

# God Loves a Cheerful Giver

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Date: 23 November 1997

Preacher: Hilary Roath

[ 0 : 00 ] This is the AM service on Thanksgiving Day the 23rd of November 1997.

The preacher is Hilary Roweth. The sermon is entitled God Loves a Cheerful Giver and is from 2 Corinthians chapter 9 verses 6 to 15.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. One of the major ministries of Paul's third missionary journey was to take up a special relief offering for the poor Christians in Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, the Corinthians were not doing their part. Because like most people, they had made promises but they failed to keep them.

In fact, an entire year had gone past since they had promised. Maybe Paul thought it would be difficult to get the Corinthians to participate.

[ 1 : 17 ] So he lifted his appeal to them to the highest spiritual level possible. He taught them that their giving was in response to God's grace in their lives.

It seems strange that we Christians need encouragement to give.

And God has given us so much. And God had enriched those Corinthians in wonderful ways.

And yet they were hesitant to share what they had with others. So they were not accustomed to giving with grace.

So Paul had to explain it to them. So Paul sent Titus and some others to Corinth to stir them up. To stir them up to share in the offering.

[ 2 : 27 ] But far more important than the money itself was the spiritual benefit that would come as they shared what they had in response to God's grace in their lives.

What was more important was the spiritual benefit that they would receive. When they shared what they had with others.

But in response to God's working in their lives. Paul had written to the church before and told them how to take up the collection.

So there wasn't any excuse for the delay. Paul wanted the entire contribution to be ready when his finance committee arrived.

And Paul obviously didn't see anything wrong or unspiritual about asking people to give. He didn't tell them how much to give.

[ 3 : 35 ] He just told them that he expected them to keep their promise. He didn't tell them how much to give. He didn't tell them how much to give. And when you think about it. When we sign up for a new telephone or even a new car.

We pay and agree to pay certain amount each week. Or each month. And so if it's acceptable to make financial commitments for things like telephones and cars and credit cards.

Then it ought to be acceptable to make a commitment to the work of the Lord. We read in verse 6. The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. And the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. And we see this operating every day in our lives.

The farmer who sows lots and lots of seeds has a better chance of having a bigger harvest. The investor who invests large sums of money will usually collect large dividends.

[ 4 : 51 ] The more we invest into the work of the Lord. The more fruit will be evident in our lives. And in verse 7 we read.

Each one of you must give as you've made up your mind. Not reluctantly or under compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver.

Motive makes absolutely no difference to the farmer. They grow. If they grow good seed. And they have good weather.

They will reap a harvest. Whether or not they are working for profit. Or for pleasure. Or pride. But it's not that way with Christians.

Our motive for giving. Or for anything else for that matter. Is vitally important. Our motive is vitally important. Our giving must come from our hearts.

[ 6 : 03 ] And the motive in our heart must please God. We must not be sad givers.

Givers who give grudgingly. Or mad givers. Those who give because they have to. But we should be glad givers.

Who cheerfully share what we have. Because we have experienced the grace of God in our lives. We give cheerfully.

Because we have experienced God's grace in our lives. It has been said. That cheerful givers.

Do not travel in large herds. And many people look on giving. As a painful procedure. But it should be.

[ 7 : 00 ] A joyous experience. Giving should not be considered. A begrudged obligation. But it is rather an opportunity.

For us to join with God. For us to join with God. In ministering to people. So why is it that we don't. Look on giving. As a joyous privilege. Is it possible. That because we are perhaps.

So distant. Or so far away from God. In our relationship to him. That we look for our security. In material possessions.

Do we look for our security. In material possessions. I would like to introduce you. To a couple that I know.

[ 8 : 03 ] And they have no shortage. Of material possessions. Their names in fact. Are Mr and Mrs Thing. Mr and Mrs Thing.

Are a very pleasant. And successful couple. At least that's the verdict. Of those people. Who tend to measure success. By a thing-o-meter.

And when the thing-o-meter. Is put to work. In the life of Mr and Mrs Thing. Mrs. The result. Is startling. There is Mr Thing.

Sitting down. On a luxurious. And a very expensive thing. Almost hidden. By a large number. Of other things. Things to sit on.

Things to sit at. Things to cook on. Things to eat from. All shiny and new. Things. Things. Things. Things to clean with.

[ 9 : 04 ] Things to wash with. Things to clean. And things to wash. And things to amuse. And things to give pleasure. And things to watch. And things to play.

Things for the long hot summer. And things for the cold short winter. Things for the big thing. In which they live. And things for the garden.

And things for the lounge. And things for the kitchen. And things for the bedroom. And things on four wheels. And things on two wheels. And things to put on top.

Of the four wheels. And things to pull behind. The four wheels. And things to add to the interior. Of the four wheels. Things. Things. Things.

And there in the middle. A Mr. and Mrs. thing. Smiling and pleased. As punch with things. Thinking of more things.

[ 9 : 58 ] To add to their things. Secure. In their castle. Of things. Mr. and Mrs. thing. May be secure.

In their castle. Of things. But that is not. The end of the story. Because I just want you to know. Mr. and Mrs. thing.

That your things. Can't last. They are going. To pass away. There is going. To be an end.

To them. Maybe you will just pass them off. To the second hand. Thing dealer. Or maybe they will wind up. In a mass. Of mangled metal. Being towed off.

To a thing yard. And what about the things. In your house. Well it is time for bed now. Put out the cat. Make sure you lock the door.

[ 10 : 54 ] So that some thing taker. Doesn't come and take your things. And that's the way. Life goes. Doesn't it. And someday.

When you die. They only put one thing. In the box. You. When we find our security.

In material possessions. It is impossible. For us. To see giving. As anything. But a threat.

To our security. And this definitely. Would take the joy. Out of giving. Because. It causes us. To have a protective.

Attitude. To our. Towards our possessions. But when. A Christian. Finds. Security. In the grace.

[11:53] And the goodness. And the faithfulness. Of God. It then. Becomes. Possible. For us. To be. Cheerful. In our giving.

Why. Does God love. A cheerful giver. Because. In a cheerful giver. God. Sees. The reflection. Of his.

Own nature. And character. Because. God. Is an extremely. Generous. Giver. God. Gives. Freely. Perfectly.

Wisely. Appropriately. Practically. And. Graciously. He. Gave us. His. Only. Son. And. As a. Parent. Delights. In the. Good. Traits. That. Of. Themselves. That. They. See. In. Their. Children. So. Does. God. Rejoice. When.

[12:53] He. Sees. His. Own. Nature. And. Character. Coming. Through. In. The. Lives. Of. His. Children. And.

In. A. Cheerful. Giver. God. Sees. A. Reflection. Of. His. Son. Jesus. Christ. Jesus. Didn't. Come. Into. This. World. To.

Receive. Jesus. Came. To. Be. A. Giver. Jesus. Gave. In. Many. Many. Ways. Healed. The. Sick. He. Loved. Those. Who.

Were. Unloved. By. Society. He. Gave. Peace. Of. Mind. To. Those. Who. Were. In. Turmoil. He. Grants. Forgiveness. To. Those. Who. Are. Sinful. He.

Gave. His. Life. As. A. Ransom. For. Many. Jesus. Said. To. His. Disciples. Freely. You.

[13:45] Have. Received. Freely. Give. He. Making. Clear. Here. What. Our. Proper.

Response. To. God's. Gifts. To. Us. Should. Be. Freely. You. Have. Received. Freely. Give. And. Paul. Quotes. Jesus. In. Acts. 20. 35. It. Is. More. Blessed. To. Give. Than. To. Receive. It. Is. More. God. Like. To.

Be. A. Giver. Than. A. Receiver. And. God. Loves. A. Cheerful. Giver. Because. He. Sees. The. Holy. Spirit. Working.

Being. Allowed. To. Work. In. Us. The. Holy. Spirit. Is. Given. To. Us. To. Reproduce. Within. Us.

[14:39] The. Nature. And. The. Character. Of. Jesus. Christ. Christ.

The. Because. Without. The. Gifts. Of. The. Spirit. To. Every. Christian. The. Church. Would. Be. Lifeless. God.

Wants. Us. To. Be. His. Workers. He. Wants. Us. To. Be. His. Givers. He. Wants. Us. To. Be. His. Helpers. He. Wants. To. Use. Us. He. Wants. Us. Us.

To. Be. Channels. Through. Which. He. Can. Pour. His. Blessing. Out. Into. The. World. But. Without. Question. The. Gift. Of. Ourselves. To. God. Is. The. First. And. Foremost. Gift. That. We. Can. Give.

[15:38] And. It. Is. The. One. Gift. That. No. One. Else. Can. Give. This. Gift. Of. Ourselves.

Must. Precede. Our. Gifts. Of. Time. And. Of. Talent. And. Of. Treasure. But. Once. That. Commitment. Of. Ourselves. To. Jesus. Christ. In. Response. To. What. He's. Done. For. Us. Has. Been. Made. Then. Every.

Gift. Of. Time. Every. Gift. Of. Talent. Every. Gift. Of. Treasure. Shows. In. A. Tangible. Way. The. Gift. Of. Ourselves. To. God. Later. On. In. The. Service. We. Will. Sing. A. Hymn. And. The. Sides. People. Will.

[16:31] Take. Up. An. Offering. And. This. Act. Of. Offering. Which. Is. Part. Of. Our. Weekly. Service. Our. Weekly. Worship. Together.

Act. Out. In. A. Tangible. Way. The. Giving. Of. Ourselves. Sometimes. We. Call. It.

A. Collection. But. It. Is. Not. A. Collection. Build. Collectors. Collect. Christians. Give. They. Give. Because. Our.

Lord. Has. Given. To. Us. Us. Probably. This. Offering. Could. Be. More. Easily. And. Efficiently. Received. Through.

Electronic. Transfer. From. Our. Accounts. But. This. Is. Not. Something. To. Be. Received. Rather. It.

[17:24] Is. A. Conscious. Chosen. Act. An. Act. Of. Offering. Ourselves. We.

Offer. Ourselves. Our. Time. And. Our. Talent. And. Our. Treasure. We. Offer. Our. Gifts. In. Response.

To. God's. Gift. To. Us. Giving. With. A. Proper. Attitude. Is. Crucial.

And. We. Read. In. 1. Corinthians. 13. 3. If. I. Give. Away. All. My. Possessions. To. The. Poor. But.

I. Do. Not. Have. Love. I. Gain. Nothing. I. Gain. Nothing. It. Hard. To.  
 [18:16] Imagine. Anything. More. Worthy. Than. Giving. Everything. To. The. Poor. But. If. It.  
 Done. With. The. Wrong. Attitude. If. It. Is. Done.

Without. Love. There. Is. No. Benefit. To. The. Giver. Certainly. God. Can.  
 Bless. A. Gift. That. Is. Given. Out. Of. A. Sense. Of. Duty. But. God. Cannot. Bless. The. Giver.  
 Unless. The. Heart.  
 Is. Right. God. Wants. To. Bless. The. Giver. As. Well. As. The. Gift. He. Wants. To. Bless. The.  
 Giver. As.  
 Well. As. The. Gift. Our. Giving. Is. Not. God's. Way. Of. Raising. Money. God. It. It. God's. Way. Of.  
 Raising.

[19:07] People. To. The. Likeness. Of. His. Son. And. For. Us. To. Develop. To. Be. The. People.  
 He. Wants. Us. To. Be. We. Must. Learn.

How. To. Share. Our. Possessions. Freely. If. We. Don't. Our. Inbred. Selfishness. Will. Grow. To.  
 Dominate. Us. And. Extreme. Example. Of. That. Is. Howard. Hughes. And. In. His. Youth. Hughes.  
 Was. A. Typical.  
 Playboy. With. A. Passion. For. Parties. And. Beautiful. Women. And. An. Aversion. To. Giving. As.  
 He. Grew. Older. He.  
 Turned. An. Inheritance. Into. A. Vast. Fortune. And. He. Became. Even. More. Closed. Fisted. He.  
 Let. His. Wealth. Create.

[20:00] An. Ever. Increasing. Barrier. Between. Himself. And. Other. People. And. In. His. Last.  
 Years. He. Lived. In. Seclusion. He. Became. A. Recluse.

Whose. Life. Was. Devoted. To. The. Avoidance. Of. Germs. And. The. Avoidance. Of. People.  
 God.  
 Wants. Us. To. Share. What. We. Have. Freely. But. Let's. Imagine.  
 That. You. Are. Sitting. In. Your. Car. At. An. Intersection. You. Sitting. Closest. Your. Car. Is.  
 Closest. To. The. Curb. And.  
 On. The. Curb. There. Is. A. Charity. Collector. Shaking. Their. Tin. In. Your. Direction. And. Then.  
 You. Go. Home.

[20:53] And. Then. You. Slump. Into. The. Chair. And. You. Begin. Sorting. Through. The. Nail.  
 There. Is. A. Bunch. Of. Bills. Some. Ads. And. Two. Newsletters. One. Is. Slick. And. Professional.  
 The.

Other. Has. Writing. Crowded. Into. Every. Corner. Of. This. Foreign. Aerogram. Both. These.  
 Letters. Are. Asking. For. Money. Money. To. Help. With. Some.  
 Good. Cause. Like. Buying. Bibles. For. China. Or. Feeding. Starving. People. In. North. Africa.  
 And. Then. You. Flip. Open. The. Magazine. And.  
 Then. There. Invariably. Is. A. Small. Brown. Girl. With. Large. Eyes. Just. For. The. Cost. Of. Your.  
 Morning. Coffee. Break. The. Magazine.  
 Ad. Says. You. Could. Feed. Her. Regularly. How. Do. You. Respond. To. All. This. Well.

[21:47] Some. People. Respond. By. Becoming. Hardened. To. All. Appeals. They. Insulate.  
 Themselves. Or. They. Just. Look. The. Other.

Way. After. All. It. Takes. Only. An. Effort. Of. Will. To. Forget. That. Expression. On. That. Little.  
 Girl's. Face. Or. You. Sit. In. Your. Car. And. Look. Straight. Ahead.  
 Willing. Those. Lights. To. Change. When. We. Are. Continually. Bombarded. With. Need. We.  
 Either. Become. Hardened. Or. Overwhelmed. And. Even. If. We. Limit. Our. Giving. To. The.  
 Church. More. Needs. Are.  
 Presented. To. Us. Than. We. Can. Respond. To. How. Do. We. Stay. Tender. To. Needs. Of. The.  
 Needs. Of. Others. And.

[22:39] Open. To. The. Lord. In. Our. Giving. Well. I. Think. The. Only. Way. To. Remain. Sane.  
 And. Solvent. And. Soft. In. Our. Hearts. Is. To. Ask. God. To. Direct. Our. Giving. To.  
 Ask. God. To. Direct. Our. Giving. The. First. Step. In. Learning. How. To. Give. Is. To. Ask. God.  
 Ask. Him. To.  
 Give. Us. A. Heart. Of. Love. But. To. Give. Consistently. Out. Of. A. Heart. Of. Love. Is. Not. Easy.  
 Either. And. I.  
 Believe. The. Only. Way. To. Do. This. Is. To. Recognize. That. Each. Gift. Is. Actually. Given. To.  
 God. Himself. A.

[ 23 : 32 ] And. We. Read. In. Numbers. 18. Verse. 24. For. The. They. Offer. Is. An. Offering. To. The.

The. Tithe. They. Offer. Is. An. Offering. To. The. Lord. If. Our. Giving. Is. Just. To. A. Church. A. Ministry. Or. A. Needy. Person. It. Is. Only. Charity. but if our giving is to God it becomes an act of worship if our giving is to God it becomes an act of worship when the offering plate is passed to you you need to consciously remind yourself that you are giving your gifts to God himself then you will become a cheerful giver and God will take a special delight in you and he will increase your capacity and he will increase your ability to be a giver and he will increase your joy in giving and then your giving will become an exciting adventure  
Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen