

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS

THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL INTEGRITY, 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15

2. (2 Corinthians 9:3-5) Stewardship— Giving: givers who please God are not caught unprepared to give.

2 Corinthians 9:3-5 (NASB)

³“But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared;

⁴otherwise if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we— not to speak of you—will be put to shame by this confidence.

⁵So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.”

Stewardship with Integrity Calls For Giving That Has Overcome the Sin of Covetousness

2 Corinthians 9:5 (NASB)

⁵“So I **thought it necessary to urge the brethren** that **they would go on ahead to you** and **arrange beforehand** your **previously promised bountiful gift**, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.”

For the reasons noted above, Paul **thought it necessary to urge the brethren** (Titus and the two unnamed brothers) **that they would go on ahead to** Corinth **and arrange beforehand** the Corinthians’ **previously promised bountiful gift**. Evidently, they had promised a specific, large amount, and Paul wanted to make certain they had it ready when he arrived.

Then Paul warned of the one sin that could keep the **Corinthians** from meeting their commitment: **covetousness**—the sin that is the greatest hindrance to giving. Since the **Corinthians** knew that the collection for the Jerusalem saints was God’s work, and that it was being done in God’s way, and since they had previously committed to be involved in it, to fail to keep that commitment was sinful covetousness.

Few sins are as ugly as covetousness; few sins manifest selfishness and pride so graphically as grasping for more at the expense of others. Covetousness is built into the very fabric of depraved human nature. “**For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, ²² deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness**” Mark 7:21-22 (NASB).

Sinners covet because they have “eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children” [2 Peter 2:14 \(NASB\)](#).

Stewardship with integrity, then, is marked by voluntary, faithful giving, proportionate to what one has, in submission to godly pastors who silence the critics by handling the money faithfully. It is motivated by exemplary love for God and others, and is completely free from selfish greed and covetousness. All giving must be measured by those noble standards.

3. (2 Corinthians 9:6) Stewardship— Giving— Reaping— Reward: givers who please God give much and reap much.

2 Corinthians 9:6 (NASB)

⁶“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

In fact, when it comes to reaping, they reap exactly what they sow. **Note that the picture is that of sowing seed:** when a man plants the seed, the same is returned to him; in fact, much more is returned to him—a full harvest. This is one of the great principles of Scripture, but it must be carefully noted: **it is not the man who pretends to sacrificially give who shall be greatly blessed by God.** It shall be the man **who actually does sacrifice all he is and has.** This man will never go lacking; God will abundantly provide for him.

Proverbs 3:9-10 (NASB)

⁹“Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce;

¹⁰So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine.”

Proverbs 11:24-25 (NASB)

²⁴“There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, and yet it results only in want.

²⁵The generous man will be prosperous, And he who waters will himself be watered.”

Proverbs 19:17 (NASB)

¹⁷“One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.”

Proverbs 22:9 (NASB)

⁹“He who is generous will be blessed, For he gives some of his food to the poor.”

Proverbs 28:27 (NASB)

²⁷“He who gives to the poor will never want, But he who shuts [hides] his eyes will have many curses.”

Ecclesiastes 11:1 (NASB)

¹“Cast your bread on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days.”

Isaiah 58:10 (NASB)

¹⁰“And if you give yourself to the hungry And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness And your gloom *will become* like midday.”

Malachi 3:10 (NASB)

¹⁰“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

Matthew 10:41 (NASB)

⁴¹“He who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.”

Luke 6:38 (NASB)

³⁸“Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, *and* running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

Galatians 6:7 (NASB)

⁷“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”

Philippians 4:10 (NASB)

¹⁰“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity.”

Philippians 4:19 (NASB)

¹⁹“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

THE EQUALITY OF THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING—[2 Corinthians 9:6](#)

2 Corinthians 9:6 (NASB)

⁶“Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

Paul encourages the Corinthians with an important principle about the matter of giving. They have promised to give to the Lord, but the temptation for greed can quench the fire of generosity. He encourages them with the equality of the law of sowing and reaping, using the farmer as an example.

One of the great spiritual principles of life is that God blesses people in proportion to their blessing others. You sow or give sparingly, you reap sparingly. You sow bountifully, you reap bountifully. Giving to meet the needs of others is like sowing seed. It will yield fruit of the same kind in time. The important lesson which Paul is urging

upon the Corinthians at this point is that to give is to sow. What is given is not lost, but, like the seed sown by the farmer, it will yield its blessing at a later time. When a generous believer gives by faith and trusts in God, with a desire to produce the greatest possible blessing, that person will receive that kind of a harvest of blessing. Your return is determined by the investment you make. This principle is taught repeatedly throughout the Bible.

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¹⁰So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine.”

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¹⁷“One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.”

Proverbs 22:8-9 (NASB)

⁸“He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, And the rod of his fury will perish.

⁹He who is generous will be blessed, For he gives some of his food to the poor.”

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A man in New England had been unemployed so long that he was down to his last dollar. He laid fifty cents of it on the offering plate on Sunday. That was a lot of money in his day. The next morning, he heard of a possible job in a neighboring town, but the railroad fare was a dollar. He began to wonder if perhaps he should have kept the fifty cents he put in the offering plate, but with the fifty cents that he had, he bought a ticket and rode halfway to his desired destination. He stepped from the train and started to walk to the town, but God had something better for him. He would reap what he had sown.

Before he had walked a block, he learned of a factory near at hand that needed help. He got a job at five dollars a week, more than he would have received had he traveled on to the other town. The man was **W.L. Douglas**, who became the famed shoe manufacturer of Brockton, Massachusetts. His shoe company made the finest shoes in the country and was considered the Pepsi Cola of the shoe industry. Mr. Douglas went on to become the governor of Massachusetts in 1905-06, a position once held by famous men such as John Hancock and Samuel Adams.

Beloved, giving to the Lord will not leave you with egg on your face, especially at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is an investment that will yield blessings for you in the future here on earth and in Heaven. Not all the blessings will be monetary. They may be the blessing of good health, peace, joy, love, and usefulness to the Lord.

Some may ask, “Is a proper motive for giving to get something in return?” The answer is “Yes.” Both Jesus and Paul urged us to lay up treasure in Heaven, to make investments, counting on the fact that they will yield eternal rewards. Jesus told a parable in [Matthew 25](#), stressing the importance of investing for the purpose of an increase. Good and faithful servants did this, but the one servant that did not do this was rebuked. We are stewards of God’s money and are to use it wisely. Money is a tool that is to be used to yield fruitfulness and blessing. We are to lay up treasures in Heaven.

Matthew 6:19-21 (NASB)

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”

²⁰“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

²¹for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

How do you properly lay up treasures in Heaven? How are we supposed to give?
Basic elements of giving are given in the next verse.