

Studies In Second Corinthians

(II Corinthians 9:1-15)

1. As we begin chapter nine, are we changing subjects from what we learned in chapter eight?

No, we are continuing to study about ministering to the saints: *“For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you”* (II Corinthians 9:1).

- Still talking about ministering to the saints (II Corinthians 8:4).
- “Superfluous” (Strong’s # 4053) means “more abundant; exceeding”.

2. In what way did the Corinthians provoke many?

Through their zeal: *“For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many”* (II Corinthians 9:2).

- The Corinthians certainly were minded to do this work (II Corinthians 8:11).
- Their zeal in such was a motivator for others as we all should be in the work of the Lord (I Thessalonians 1:7-9; cf. Hebrews 10:24).
- In fact, consider this on an individual level: *“(7) In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, (8) Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”* (Titus 2:7-8).

3. What did Paul do to make sure his boasting of the Corinthians was not in vain?

Sent brethren to be sure they were really ready to help the needy saints: *“(3) Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: (4) Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. (5) Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness”* (II Corinthians 9:3-5).

- Paul boasted of the work of his brethren (II Corinthians 7:14).
- We should not boast of ourselves (James 4:16), but another praising you is not altogether bad (Proverbs 27:2).
- Yet, though Paul boasted of them, actions speak louder than words (Matthew 7:16, Matthew 7:20, and Titus 1:16).
- Take of their bounty (Proverbs 22:9).

4. What motivation is there in giving bountifully?

The return: *"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully"* (II Corinthians 9:6).

- Paul frequently used the statement, "this I say": I Corinthians 1:12, I Corinthians 7:29, I Corinthians 15:50, Galatians 3:17, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 4:17, and Colossians 2:4.
- Helping the brethren bountifully (Psalms 41:1-3, Proverbs 19:17, Luke 6:38, and Hebrews 6:10).
- As always, God is a "reap what you sow" rewarder (Galatians 6:7-9).

5. Should one be forced into giving?

No: *"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver"* (II Corinthians 9:7).

- Giving is purposed or planned and cannot be forced (Proverbs 3:9).
- Cheerful giving speaks the heart of one who loves to help more than receive (Acts 20:35).
- Giving is no one else's business either (Matthew 6:1-4).

6. When doing right, can Christians expect to have sufficiency in all things?

Yes, and such is non-miraculous with the emphasis on sufficiency: *"(8) And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (9) (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. (10) Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)"* (II Corinthians 9:8-10).

- Spiritual blessings are what comes from God (Proverbs 10:22).
- That being said, giving people will not lack (Proverbs 28:27).
- We should abound to good works (Titus 2:11-14).
- "As it is written..." (Psalms 112:9).
- Don't forget that everything we reap started with what God has given us to work with both spiritually (I Peter 4:11) and physically (Genesis 1:11-12 and Hebrews 6:7).

7. Who were they all thankful to for their bountifulness?

God: *"Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God"* (II Corinthians 9:11).

- Our works should bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16 and John 15:8).
- What people see in us should cause them to thank God (II Thessalonians 1:3).

8. When helping brethren in need, should you help them to just barely get by?

No, in abundance: *“For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God” (II Corinthians 9:12).*

- We can help our brethren to be full, and thus bear fruit on our own account (**Philippians 4:13-18**).

9. Who is supposed to get the glory when Christians take upon themselves the fellowship of helping one another?

God: *“Whiles by the experiment of this ministraton they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men” (II Corinthians 9:13).*

- As noted in the notes on the previous verse, God is to be thanked and glorified (**Acts 4:21**).
- The word experiment: Strong’s number 1382; “dokimē”: “approved, tried character exhibited in the contribution” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*; page 154). “The state of disposition of that which has been tried and approved, approved by character or temper” (*The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*; Wesley J. Perschbacher; page 105). “Proof, trying” (*Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Bible*; page 319).
 - Other translations: “proof” (NKJV); “proving” (ASV 1901).
 - Tyndale’s Word Study Concordance shows “dokimē” in the following verses (page 160): **Romans 5:4** (experience; *twice*); **II Corinthians 2:9** (proof); **II Corinthians 8:2** (trial); **II Corinthians 13:3** (proof); **Philippians 2:22** (proof).
- I say fellowship for this reason: “Distribution” (KJV): Strong’s number 2842; “koinonia”: “A gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*; page 352). “Fellowship, partnership, participation, communion, aid, relief; contribution in aid” (*The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*; Wesley J. Perschbacher; page 242). “A sharing, participation” (*Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Bible*; page 260).
 - Other translations: “sharing” (NKJV); “contribution” (ASV 1901).
 - **Acts 2:42** (fellowship); **Romans 15:26** (contribution); **I Corinthians 1:9** (fellowship); **II Corinthians 10:16** (communion; *twice*); **II Corinthians 6:14** (communion); **II Corinthians 8:4** (fellowship); **II Corinthians 9:13** (distribution); **II Corinthians 13:14** (communion); **Galatians 2:9** (fellowship); **Ephesians 3:9** (fellowship); **Philippians 1:5** (fellowship); **Philippians 2:1** (fellowship); **Philippians 3:10** (fellowship); **Philemon v. 6** (communication); **Hebrews 13:16** (communicate); **I John 1:3** (fellowship; *twice*); **I John 1:6** (fellowship); **I John 1:7** (fellowship).

10. Did those being helped by the Corinthians pray and thank God for the help they were getting?

Yes: *“(14) And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. (15) Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (II Corinthians 9:14-15).*

- This tells us that the Corinthians were only helping faithful Christians for God does not hear the prayers of sinners (**Proverbs 28:9, John 9:31, and I Peter 3:12**).