

“Thanks Be Unto God!”
2 Corinthians 9:11-15

Introduction:

1. Let's Open Our Bibles Together This Morning:
 - To 2 Corinthians 9:
 - Where We Will Finish Looking At:
 - The Apostle Paul's Instructions:
 - On Christian Giving:
 - Which He Has Covered In Two Whole Chapters - Chapters 8-9!
 - But We Have Also Seen:
 - That Christian Giving Is Not Just About:
 - **What** You Give!
 - But **Why** You Give & **How** You Give & Even **To Whom** You Give!
 - Your Giving Is A Reflection Of What Is Really Going On In Your Heart!
 - This Is Why Back In 9:7 We Read:
 - “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver!”
 - And This Focus Is No Different In The Verses We Will Look At This Morning:
 - In 9:11-15 - Where Paul Continues - “Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. / For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; / 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; / And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. / Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!”
2. These Verses Tie Your Giving & Serving As A Christian:
 - To Your Gratitude To & Your Glorifying:
 - The Lord!
 - And Paul - After Thinking About & Writing About All The Blessings:
 - That Come With Christian Giving:
 - Ends These 2 Chapters With A Spontaneous Doxology Of His Own!
 - 9:15 - “Thanks Be Unto God For His Unspeakable & Inexpressible Gift!” (2x)
 - A Gift That Paul Himself:
 - Could Not Fully Describe!
 - Peter Even Tells Us That Its Something “The Angels Desire To Look Into!”
 - Now - What Could This Gift Be?
 - This Gift Can Only Be:
 - As James Denney Once Described It - “The Great, Original, Unsearchable Gift!”
 - It Is The Gift Of The Gospel! The Gift Of The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - After All:
 - Christ Alone Is The Source & The Fountain Head Of **Every** Gift Of God's Amazing Grace!
3. Now - After Spending 2 Whole Chapters:
 - Writing To Us About Giving:
 - What Would Cause The Apostle Paul:
 - To Break Out - At The Very End - In Spontaneous Praise & Thanks To God For His “Unspeakable Gift?”
 - Because He Was Completely Overwhelmed & Completely Awe-Struck With What Jesus Was Able To Accomplish:
 - Through This Simple Love Offering He Was Taking Up For The “Poor Saints At Jerusalem!”
 - And With These Words:
 - Paul Invites You & Me:
 - To Praise & Thank God As Well:
 - As We Think About All That Jesus Christ Makes Possible:
 - When We Serve & Give For Him!

* In 9:11-12 - We Find That Only Jesus Can Make Possible:

1. ***The Growth Of Genuine Christian Fruit!***

- In 9:11 - Paul Reminds Us That:
 - We Are “Enriched In Every Thing To All Bountifulness!”
 - This Means That:
 - God ***Pours In*** So That You Can ***Pour Out!***
 - And Remember - He Does So In A Way That As You ***Pour Out***, You Will Never ***Run Out!***
 - But That’s Not The Only Result Of God’s Pouring In!
 - It Will Also Yield:
 - Thanksgiving & Praise To God!
 - “Which Causeth Through Us Thanksgiving To God!”
- And So - According To 9:12 - “The administration of this service (The Collection He’s Been Taking Up & Talking About) not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God!”
 - This Means That There Is More To Christian Giving:
 - Than Meets The Eye!
 - It’s A Gift That Really Does “Keep On Giving!” / It’s An Investment That Really Does Yield Spiritual & Eternal Returns!
 - Your Giving & Serving:
- Will Bring Encouragement!
 - Encouragement To God’s People!
 - 9:12 - It “Supplieth The Want Of The Saints!”
 - When You Give - God Is Using ***You*** To Be A Blessing & A Source Of His Provision:
 - To His People In Need!
 - What An Encouragement It Is:
 - When God’s People Give To God’s People:
 - And Even Beyond!
 - As Paul Proclaimed - “Thanks Be Unto God!”
 - But This Is Not ***All*** Christian Giving Is ***About!***
 - This Is Not ***All*** That Christian Giving ***Brings About!***
 - Because Even More - Your Giving & Serving:
- Will Bring Exaltation!
 - Exaltation & Praise To God Himself!
 - 9:12 - It “Is Abundant Also By Many Thanksgivings Unto God!”
 - This Is The Exponential Return Of Your Investment Whenever You Give To & Serve The Lord & His People!
 - It Causes Everyone Involved:
 - To Thank & Worship & Glorify God:
 - In A Greater Way!
 - And Isn’t This Really:
 - The Goal For Everything We Do:
 - As Christians? 1 Corinthians 10:31 - “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do (Giving & Serving), do all to the glory of God!”
 - A Lot Of Good Can Come:
 - When You Give & Serve!
 - It Can Be A Real Help & Blessing To Others!
 - ***IE:*** Remember The “Ice Bucket Challenge?” The Money Collected Was To Benefit Those Who Had ALS - Lou Gehrig’s Disease - And It Helped Many Individuals & Families! Paid For Research / Medicine / Even Special Equipment For Those Who Were Suffering - Including Our Own Brother, Mark Judy! Giving Really Does Help & Encourage Others When They Are In Need!
 - But Christian Giving Yields Even More - It Brings Praise & Glory To God!
 - Not Just From Your Own Heart:
 - But From The Hearts Of Many Others!
 - “Many Thanksgivings Unto God!”
 - But Even Further - We Find That Your Giving & Serving:
 - Will Bring Evidence!
 - Evidence Of God’s Grace At Work In Your Life!
 - In 9:13 - Paul Describes The Collection As:
 - “The Experiment Of This Ministration!”

- The Word Translated “Experiment” Means Something That Is Proven In The Laboratory Of This Love Offering!
- Their Eagerness To Give:
 - And Their Efforts In Giving:
 - Provided Clear Evidence Of Their True Nature:
 - As Christians & As A Church!
- And So - We Can Say With The Apostle Paul:
 - “Thanks Be Unto God For His Unspeakable Gift!”
 - Because Only Jesus Christ:
 - Can Take Something As Seemingly “Mundane” As Giving:
 - And Give It Life!
 - Giving & Serving:
 - For You As A Christian:
 - Is Not Just Charity Work:
 - Or Volunteerism
 - It Is A Spiritual Grace:
 - And A Spiritual Fruit:
 - That Will Multiply And Grow!
 - **IE:** Even As Jesus Took Just A Few Loaves Of Bread & Fish & Miraculously Multiplied Them So He Could Feed Thousands With Plenty Left Over!
 - So Jesus Will Take What You Give:
 - And Cause It To Take Root:
 - So That - Not Only Will It:
 - Encourage Others:
 - It Will Bring Glory To God Himself!
 - “Thanks Be Unto God!”
 - Only Jesus Christ Can Make This Kind Of:
 - Spiritual Fruit Possible!
 - When We Serve & Give For Him!

* But We Also Find In 9:13 - That Jesus Can Make Possible:

2. ***The Growth Of Genuine Christian Fellowship!***

- 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!”
 - In These Verses - Paul Tells Us:
 - About The Response Of The Christians In Jerusalem Concerning Their Gift!
 - Now - How Did Paul Know This Would Be Their Reaction! How Could He Be So Sure? Perhaps Paul Was So Confident That God Was At Work, That He Describes Their Reaction As Already Taking Place!
 - But It Is Also Possible:
 - That The Christians In Jerusalem:
 - Already Heard About The Corinthians Desire To Give & Contribute To Them!
 - And Even Though They Have Yet To Receive Their Gift - They Were Enthralled With This Demonstration Of Love!
 - And So - The Christians In Jerusalem:
 - Praised & Glorified God:
 - Not Just For The Gift:
 - That Was Coming!
 - But For ***Them*** - The Corinthians - And Their:
 - Genuine Fellowship With Christ!
 - 9:13 - “They Glorify God For Your Professed Subjection Unto The Gospel Of Jesus Christ!”
 - The Jerusalem Church Was Overjoyed That There Was A Genuine Christian Church In Corinth!
 - **IE:** The City Of Corinth Was Known For Its Idolatry! And There Were Many Different Religions & “Professions” In That City! The Christians In Corinth Literally Lived Under The Shadow Of The Temple Of Aphrodite, Which Prominently Stood On Top Of The Mountain That Overlooked The City!
 - But Now - Their Profession Had Changed!
 - Their Devotion & Allegiance:

- And They Did This:
- For God's Good!
 - There Where Many Christians:
 - In The Jerusalem Church:
 - Who Were Very, Very Poor, According The World's Standards!
 - And There Was No Possible Way For Them To Repay The Gift & The Kindness Of The Churches Who Gave To Them:
 - Including The Corinthian Church!
 - But - According To God's Standard, They Were Rich! And "Such As They Had They Gave!"
 - They Gave Their Love!
 - And Earnestly Prayed For Them!
 - For The Richest Blessings Of God!
 - They Also Did This:
 - By God's Grace!
 - The Jerusalem Christians:
 - Were "Longing After" The Corinthian Christians:
 - "For The Exceeding Grace Of God" In Them!
 - Their Hearts Yearned:
 - For Their New Brothers & Sisters In Christ!
 - Though They Might Never Meet Them:
 - By God's Grace, They Were One With Them!
 - And Their Hearts Were Knit Together:
 - In Christian Love!
 - Only The Gospel Of Jesus Christ:
 - Can Make Possible This Kind Of Love:
 - Within The Church!
 - Only Jesus Christ Could "Break Down The Middle Wall Of Partition" Between The Jewish Church & The Gentile Churches:
 - And Make Us One!

Conclusion:

1. And As The Apostle Paul:
 - Pondered All That God Was Doing:
 - Through That Simple Collection:
 - And The Genuine Growth Of:
 - Christian Fruit!
 - Christian Fellowship!
 - And Christian Feeling!
 - He Could Not Contain His Own Praise Any Longer!
 - So - Once Again - In 9:15 - Out Of The "Overflow" Of His Own Heart - Paul Exclaims:
 - "Thanks Be Unto God For His Unspeakable / Inexpressible Gift!" (2x)
 - Paul Puts It Another Way In Romans 11:33-36 - "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! / For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? / Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen!"
2. The Apostle Paul Could Not:
 - And We Should Not:
 - Ever Get Over God's "Unspeakable Gift" To Us:
 - In The Person & Work Of Jesus Christ!
 - He Is "The Divine Gift Which Inspires All Gifts!" (Tasker)
 - Because Jesus Christ Alone:
 - Can Make All These Things Possible!
 - Christ Alone:
 - Can Take A Single Seed:
 - And Give It Life:
 - So That It Can Multiply Itself And Yield A Bountiful Harvest!
 - Christ Alone:

- Can Take A Few Loaves Of Bread & Some Small Fish:
 - And Multiply Them:
 - So That They Can Feed Thousands Even To Point Of Being Full!
 - Christ Alone:
 - Can Take A Gift:
 - Even If Its Just Two Small Mites:
 - And Multiply It:
 - To “Not Only Supply The Want Of The Saints!”
 - But Also To “Abound – By Many Thanksgivings To God!”
 - Do Not Underestimate:
 - The Power Of God’s Grace:
 - And How It Can Overflow & Grow:
 - In Ways That You Would Never Expect Or Anticipate!
3. Because Only Christ:
- Can Turn Your Giving & Your Service:
 - Into An Opportunity:
 - For Greater Fruit, Greater Fellowship, And Greater Feeling & Love:
 - Within His Church!
 - “Thanks Be Unto God For His Unspeakable Gift!”

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