

The Hidden Benefits of Giving

The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 has some very interesting comments about the hidden benefits of giving.

First, in chapter 8, verse 1, he equates the giving that the churches of Macedonia displayed was a grace that God had given them. In the Phillips translation it is expressed this way; "Somehow, in most difficult circumstances their joy and the fact of being down to their last penny themselves, produced a magnificent concern for other people." He goes on to say, that they considered it an honor to help in the support of their brothers in Christ.

Later, in verses 10 through 15 he writes about the equality of giving. In verse 14 he says; "it is a matter of share and share alike. At present your plenty should supply their need, and at some future date their plenty may supply your need. In that way we share with each other.."

In chapter 9 verse 7 he shares the principle that our giving should be "as our heart tells us, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

In verse 8 he reminds us that God is able to supply every need, enough for yourself and others.

The beautiful principle of sowing and reaping is taught in verse 10 of chapter 9. God supplies the seed, we sow that seed, it is multiplied to allow more sowing and the harvest is a crop of righteousness - (which manifests itself in active goodness, kindness and charity). Amplified.

However, verse 12 reveals to us the greatest benefit of giving - it overflows in thanksgiving to God!

The climax of this is contained in verse 14 - from the Phillips translation. "Moreover, your very giving proves the reality of your faith, and that means that men thank God that you practice the gospel that you profess to believe in, as well as for the actual gifts you make to them and to others. And yet further, men will pray for you and feel drawn to you because you have obviously received a generous measure of the grace of God." From all of this we can conclude the following:

Giving is a grace from God

Giving produces joy and concern for others

There is an equality in giving

Giving should be as our heart tells us -- not under compulsion

When we give, our needs are met

The more we give, the more we have to give

The crop harvested by our giving is righteousness

Giving results in many thanksgivings to God

Giving is proof of our faith

When we give to others, they will pray for us

A final word: As others have given to Ken and me in order that we might conduct the ministry that God has given us, we have found that our faith has greatly increased, our thanksgivings to God have multiplied and our prayers for those who give are consistent and fervent. Above all, we echo Paul's words at the end of 2 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 15. - "Now thanks be to God for His Gift (precious) beyond telling - His indescribable, inexpressible, free Gift!" - Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.