May God richly bless your life as you daily study His Holy Word.

Yours in Christ,

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