

# Loaves & Fishes – Part 3

## Open Hearts and Open Hands – 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – May 3, 2026

### Introduction

- This morning is the third and final installment of our “Loaves & Fishes” series, and we consider the invitation of God to join with what He is doing in and among us during this next season of ministry.
- Today, we are looking at a letter Paul sent to the church in Corinth. The context of this passage is that the church in Corinth had pledged to help the church in Jerusalem, which was suffering under intense hardship and persecution. Paul and his companions were preparing to go and receive this gift.
- In preparation for his arrival, Paul gives the Corinthians instructions about giving. What he says to them is not just helpful for them, but it is also deeply relevant for us as we seek to give to the work of the Lord.
- Please turn in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 9:6 (page 997). Paul begins this section this way:

### 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 NIV

**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.**

### Generosity Is an Outflow of the Heart

- First, when we give to the work of the Lord, we are not just giving; we are sowing. Sowing means that we are planting something that, over time, will grow into something more. The more that is sown, the greater the harvest. So, when we give to the Lord, it is not given and forgotten; it is invested and multiplied. God takes what is placed into His hands and uses it far beyond what we can see, ask, or imagine.
- This should encourage us. Because in our giving, our “Loaves & Fishes” becomes part of something much bigger that God is doing in the world and in the lives of others.
- Second, Paul tells us that when we give, we are not to do so reluctantly or under compulsion. Not out of guilt. Not out of pressure. Not out of obligation. But instead, we are to give from a cheerful heart.
- A heart that recognizes I am glad I have something to give. A heart that sees giving not as a burden, but as a privilege. Because giving is an invitation. An invitation to invest in eternal purposes. An invitation to become a channel through which God extends His grace and goodness to others. And that is good news for us.
- If we understand our giving this way, it changes everything. It fills our giving with joy. Because we realize that God has not only given to us, but He has also invited us to participate with Him in what He is doing.
- Paul continues in this way:

### 2 Corinthians 9:8-11 NIV

**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.**

### **Generosity Is an Expression of the Goodness of God**

- God gives to us so that we can give to others. He blesses us in all things at all times, not only to meet our needs, but also so that we will “abound in every good work.” In other words, God does not just provide *to* us, He provides *through* us.
- Every good thing that God has given us is both a gift to receive and an opportunity to respond. He shapes our hearts to be like His, and then gives us the opportunity to experience His joy in the process of giving and receiving.
- This is amazing, because it means that generosity is not something we manufacture, it is something we participate in. We are stepping into the ongoing goodness of God.
- When we do this, something happens. Not only do we give thanks to God for His generosity to us, but others begin to give thanks to God for His generosity to them.
- Our giving becomes a catalyst for worship. There is a multiplication of thanksgiving. God gives to us. We give to others. And thanksgiving rises back to God. That is a beautiful cycle of grace.
- Paul then builds on these things and continues His instructions.

### **2 Corinthians 9:12-15 NIV**

**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!**

### **Generosity Results in Multiplied Blessings**

- Paul now shows us what happens when we live this way. When we give to the work of the Lord, needs are met, both physical and spiritual, but it doesn’t stop there. There is an overflow of thanksgiving to God. People don’t just receive help; they respond in praise.
- Paul presses even deeper by showing that our giving becomes evidence that our faith is real. It demonstrates the obedience that flows from our confession of the gospel. In other words, generosity is not just something we do, it is something that reveals what we truly believe.
- We freely give because we have freely received, and in doing so, we show that our faith does not start and end with us, but that it begins and ends with God. He is the giver, and we are both the recipients and the responders.
- Then Paul adds something beautiful. As we give, others respond not only with thanksgiving, but with prayer. Their hearts go out to us. There is a deep connection that forms. Generosity strengthens not only our relationship with God, but also our relationships with one another. It builds up the body of Christ. It creates shared love, shared purpose, and shared joy.

- So when we step back and look at all of this, we begin to see that generosity is far more than we often think. It is an expression of God’s goodness to us, an opportunity to participate in His work, a source of joy in both giving and receiving, a demonstration of our faith, a means of meeting real needs, a cause for thanksgiving to God, and a bond that connects hearts together.
- It is, in every sense, a multiplied blessing. And all of this is rooted in one thing: “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.” Everything begins there, with God’s generosity to us in Christ.
- At this time, we will hear a story from the lives of Sam and Sarah Snyder as they share how they have experienced the truth of these things in their lives.

## **Conclusion**

- I am deeply grateful for the grace of God in my life and in my home. Not only has He saved us, but He has also equipped us, enabled us, and invited us into the joy of both giving and receiving. I am grateful that we have the opportunity to sow what He has first given to us, trusting that He will use it for multiplied blessings in and through our lives and into the lives of others.
- Because of what God does in us and through us, others might taste and see that the Lord is good. They too might receive His grace and, in turn, extend that same grace to others.
- My prayer is that God would move among us in a powerful way, that we would freely and cheerfully give what God has first given to us, and that we would step forward in faith and partner with Him in what He is doing in and among us. I pray that we will look back on this moment and this season with joy and satisfaction.

***Our prayer team is available to pray with you after the service, near the “prayer” sign at the front of the sanctuary, and in the prayer room next to the offices. Also, you can send your prayer request to [prayer@crosspointrockford.com](mailto:prayer@crosspointrockford.com)***

## **Questions for Growth Groups**

1. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 together. What stands out most to you from this passage, and why?
2. In verse 6, Paul uses the image of sowing and reaping. How does this change the way you think about giving? What does it mean that giving is “planting,” not just “spending”?
3. Verse 7 emphasizes giving from the heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion. What are some wrong motivations for giving that you’ve experienced or seen? What would it look like for you to give “cheerfully”?
4. According to verses 8-11, what does Paul say about God’s provision? How does trusting God as your provider affect your willingness to be generous?
5. In verses 12-14, Paul describes the results of generosity. Which result stands out most to you and why? (Meeting needs, thanksgiving to God, praise to God, strengthened relationships.)
6. Verse 13 connects generosity with “the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel.” How does giving demonstrate what we truly believe? In what ways does generosity reveal or challenge your faith?
7. Verse 15 points us to God’s “indescribable gift.” How does reflecting on what God has given us in Christ shape the way we give? What is one step you sense God leading you to take in response to this passage?