

The Gift that Keeps on Giving 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

It's Labor Day weekend – A weekend to rest from our labor!

Why do we labor? Why do we work? What is God's good purpose in it?

- As beings created in the image of God, we are called to reflect Him in this world, so we work because God is a God who works! Genesis 1
- Work is an extension of God's provision in our lives – it's the means by which our needs & our family's needs get met! 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12
- We work so that we don't get tempted to break the 8th commandment! Proverbs 30:7-9 H.C. # 110 – What does the 8th commandment forbid?
- We work so that we can be generous & be a blessing to others in need! Eph. 4:28 H.C. # 111 – What does the 8th commandment also require?
- We work so that we can learn to be good stewards of God's resources & bring Him glory through our obedience & cheerful giving. 2 Cor. 9:11

Why do pastors and churches shy away from teaching about giving? Fear

Why don't we simply claim the words of Jesus, ***"It is more blessed to give than to receive"*** – Acts 20:35 There is great joy to be found in generosity!

And why is it so hard to believe the words of the Apostle Paul, when he says ***"whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."*** – 2 Corinthians 9:6

He's not saying to give in order to receive an even greater monetary return!

We are called to give b/c of the increasing joy we receive in doing so, & also because God will use what we give to increase the work of His Kingdom!

Each of us must answer the questions *"How much joy do we want to receive from giving?"* *"How much Kingdom work do we want to partner with?"*

This is why we at BRC, like Paul, don't tell you how much to give or where you need to give it. ***"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or out of compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*** 2 Cor. 9:7

We also acknowledge that we serve a God who is ***"able to make all grace abound"*** to us, and sufficiently supply us w/ all that we need to continue to ***"abound in every good work!"*** God blesses us, so that we can be a blessing!

Through giving, God ***"will supply and multiply your seed for sowing"***, but He will also use it to ***"increase the harvest of your righteousness."***

When God blesses us, for the purpose of us being a blessing to others, He is doing a good work of producing righteousness in us!

The harvest we receive from giving, is being transformed more & more into the image of Christ – who came to serve & give His life for many! Matt. 20:28

2 Cor. 9:11-13 - Our faithfulness in giving will ***"produce thanksgiving to God."*** The recipients of our gifts will glorify God as a result of our giving!

Let me share a testimony of ***"thanksgiving to God"*** for your faithful giving!

The reasons why we should talk/teach/preach about giving, and even celebrate it in the church, mirror the same reasons why we labor/work.

- God is a God who showers ***"surpassing grace"*** upon us! To reflect His image in this world is to do the same for others! When we give freely and abundantly, we look more like the One we were created to image!
- Giving is often the means by which God's provision comes to others - those called to lead in the church, the ministries of the church, those in need who want to work but can't, those who have fallen on hard times, etc.
- When we give, it keeps those around us from being tempted to break the 8th commandment! Luke 6:29
- When we give, we are keeping the 8th commandment & acting obediently!
- Giving allows our hearts to experience joy and releases the power of greed and covetousness in our lives.
- Giving is an extension of our worship! ***"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also!"*** - Matthew 6:21

2 Cor. 9:15 – ***"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!"*** When what we treasure most is the gift we have already received in Christ, that will be, He will be, the gift within us that keeps us giving!

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