

Wednesday

The Blessings of a Generous Heart

Today's Scripture 2 Corinthians 9:8-14

At a banquet honoring a highly successful fundraiser for colleges and universities, the person who presented him said, "Here is the greatest beggar in America!" Not pleased by the unintentional misconception of his host, the honored guest replied, "I am not a beggar. I have never begged from anyone. But I have given a lot of people opportunities to be of service to their fellows in this world" (Curtis G. Jones, 1,000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching; Broadman and Holman).

Paul was not a beggar on behalf of the Christians in Judea. He offered the Corinthians an opportunity to be of service to other believers. In 2 Corinthians 9, Paul reminded them of the blessings of Christian charity.

First, a generous heart relies on God's strength and resources (9:8-10). God was the source of the Corinthians' efforts. His grace gave them the resources needed to abound in every good work (vss. 8-10). Remember, as the church serves God strengthens and provides.

Second, a generous heart overflows with thanksgiving to God (9:11-13). Both Paul and the Judean Christians offered thanks to God because of the Corinthians' generosity. Their offering was a reminder that God is the source of everything good (cf. James 1:18). Much like the Corinthians, we need to be reminded that God makes us sufficient for ministry. Thus, our service to others flows from a heart of gratitude to Him.

Third, generous hearts advance the well-being and solidarity of the worldwide Christian community (9:13-14). The Judean Christians glorified God and prayed for the Corinthians. The Corinthians' assistance demonstrated their mutual love and concern for the Judeans. This is a beautiful picture of unity and love (cf. Psalm 133:1). The church must do good for all people, but especially those of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10).

Today, I will...remember the church is the hands and feet of God and he makes us sufficient for ministry. As a part of the church, I will abound in every good work endeavoring to serve others.