On his third missionary journey, Paul was conducting an ambitious campaign to raise a large number of one-time gifts for a special project, humanitarian aid for the poverty-stricken Judean churches. He initially wrote the Corinthians concerning this in *1 Corinthians 16*. When they proved reluctant to give, he wrote again, giving us two incredible chapters on the subject of special offerings and Christian stewardship, *2 Corinthians 8, 9*.

Paul's concluding paragraph, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, reveal:

A truth, verse 6: The Lord states here a basic truth, a law built into the physical and moral fiber of the universe: the law of the harvest, or the law of sowing and reaping. Also, He promises to reward us (whether financially or otherwise) for our generosity in giving. This principle has ramifications in every area of life.

A directive, verse 7: One of the Bible's greatest verses on the subject of giving, and it contains multiple implications about Christian stewardship. Let's isolate some of them:

- We should all give – "Each man (every person) should give...."
- We should all decide prayerfully and thoughtfully (in our hearts) how much
  to give.
- We should follow through, carefully keeping our commitments: "Each should give what he has decided....to give".
- We should not give reluctantly.
- We should not give under compulsion. Its isn't human pressure, but divine persuasion that should guide us in determining the amount of our commitment.
- We should give cheerfully. Our attitude should be joyful as we recognize the honor of giving to God and to the expansion of His Kingdom.

A promise, verse 8-11: The powerful words "And God is able" are followed by "all"

- All grace
- All things

© Impact Stewardship

God promises to provide us with everything we need so that we'll always have enough to give back to Him.

- What does *verse 11* mean when it says we will be made rich in every way?
- Why does God want to make us rich in every way?
- What will be the final result?
- What other promises in the Bible relate to stewardship?

SUPPLEMENTAL READING

Proverbs 3:9-10; 11:25
Malachi 3:10-11
Luke 6:38

A result, verse 12-14: Our gifts to the Lord not only result in the physical expansion of the worthwhile project, they result in thanksgiving, praise, and prayers from those who will benefit. In this current building program, we must not only think of bricks and mortar, but if men and women, boys and girls. Our land and buildings are merely tools for reaching and teaching those who need the Lord. One day a host of people, presently unknown to us, will be praising and thanking God for the way in which we provided the tools God used to reach them.

A doxology, verse 15: Not only do others thank the Lord for our gifts, but we ourselves experience tremendous feelings of gratitude as we thank God for His indescribable gift. This is the only time the word "indescribable" occurs in the Bible, and it is the only one gift that defies all attempts to describe it:

© Impact Stewardship

- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.
  – *John 3:16*
- The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.
  – *Romans 6:23*
- It is by grace you have been saved, through faith....it is the gift of God.
  – *Ephesians 2:8*
- Every good and perfect gift is from above.
  – *James 1:17*

PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for Your indescribable gift. May my gift to You be as described in this passage – generous and cheerful, and may it result in overflowing expressions of thanksgiving to You because of Your surpassing grace to me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

© Impact Stewardship