**GOD’S INDESCRIBABLE GIFT**

2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Key Verse 15

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!”

**Introduction**



 In today’s passage, Paul continuously encouraged the Corinthian believers in the matter of offering. He wrote this letter to ensure that their offering would be ready. The word “generous” or “generosity” is repeated 7 times. Paul concludes that this generous offering is God’s indescribable gift. May the Lord help us to be generous in everything including offering as God’s children.

1. Read verses 1-5. What was Paul’s boasting about the Corinthian believers? (1-2)

Why was Paul sending Titus and the brothers to Corinth? (3-5)

1-1, Read verses 1-5.

 There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the Lord’s people. **2** For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. **3** But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. **4** For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. **5** So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

1-2, What was Paul’s boasting about the Corinthian believers? (1-2)

***There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the Lord’s people. 2 For I know your eagerness to help,***

* Basically Paul is trying to say here, “I don’t even need to write this in order to remind you guys about the collection, for you are already ready and willing to give before. Right?”
* Of course, if the Corinthian Christians were really as ready and willing, he really wouldn’t need to write this letter at all. Now he is encouraging them to complete their giving by mentioning the example of the Macedonian believers and the example of Jesus in the following passage.

***and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians,***

* In chapter 8:1-8, Paul spoke about the good example of the Macedonian believers in regards to offering. Now Paul informs the Corinthian believers that he has boasted to the Macedonians about their willingness to give.
* Paul is basically saying here, “Come now, you really can be ready to give. After all I have already bragged about your willingness to others.”

 ***telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.***



* Macedonia and Achaia were regions on the Greek peninsula. Corinth was the leading city in Achaia.
* Paul is saying here that the good example of the Macedonians is a reflection of the good example of the Corinthians.
* So Paul meant that if the Corinthians really were such great examples in giving, and if their giving stirred others to give, then he would never have to give them further encouragement, much less instruction as he wrote.

1-3, Why was Paul sending Titus and the brothers to Corinth? (3-5)

 ***But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. 4 For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.***

* If the Corinthian believers were fully ready and willing, Paul wouldn’t have to send the brothers to collect their offering.
* Paul was very concerned that giving be a matter of generosity and not a matter of grudging obligation. God Himself never gives out of an attitude of grudging obligation, and neither should we. God wants a willing attitude from givers.

2. Read verses 6-11. How did Paul encourage them to exercise their personal faith

in giving? (6-7a) What is God able to do for a cheerful giver? (7b-10) Why

does their generosity result in thanksgiving to God? (11)

2-1, Read verses 6-11.

 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **7** Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **8** And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. **9** As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.” **10** Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. **11** You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2-2, How did Paul encourage them to exercise their personal faith in giving? (6-7a)

 ***Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.***

* Paul explained the Biblical basis for the generous offering. First, he reminded them of the principle of sowing.
* A farmer sowing seed may feel that he loses seed as it falls from his hand to the ground, and we may feel we are losing when we give. But just as the farmer gives the seed it in anticipation of a future harvest, we should give with the same heart.
* If a farmer planted only a few seeds because he wanted to “hold on” to as much seed as he could, he would have more seed in his barn after sowing time. But at the harvest, the one who planted more seed would have much more grain in his barn than the one who planted less seed.
* Will also reap generously - Paul teaches that giving an offering to God is like planting a seed that grows and produces a harvest. God surely remembers our offerings and blesses us accordingly.

Proverbs 11:24-25 reads,

One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. **25** A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed

 Galatians 6:7-8 reads,

 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. **8** Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

 ***7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion,***

* Each believer should be a giver instead of being a taker. Giving should be initiated and motivated by our own heart instead of being forced by others. We should give because we want to give.
* If we say that we love the Lord more than something else, still spend all our money on them and do not give as we should to the Lord’s work, then the way we spend our money shows the true color of our heart more accurately than our words. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Mt 6:21)

2-3, What is God able to do for a cheerful giver? (7b-10)

***for God loves a cheerful giver.***

* God does not want our giving to be grudgingly or reluctantly. This way of giving is not Biblical. God wants us to give cheerfully with the love of God and love for others.
* The Greek word for cheerful is the root for our English word “hilarious.” God wants us to give happily, for that is how God himself gives! God is the ultimate cheerful giver. So God delights in the cheerful giver. He wants to see those who were created according to his own image!
* True giving comes from a happy heart, and it also gives us a happy heart. In verses 8-10, The cheerful givers were blessed by God.

 ***And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.”***

* God is able to bless you abundantly. We must be persuaded that God is able to reward our giving and is able to bless our giving.
* Jesus taught that a cup of cold water will be remembered. (Mt 10:42) The word “righteousness” is repeated two times in verses 9 and 10.
* Giving is considered to be the act of righteousness in God’s eyes. God may bless our giving in material aspect. Also he may bless us to outgrow the tyranny of greed and materialism with a sense of blessing and happiness. What a blessing it is to have this spiritual gift in this society where money talks!
* God will abound in every good work. Godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6) God gives a special gift to the giving heart: all, all, all, and every.
* No matter how much you might have money, there is no true contentment. People are compelled to full their needs in their lives by material possession or somebody. But it is truly filled with righteous relationship with the Lord only!
* With this kind of contentment, we can be the richest people on earth. If we have this, it really makes us better off than the wealthiest people who don’t have it.
* We are truly blessed as the source of blessing to others. God wants us to be the channels of blessing continually! Giving helps us to stand right with God!

***10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.***

* Paul recognizes God as the very supplier. Whatever we have to give was first given to us by God.
* Paul prays that God would supply resources to the Corinthian Christians so that they may give, and at the same time multiply what they give.
* Enlarge the harvest of your righteousness: The giving of the Corinthian Christians will give a harvest, the fruits of your righteousness.

2-4, Why does their generosity result in thanksgiving to God? (11)

***11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.***

* Paul prayed that the Corinthian Christians would be enriched by their giving in every way.
* The more you are enriched by God the more scope there will be for generous giving, and it is the true meaning of God’s blessing. And many will thank God.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 reads

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth,which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **18** Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. **19** In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

3. Read verses 12-15. How would their generous offering glorify God? (12-13) What

is the beautiful outcome of their generous offering? (14) What is Paul’s

reason for thanksgiving? (15)

3-1, Read verses 12-15.

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. **13** Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. **14** And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. **15** Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

3-2, How would their generous offering glorify God? (12-13)

 ***This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.***

* Practically the giving of the Corinthian Christians will supply the needs of the saints in Jerusalem. But their giving resulted in many thanks to God.
* Their giving means more than money itself, but they were giving people kind of clear reason to thank and glorify God.
* They would also glorify God as they understood the gift, which meant the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ.
* Giving among the Corinthian Christians was the evidence of their obedience to their confession to the gospel of Christ.
* If a person does not have a generous heart, there is a sense in which they are not obedient to the confession of the gospel of Christ.
* Others would also thank God because the gift from the Corinthian Christians will show that they have hearts of generous sharing. This meant God was really doing a work in the hearts of the Corinthian Christians, and that was why God is praiseworthy for His great work among them!
* Generosity in sharing - This is the same word used for the ideas of fellowship and communion – it means the sharing of things in common.
* When we share our resources so none would be destitute, “koinania” is called sharing

3-3, What is the beautiful outcome of their generous offering? (14)

 ***And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.***

* The other benefit from the gift(giving) of the Corinthian Christians was that it would prompt the Jerusalem Christians to pray for them.
* Paul expected that the Jerusalem Christians would pray for the Corinthian Christians. This is something that we can do in return when others give to us, and we can pray for them.
* Paul called surpassing grace. Giving is called as surpassing grace. What a grace we can share in our practical lives to glorify God and mutually be encouraged. Praise God who is worthy of all our praise!

3-4, What is Paul’s reason for thanksgiving? (15)

***15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!***

* Paul is simply saying that it is impossible to adequately describe the gift. It is beyond full description.
* Jesus Christ, the very gift of God’s love to mankind, is an unspeakable blessing; no man can conceive, much less declare, how great this gift is; for these things the angels desire to look into.
* God’s indescribable gift should fill us with gratitude. If we really understand and appreciate the indescribable gift God gives us, our lives will be filled with gratitude and pursue such gift naturally and eagerly. Amen!

**Conclusion**

 Now it quite makes sense for Paul to conclude these two chapters (8 and 9) with His indescribable gift. The best motivation for giving is always gratitude for the indescribable gift of God to us. Praise God who is the very Supplier! God’s indescribable gift is what inspires all true giving and blessing. May the Lord help us to have His indescribable gift above all. Amen!

**One word: His indescribable gift!**