**Decide in Your Heart to Give**

**By Major Glenda Davis**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Introduction

If you have food in your fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet and some spare change you are among the top 8% of the world’s wealthy.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week.[[1]](#footnote-1)

While many of us would not consider ourselves to be amongst the world’s most wealthy, when we look at it from this perspective, we realize just how blessed we are to be living in such a beautiful resourceful country. How the Lord has blessed us!

Each year, we are given the privilege of sharing those blessings with others in countries that we partner with in ministry. This year our focus is on Malawi and Mozambique, both of which are amongst the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world with low life expectancy.

Our Scripture passage teaches us the importance of giving with a willing heart. In my Bible, the title for this section in 2 Corinthians 9 is, “Generosity Encouraged.” 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, “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.”

Why should we give? There are several reasons; we will focus on four:

1. The Lord requires it of us. One of our responsibilities in following Jesus includes giving to others.

In Matthew 5:42 Jesus says, “Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.”

* + - * 1. In Matthew 19:21, Jesus told the rich young ruler, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” The young man was asking how to inherit eternal life.

While Jesus was not telling Him that He could earn eternal life, He was teaching the young man the importance of self-denial and of loving his neighbour as a demonstration of his commitment to follow Jesus.

* + - * 1. In Matthew 14 in the account of the feeding of the 5,000 the disciples wanted to send the hungry crowds away. However, in verse 16 Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” In spite of the limited resources the disciples had (just five loaves and two fish), Jesus accepted what they had to offer and multiplied it, thereby sharing the blessing exponentially.
1. The Lord blesses us when we give. Even though it might appear to be a sacrifice for us to give, He always multiplies the blessing back to us.

Luke 6:38 says, “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

* 1. “J.L. Kraft, head of the Kraft Cheese Corporation, who had given approximately 25% of his enormous income to Christian causes for many years, said, ‘The only investment I ever made which has paid consistently increasing dividends is the money I have given to the Lord.’

“J.D. Rockefeller said, ‘I never would have been able to tithe the first million dollars I ever made if I had not tithed my first salary, which was $1.50 per week.’”[[2]](#footnote-2)

* 1. Going back to our passage in 2 Corinthians 9, verses 8 – 10, it says, “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. As it is written: ‘They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.’ 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.” God is able to bless us abundantly and He does. He supplies all that we need.
1. Our generosity brings glory to God. When others see what we are doing in His Name, they will glorify God.

Matthew 5:16 says, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

* 1. Our passage in 2 Corinthians 9:12-13 says, “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. 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.” People praise God because of the demonstration of the gospel of Christ being lived out in our lives through generosity.

* 1. When we give to Partners in Mission, we are supporting the work of The Salvation Army in other countries. We are enabling them to do what the Lord has called them to do. Our gifts are often an answer to prayer for them, and they glorify God because of it.
1. God set the example. He showed us how to give. We love because He first loved us. We give because He first gave to us.

James 1:17 says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

* 1. He gives good gifts to those who ask. Matthew 7:11 says, “If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” As imperfect humans, we give good gifts to our friends, our family members and even to strangers. How much more does a loving God who is perfect give good gifts.
	2. “How Much More”, a song from the musical *Hosea* by John Gowans and John Larsson says,

If human hearts are often tender, and human minds can pity know,
If human love is touched with splendor, and human hands compassion show,
Then how much more shall God our Father in love forgive, in love forgive!
Then how much more shall God our Father our wants supply, and none deny!

* 1. God gave us the ultimate gift. He gave His only Son so that we could live.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Mark 10:45, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

2 Corinthians 9:15 “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” This indescribable gift is the gift of His Son, Jesus.

Conclusion

As we decide in our hearts what to give, let us allow the Lord to speak into that decision and remind us why we ought to be generous. Let us give with willing hearts to our brothers and sisters and give as giving unto the Lord.

In Matthew 25:40, Jesus said, “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

1. Author unknown [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. W. A. Criswell, A Guidebook for Pastors, p. 154, http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/g/giving.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-2)