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## *Devotion for August 31, 2021*

*"Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:6*

**I often have people tell me at the end of the church service that it seemed as if the sermon was directed at them!** It wasn't intended to be personal, of course - if I knew exactly what was troubling a particular person in their heart, I would ask to meet with them privately, not shout it from the pulpit. Of course, though, too, the preaching of God's Word is always personal in that it cuts at sin through the law and points you to the Savior whom you need.

I'm writing about this for you because for me the verse offered above and indeed, all of today's reading from 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9 is extremely personal. For starters, I've struggled to be a "good" giver. Life circumstances make the home budget tight. No, you don't get money from the government in order to help with a disabled child and if your income is what most would consider middle class, you are constantly left to fend for yourself. It's tough.

Of late, though, the Loughran family has taken the words of a wise parishioner to heart, namely that it's fun to give to the work of Christ's church. At the start of the COVID pandemic, we signed up for a direct withdrawal to Grace so that we tithe right off the top of each paycheck that we receive.

Rather than being impersonal, we've seen how personal it is. Whenever we review our bank account, we are able to see that offering going to Grace and thank God that He has given us means to support the work being done by His church. It's fun to give and that fun leads us to look for opportunities to give more as we are able.

In the end, I would suggest that this is the bounty that Paul had in mind when he penned this chapter. It's not that we have gotten rich financially because of our giving, it's that we find ourselves more at peace with God as our hearts are turned by Him in His Son, Jesus, to attend to the needs of others.

My prayer for you today would be that you might find this same joy of giving in your life. Reading 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter nine is a great place to start. Reading the entire book is even better, though, as by it the Holy Spirit is at work to give you the gift of faith in your Lord Jesus Christ who went to the cross to die for your sin and to give to you the life everlasting. Praise be His Holy Name forever. Amen!

*God's blessings,  
Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor  
Grace Lutheran Church & School*