

WEEKLY MEDITATION

(2 Corinthians 9:6-11) In today's Epistle reading, the Apostle Paul encourages the Corinthians to share their resources in support of believers in need. The Corinthians have been very good about this collection 'for the needs of the saints' and their example has been a source of inspiration to other communities of believers. Nonetheless through this letter - and the messengers who bring it to them from him - Paul expresses concern that the Corinthian's gift should be ready and truly generous. He is writing to encourage them. He reminds them of the principle of sowing and reaping - *he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully* - and that *God loves a cheerful giver*. The truth is that God always gives us not only whatever is sufficient for our own needs - but even much more, to be used for good works. He prays that God will bless the Corinthian's giving by making their offerings fruitful in the good works for which they are being collected.

Reflecting on this passage we are struck by the affirmation of a very important and fundamental spiritual teaching: the power of such giving actually enriches the giver. Free and generous giving can shape our character in godly way. Doing good enlarges the spirit. The one who gives and does good and the one who receives are both blessed - and God is glorified in both the giving and the receiving.

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