

Text: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Part 2

Title: Last Principles Guiding our Giving—and the Matter of Israel

Truth: Giving is a key part of what it means to be like Jesus.

Date/Location: Sunday July 19, 2026 at FBC

Introduction

For the past few weeks, we have been looking at the doctrine of Christian giving. We left off last time thinking about some “general rules” of giving including these two:

- A. God will *not* bless stinginess. The one who sows sparingly will sparingly reap. This is how God has designed the world—a general rule or law is that if you sow little seed, you will get little fruit. So is stinginess and lack of attention to others. By very nature the attitude that drives this behavior often puts you into a place where you find it tough to “get ahead” because the money you earn goes into a bag with holes (Haggai 1:6).
- B. God *will* bless generous giving. The Bible states the principle: the one who sows bountifully will bountifully reap. Again, this is a general principle not to be taken to the prosperity-gospel extreme, but it is true nonetheless. Once again, God does not have to have a miraculous finger on the scale for this to occur. He can bless in ways perhaps unexplainable by us, but normally the blessing comes from normal means. He has set things up so that His blessing comes in simple grace, by means of sufficient material possessions for good works, by supplying “seed and bread” so that the fruits of our righteousness can be increased.

The Old Testament supports the principle, as Paul quotes from Psalm 112:9. We also saw Prov. 22:9. We know then that it is a timeless principle that applies more broadly than to the specific situation of the Corinthians or of Israel.

We follow this timeless principle today with faith-filled confidence. It is to our advantage to give. So—give, generously and happily!

I. Giving in the Specific Corinthian Situation

But there is something interesting about this particular situation. Think about the recipients of the giving in the case of the

Corinthians. Remember Paul is making a collection for the “poor among the saints who are in *Jerusalem*.”

- A. First, they are “among the saints,” that is, Christians, brothers and sisters in the same family as we are. There is no shortage of blessing from God for supporting your fellow saints.
- B. Second, they are poor, so they have a legitimate need. The poverty is not all of their own making—a famine brought it on. Indeed, saints are expected to work and provide for themselves, but when the circumstances make that difficult if not impossible, other “family members” can step in.
- C. Third, the recipients are largely Jews. They are not just ethnically Jewish, but they are believing Jews who share the faith of Abraham. So, the Corinthians would be blessing the Jewish faithful.

This suggests another Old Testament principle comes into play: Genesis 12:3—“I will bless those who bless you.” God here promises a blessing to those who bless Abraham, and this applies to Abraham’s seed as well.

This does *not* mean we co-sign or support everything that modern Israel does in its unbelief, but it does mean that we would expect God to bless our support for believing Jewish people. God may, for the sake of His promise, also bless His people for sharing their blessings with those Jews who are not yet believing, but who may become so in the future because of our faithful testimony.

We also know that the treatment of our Lord’s Jewish “least of these brethren” (Matt. 25:40) will be a relevant issue in the future sheep and goats judgment.¹ If the Lord takes an interest in the treatment of His Jewish family at *that* time, we can expect that He is pleased with kind treatment of them *today*. Not kid-glove treatment, not give-a-pass treatment, not love-is-blind treatment, but basic Christian kindness, gospel preaching kindness, benevolent kindness when there is a need, etc.

¹ I am not suggesting that Christians will appear at the sheep and goats judgment, because I believe all Christians will be raptured before the Tribulation. It is *at the end* of the Tribulation when that judgment will occur for people alive on earth at that time.

II. Sidebar: Today's Antipathy Toward the Jews

Let me take some time to comment from a pastoral perspective on current antipathy toward the nation of Israel. Not only will these comments address a current topic in the news, but it will remind us of the reliability of God's promises and of doctrines that guide our thinking about other people. Let us think, not emote, on this.

Among professing Christians who formerly were solidly pro-Israel (and not all were to begin with) we see a distinct movement not only away from support for Israel but among some, toward a more active hostility. The occasion for this is the conflict that re-ignited on October 7, 2023, with Hamas attacking Israel and killing 1,200 people. The response by Israel has been devastating, with an estimated 73,000 Palestinians killed. I am not giving my judgment on those numbers or the particulars of the conflict, but the imbalance of casualties has caused some to recoil from Israel. Others have been primed for Jewish opposition with the Zionist occupied government theory, the USS Liberty incident, and various issues in the financial world.

In light of this, it is helpful to keep in mind several facts as we consider the question, "How should Christians think about Israel?"

- A. I do not think it is controversial to say that neither party's hands are completely clean in this situation. It will not be useful to assign percentages of blame or say that one side has done everything perfectly and justly. Neither party has been angelic in its behavior. Nor should we expect them to behave sinlessly—because by and large they are unsaved, depraved sinners.
- B. Experience or your perception of experience through the news outlets does not change the Bible's teaching one bit. The Bible still means what it always meant. For example, Jeremiah 31:31-36 says that Israel will never cease being a nation. It says that God will make a new covenant with Israel in which they will know God and He will forgive their sins. That is not going away ever. No matter how apostate Israel may seem to be, God will do a regenerating work in many of them in some future day. I thank God for that because it reminds me that no matter how bad I was, or no matter

how bad you have been, God can *still* save you and give you forgiveness and eternal life and hope and joy.

But the bigger point here is that God's promises stand secure. There is nothing that is going to stop those promises from being fulfilled—not a hardened Israel, not a repenting Israel, not another persecution of the Jews, not a (temporary) dissolution of the Jewish state, not driving Israel into the sea, nothing.

- C. Modern Israel maintains a connection with historical Israel from the Old Testament, the intertestamental period, and the first century. It is also connected to the future Israel which will be persecuted and then rescued by the Lord. Therefore, it is a mistake to say that modern Israel has *no* connection with God's promises.
- D. The modern state of Israel exists in unbelief. It is not redeemed. Its citizenry, by and large, has not repented and turned to God, much less the Messiah. It is in a state of spiritual hardness. It therefore is another mistake to say that modern Israel is the fulfillment of God's promises. The picture is not so rosy as that.
- E. Some ethnically Jewish people (descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) are and have been saved. These are part of the "remnant" as the Bible calls it. They make up a small portion of living Israelites today. We are very grateful for God's continued spiritual work in His ancient people.
- F. There will be a spiritual revival among the children of Israel in the future (Zech 12:10-14). "And so all Israel will be saved..." (Rom. 11:25-27). At that time, God's promises to the nation will be fulfilled—all the physical and spiritual promises from the OT. This is because the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11:28). Far from their disobedience locking them out of the promises of God, or God ditching His plans for Israel in favor of the church, God pre-planned to handle Jewish disobedience by creating from it an opportunity for the Gentiles to be saved, and then to return His special favor toward the Jews. Their present disobedience does not make God's word of no effect (Rom. 9:6).
- G. Hatred toward any person or group is not a Christian virtue. There are some people, even professing Christians, who have a very

negative feeling toward Israel. This is *not* a Holy Spirit-led way of thinking. Hating on Israel is not a spiritual virtue. It is a violation of our Lord's teaching to love our neighbors as ourselves, and even to love our enemies (Matt. 5:43-48). Focus instead on how to love your neighbors. Serve God instead of talking trash about Israel.

- H. Not everything Israel does is upright and able to be supported by Christians. There is room for debate on the particulars, and there is no profit in lobbing accusations against someone that they do not believe in God's promises if they are critical of this or that tactic of the Jewish nation. *I do not have to support everything modern Israel does to believe that God's promises to the nation will be fulfilled at some point in the future.* Of course, not everything Hamas does is upright and supportable by Christians either.
- I. Stereotypes are wrong. Thinking all or most Jews are Christ-killers or greedy or take-over-the-world-government-types is not something that genuine, faithful Christians do. You have to know a person before you can make a judgment about a person. Like every other group, Jewish people are individuals and must be evaluated as each is him or herself, not under some group stereotype.
- J. The best support for Israel right now is to pray for them to be saved (Rom. 10:1). Praying for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6) means praying for them to have peace with God. Their most important need is *not* peace from secular enemies but for peace with God in salvation.²
- K. For the person who claims to follow Christ but has antipathy in his or her heart toward Israel, these thoughts should cause you to pause and re-evaluate **both your big-picture theology of the Bible and Israel and your personal character**. About theology, Israel is a centerpiece of Biblical revelation. Antisemitism has no place in Christian theology or practice. In fact, anti-any-race has no place.
- L. About your character, you might think your theology is fine, but hating on others shows that your character stinks. We can easily compartmentalize and be smart about information but be very poor in our interaction with people. I could argue that the

² A helpful article: <https://daviddoranjr.substack.com/p/what-do-we-do-with-israel>

interaction piece is actually more important to God than the informational piece. God wants you to love Him and love your neighbors as yourself. If you know all doctrine and have not love, you are nothing (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love is an important doctrinal element of the Christian faith. Let us resolve to live it.

All that to say that if you bless God's people, it is a worthwhile investment of seed with a good return of blessing to be expected. Helping the poor among the saints in Jerusalem today would be the same good thing as it was in Paul's day. Even helping our friends there in the name of Christ and with hope of showing them His love so they would be saved is another good thing.

But now, we return to the topic of general principles that guide our giving.

III. Final Principles to Guide Giving

A. Psalm 112:9 teaches us that **the man who fears God will help those in need**. The entire psalm focuses on this. This man is gracious and lends, he disperses abroad, he gives to the poor. Our fear of God leads us to help man.

Who are those in need? Particularly those who depend on the Lord's people for supply so that they can minister full time. There are the poor, like in the case of the Jerusalem believers. There are those who are victims of crime. There are orphans and widows. The sick too.

B. **God will remember the man who fears Him**. The Psalm is saying such a man will be blessed, will have mighty descendants, and will have wealth. He might not have all that in the here and now, but he can count on it in eternity. His righteousness is the kind that is enduring—that is how God sees it (Psalm 112:3, 12). These people will be in everlasting remembrance—not just by men, but by God.

For someone to have an enduring righteousness, that righteousness must come from the Lord and be recognized by the Lord Himself. He is the one who helps us to be righteous, not just temporarily but also permanently and truly. God will never forget your good works, even if every one else has forgotten, and perhaps you yourself have forgotten.

C. Helping others results in worship and fellowship (9:10-14).

1. First, giving results in God giving back, so **God supplies**. In the NKJV, verse 10-11 are a prayer with “may...supply.” In the NIV, the verses are translated as a promise, without the “may” language. Paul either prays or states that the One who supplies seed and bread will supply everything the Corinthians need and multiply what they sow so that it has even more impact. It may even come back to them (8:14b).
2. **Righteous harvest**. But he is not just talking about money invested in others turning into more money. He is talking about seed sown resulting in a harvest of righteous fruits, which come from being obedient to God in the matter of sacrificial giving. These are not just blessings that come back to yourself, but blessings upon others as well (see the next points). At the same time, the giver is enriched for continuing generosity.
3. **Supplies needs of the saints**. This is a very practical part of giving. It takes from your abundance to supply someone else’s lack (8:14). This is so obvious that you could almost overlook it as you think about giving. If you are focusing on overcoming your self in giving, you might forget that there are *other people out there* who need what God can provide through you.
4. **Thanksgiving to God**. Giving also results in thanksgivings to God, which is honor and worship to our creator. Part of the thanksgiving is that the recipient thanks God for the godly obedience of the donor and the donor’s faith in the gospel. Notice this: you just took money and turned it into worship!
5. **Prayer**. The fifth result of giving in this passage is that the recipients pray for the donors. This seems quite natural to a believer, as they give thanks to God for His help, they would thank God for the donors and for their care.
6. Another result is what I will call **fellowship in the faith**. Paul says that the recipients “long for you because of the grace of God in you.” The recipient recognizes God’s grace operating in the life of the donor and cannot help but feeling a kinship and connection with them.

7. The thanksgiving and prayer and fellowship mentioned above provide further support for the thesis that giving is part of **worship**. We have already seen that giving is a grace (8:7). Giving shows that we believe God is worth our time and money. Giving is something done in conjunction with worship on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Giving causes thanksgiving in in the recipients, prayers, and strengthened partnership in the gospel. And giving is one way we worship as we obey God.

D. **God's ultimate gift teaches us to be like Him in our giving.** In verse 15 we are reminded of the ultimate gift, the one beyond words. The grace of God that is operative in the Corinthians comes from God's own tremendous gift to them and to humanity. God gave His Son to take our place, which to describe is beyond words. In response and emulation, we give of ourselves in thankful worship, in support of His cause, and in helping others. But we cannot outgive God, for He returns a blessing to each giver!

Conclusion

We have learned that if there is no sowing, there will be no reaping. But since such blessings come from reaping, how can we say "no" to sowing? Because it takes work and sacrifice? What good thing does not? Once you understand this basic principle, you will see that it is natural and incumbent upon Christians to give purposefully and cheerfully. This is just what the righteous do, and God remembers them for it. He will supply the needs of others, ensure a harvest of righteous fruit, supply our needs, and it all will result in thanksgiving, prayer, and worship.

Giving is a grace. It is something that God works in us, and that we can improve at. Christ is the ultimate example of such grace, because He gave graciously, bountifully, happily, generously, which has resulted in thanksgiving, worship, prayer, and the supply of the ultimate need of His people.

Through this series, I have learned that **God blesses giving and giving creates blessing**. And although God's gift to us in the provision of a substitutionary atonement is indescribable, it shows us that giving is one small way that we can be like Him. MAP