

**A Model**  
**First Century**  
**Stewardship**  
**Program**

Stewardship as Revealed in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9

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***Purpose***

To give the Holy Spirit of God the opportunity to teach us, and to apply to our own hearts—from a study of God’s Holy Word—some basic truths about a Christian’s stewardship of his treasures.

To encourage us to be more faithful, committed, joyful stewards of all that our God has given to us.

***Overview***

- Session 1: What is *Christian* Stewardship?
- Session 2: Stewardship Encouragement (2 Corinthians 8:1-15)
- Session 3: Stewardship Leadership (2 Corinthians 8:16–9:5)
- Session 4: Stewardship Blessings (2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

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## Session 4: Stewardship Blessings (2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

### Introduction

In this final part of 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, Paul speaks of four specific blessings God attaches to generous, whole-hearted giving:

- The giver is blessed.
- People are helped.
- God is glorified.
- Bonds of Christian fellowship are strengthened.

Christians don't give in order to be blessed; but God does assure his children that when they go his way—also in the stewardship of giving—his blessings will follow.

### 9:6-11 The giver is blessed

*<sup>6</sup>Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>7</sup>Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. <sup>9</sup>As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.*

9:6      What promise does God attach to generous giving (see also Proverbs 3:9,10; Malachi 3:10-12)?

9:7      How should the Corinthians determine how much to give?

What might lead them to give "reluctantly" or "under compulsion"?

9:8-11    How can one afford to give generously?

“He” (v. 9) is the grateful believer. This is a quotation from Psalm 112, which speaks of the grateful believer responding to God's generosity by generously sharing these gifts with others.

### **9:12,13 People are helped and God is glorified**

*<sup>12</sup>This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. <sup>13</sup>Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men 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.*

The following are two further blessed results of this service for the saints:

- The needs of God's people (in Jerusalem) will be supplied (9:12a).
- The Jerusalem believers will praise and thank God for this expression of Christian love on the part of the Corinthians (9:12b,13).

### **9:14,15 Bonds of Christian Fellowship Are Strengthened**

*<sup>14</sup>And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. <sup>15</sup>Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!*

9:14 Another blessed result is that the bond of faith between the Jerusalem believers, largely Jews, and the believers in Asia Minor and Greece, largely Gentiles, will be greatly strengthened.

9:15 What is this “indescribable gift” of God (see 8:9)?

### **For Reflection and Discussion**

1. 9:6 Agree or disagree? It is proper to tell God's people that if they give, God will give to them.
2. 9:6 Agree or disagree? True Christian giving is sacrificial in nature.
3. 9:7 Agree or disagree? A passage such as this suggests the value of “pledging” offerings (see also 9:5, “the generous gift you had promised”).

Agree or disagree? It is wrong for a church to suggest to its members how much to give.

4. 9:12-14 Note how the same blessed results occur today when we cheerfully give from what God has given to us.
  
5. From our study of 2 Corinthians 8 and 9:
  - Why would Paul spend two chapters talking about the stewardship of money without ever mentioning the word *money*?
  
  - Should pastors today preach about money?
  
  - Are stewardship programs necessary?
  
  - Is it proper to focus a stewardship program on needs?
  
  - Where does the church budget fit into stewardship?
  
  - Comment on this statement: “If all of us would increase our giving by just 1%, we would be able to balance the budget.”
  
6. Look over 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 and gather as many principles for giving as you can find in these chapters. List them below.

- **Suggested Reading**

Johann P. Meyer, *Ministers of Christ: A Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, especially the comments on chapters 8 and 9 (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1963).

\*David J. Valleskey, *The People's Bible: Second Corinthians*, especially the comments on chapters 8 and 9 (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992).

**Two excellent books on Christian stewardship, if you can lay your hands on them:**

\*Waldo Werning, *The Stewardship Call* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965).

\*Carl W. Berner Sr., *The Power of Pure Stewardship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970).

**The following articles in *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*:**

David P. Kuske, "Principles of Stewardship in First Corinthians 16:1,2 and Second Corinthians 8:1-9," Vol. 84, No. 4 (Fall 1987), pp. 248-269.

Wayne D. Mueller, "Lessons on How to Encourage Christian Giving and Administer an Offering—Exegesis and Application of 2 Corinthians 8:10-24," Vol. 85, No. 1 (Winter 1988), pp. 36-52.

Richard D. Balge, "Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 9:1-7," Vol. 85, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 220-229.

Armin J. Panning, "Be Cheerful Givers—2 Corinthians 9:8-15," Vol. 86, No. 2 (Spring 1989), pp. 131-142.

\*David J. Valleskey, "Christian Stewardship of Possessions—Compelled by the Love of Christ," Vol. 87, No. 1 (Winter 1990), pp. 13-37. A summary essay following seven stewardship studies in *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, including the four listed above.

\*John Jeske, "Christian Stewardship Is Taking God at His Word," Vol. 92, No. 3 (Summer 1995), pp. 198-209 and Vol. 92, No. 4 (Fall 1995), pp. 243-262. Jeske emphasizes the importance of using both law and gospel in stewardship training.

\*More suited to a layperson, since they do not require a knowledge of Greek.