

2 Corinthians Chapter 9

2 Corinthians 9:1 "For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:"

The ministering to the saints is still speaking of the offering for the saints in Jerusalem.

The last lesson was very similar to this lesson.

"Superfluous":

This means excessive or super abound.

It also means, have more abundance.

The word "for" above shows that this is a continuation of chapter 8.

Paul is saying he really shouldn't have to write to them about this.

They should be eager to help their brothers in Christ who have a need.

They had been sidetracked by the false teachers who were accusing Paul of ministering for the money only.

2 Corinthians 9:2 "For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many."

It appears the zeal of the church at Corinth has caused the other churches to want to help also.

Paul had bragged so much on the church at Corinth that they had wanted to do the same thing.

Now Paul is calling the Corinthians back to their original eagerness and readiness to participate in the offering project.

Macedonia was located in northern Greece and Achaia was a province in southern Greece near where Corinth was.

2 Corinthians 9:3 "Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:"

When the Corinthians first heard of the need, they had undoubtedly promised Paul that they would raise a large amount.

Paul is encouraging them to do whatever they are going to do now.

It seems a great deal of time has passed since the need was known, and Paul is saying, send your offering now.

2 Corinthians 9:4 "Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting."

After promising so boldly what they would do, if they did not, it would be embarrassing for Paul, as well as for them.

Paul had not ceased in telling the people in Macedonia just what the church at Corinth had planned to give.

2 Corinthians 9:5 " Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as [a matter of] bounty, and not as [of] covetousness."

“Bounty”:

Meaning their generous gift.

Paul says that he is not coveting their funds.

He wants them to have the free will offering ready for when they come, in order to keep down any embarrassment.

“Covetousness”:

Or greed meaning a grasping to get more and keep it at the expense of others.

This attitude emphasizes selfishness and pride, which can have a very detrimental effect on giving and is natural for unbelievers but should not be for professed believers.

2 Corinthians 9:6 "But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

If you want a large crop, you have to plant a lot of seeds.

Pertaining to Christian giving is the saying that the harvest is directly proportionate to the amount of seed sown.

“Bountifully”:

This comes from a Greek word “eulogy” meaning blessing.

When a generous believer gives by faith and trust in God, with a desire to produce the greatest possible blessing, that person will receive that kind of a harvest of blessing.

This is not speaking in planting real seed, but speaking of the ministry.

If the Lord is to bless them mightily, then they must give mightily.

God gives a return on the amount one invests with Him.

Invest a little, receive a little and vice versa.

The Lord multiplies what they give.

10 times one is ten, but ten times ten is 100.

To bring in a big harvest, you must plant big.

This is true in all walks of life.

You reap according to what you sow.

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Paul is teaching them a principal of giving.

“Purposeth”:

This is a premeditated, predetermined plan of action that is done from the heart voluntarily, but not impulsively.

To give because you have to and not because you want too brings no rewards at all.

You might as well keep the offering if it is given grudgingly.

It will not do you any good, or the person receiving it either.

Give and it shall be given you, pressed down and running over.

The “if” is then, if you gave it in love, cheerfully.

God has a unique special love for those who are happily committed to generous giving.

The Greek word for “cheerful” is the word from which we get “hilarious,” which suggests that God loves a heart that is enthusiastically thrilled with the pleasure of giving.

2 Corinthians 9:8 "And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work:"

When you give to those with no hope of return, you lay up treasures in heaven for yourself.

God does not overlook the smallest gift you give to someone in need.

Mark 9:41 "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

The gift does not have to be large; it just has to be given freely with a cheerful heart.

Those who help others in need will find that they will never suffer from need themselves.

God sees their generosity and rewards them.

Grace here isn't referring to spiritual grace, but to money and material needs.

When the believer generously and wisely gives of his material resources, God graciously replenishes them so he always has plenty and will not be in need.

God gives back lavishly to generous, cheerful givers, not so they may satisfy selfish, nonessential desires, but so they may meet the variety of needs others have.

2 Corinthians 9:9 "(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.)"

When you are continually giving to others in need, you are insuring the love of God toward you.

You are letting the righteousness that Jesus gave you, work in your life.

This verse comes from Psalm 112;

Psalm 112:9: "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor."

God replenishes and rewards the righteous giver both in time and eternity.

2 Corinthians 9:10 "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for [your] food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)"

This verse may be also translated, "Now He (God), who supplies seed to the sower and bread to eat will supply and multiply your seed and will increase the harvest (Yield), of your righteousness (prosperity).

The Corinthians would not be the ones to distribute their offerings.

They are the one who provides the seed to be sown.

They entrust someone else to sow it for them and everyone benefits.

The person who provides the funds to minister with has just as much part in the ministering as the one who actually does the ministering.

In this scripture, Paul quotes from Isaiah 55:10 for support:

Isaiah 55:10 “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.”

The same God who is faithful to supply all His creatures’ physical needs and is kind to all men, is uniquely gracious to His children.

He always fulfills His promise to replenish their generosity.

This verse may be translated, “now he who supplies the seed to the sower and bread to eat will supply and multiply your seed and will increase the harvest (yield), of your righteousness (prosperity).

“Fruits of your righteousness”:

This is God’s temporal and eternal blessings to the cheerful giver.

Paul may preach to these people, but the givers of the funds to do it with are producing fruit for God, as well.

Both are needed to get a good crop.

2 Corinthians 9:11 "Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."

One may provide the seed and another plant the crop, but God gets the increase.

The saints who are blessed by this offering will give thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:12 "For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;"

This giving to the saints in need is not just a physical blessing to them, but also shows the love of God to them.

It feeds their souls to know of the unselfish love these Corinthians have for them.

It shows to them Christianity in action.

This is what Christianity is all about.

Paul viewed the entire collection project as a spiritual, worshipful enterprise that was primarily being offered to God to glorify Him.

The Jerusalem church had an extremely great need.

Many of its members had gone to Jerusalem as pilgrims to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, had been converted through Peter's message, and had then remained in the city without adequate financial support.

Many residents of Jerusalem had undoubtedly lost their jobs in the waves of persecution that came after the martyrdom of Stephen.

However the Corinthians were wealthy enough (they had not yet suffered persecution and deprivation like the Macedonians), to help meet the huge need with a generous monetary gift.

2 Corinthians 9:13 "Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for [your] liberal distribution unto them, and unto all [men];"

The collection, which the Corinthians had provided, gave proof of this ministry which gave them opportunity to test the genuineness of their faith.

The Jewish believers, who already doubted the validity of gentile salvation, were especially skeptical of the Corinthians since their church had so many problems.

The Corinthian's involvement in the collection would help to put those doubts to rest.

Obedient submission to God's Word is always evidence of a true confession of Christ as Lord and Savior.

If the Corinthians had a proper response to and participation in Paul's collection ministry, the Jewish believers would know the Gentile conversions had been real

We see from this scripture that they had not only accepted Jesus as their Savior, but are walking in that newness of life of the Christian.

Jesus is their Lord, as well as Savior.

They are acting in a Christ-like fashion.

We see, in this, the brotherhood of the believers.

2 Corinthians 9:14 "And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you."

This just shows that the saints in Jerusalem thank God for the Corinthians who helped them.

They do not have funds to give in return, but pray for their generous brothers in Corinth.

The grace of God is showing in these followers in Corinth.

This verse illustrates the truth that mutual prayer is at the heart of authentic Christian unity.

When the Jerusalem believers recognized God was at work in the Corinthian church because of its outreach through the collection, they would have become friends in Christ and prayed for the Corinthians, thanking God for their loving generosity.

The Spirit of God was at work in the Corinthians in a special way.

2 Corinthians 9:15 "Thanks [be] unto God for his unspeakable gift."

Paul summarized his discourse by comparing the believer's act of giving with what God did in giving Jesus Christ, "His unspeakable gift".

God buried His Son and then reaped a vast harvest of those who then had put their faith in the resurrected Christ.

That makes it possible for believers to joyfully, sacrificially and abundantly sow and reap.

As they give in this manner, they show forth Christ's likeness.

2 Corinthians 9 Questions

1. What does "superfluous" mean in verse 1?
2. What does the fact that this lesson begins with the word "for" show us?
3. Who had Paul boasted to of them?
4. Who was ready a year ago?
5. What zeal was Paul speaking of?
6. Why was Paul anxious for them to send the offering now?
7. What bounty are they speaking of?

8. He that soweth sparingly, shall reap _____.
9. What must you do to get a large crop?
10. You reap according to what you _____.
11. How does verse 7 say to give?
12. What does verse 8 say God will do for you, if you are generous in your giving?
13. What is working in your life when you give generously?
14. Who is blessed more, the one who provides the seed to sow, or the one who sows it?
15. In verse 11, thanksgiving was given to whom?
16. What does this offering do for the saints, besides take care of their physical needs?
17. These Corinthians are walking in _____ of _____.
18. What will the saints at Jerusalem do for the Corinthians?