



The Faithful Steward

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Incredible Outrageous Hilarious Generosity

**Acts 20:35,
"It is more
blessed to
give than to
receive."**

EVERY MAN
ACCORDING AS HE
PURPOSETH IN HIS
HEART, [SO LET HIM
GIVE]; NOT
GRUDGINGLY, OR OF
NECESSITY: FOR
GOD LOVETH A
CHEERFUL GIVER.
2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

Giving to the Lord should be a pleasure, fun and hilarious activity because God loves a cheerful giver.

God wants us to give *happily*, because that is how God Himself gives! True giving *comes* from a happy heart, and it also *gives* us a happy heart. That is what I call it Incredible Outrageous Hilarious Generosity.

It does not hurt to give...it is "hilarous" to give. Do not wait to give until it hurts to give, give until it's hilarous. That is what the I call, Incredible Outrageous Hilarous Generosity.

Sir Henry Taylor, a British author states, "For the essence of generosity is in self sacrifice." An anonymous writer also acknowledged, "Generosity is always putting other people's wants and needs before your own."

The Corinthian church was loaded with potential and talent. It had numerous spiritual gifts and excellent teachers. It had money and influence. It was a very exiting and contagious church. But this church was not exempt from problems.

Miles from Corinth was the Jerusalem church struggling financially. The mother church was economically strapped. Their need for assistance was severe. That is why Paul was involved in raising funds for them.

Even though the Macedonian Christian were poor, unlike the Corinthians, they gave generously and abundantly.

About a year later, the Corinthians had promised to help the Jerusalem church. Part of the reason why Paul wrote the second letter to the Corinthians was to remind them to fulfill the commitment that they had made a few months letter.

Using an age-old agricultural analogy, Paul writes, *"he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also*

reap bountifully."¹ Paul is laying down an important stewardship principle: If you plant a little you will sow little. If you plant a lot seed, the harvest will be in abundance. "Giving is not a sacrifice, but rather a sowing."²

Paul continues, "Let each one do just as he has proposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion..."³ The word *grudgingly* can also be translated reluctantly or "not give as out of sorrow."⁴ It gives the idea of holding onto something because you don't want to give it up.

The Macedonians gave joyfully or as the text puts it, with "overflowing joy." They were more than happy to help others. Or as Vanenargues declared, "Generosity gives assistance, rather than advice."

They also gave generously. Ellen White reminds us in this incredible statement: "An occasional Christianity, an occasional generosity, an occasional doing of good deeds, is not the Christianity that will accomplish the work for which God calls."⁵

They gave cheerfully. Generosity prompted by joy. In Greek the word for cheerful is the term *hilaros* from where we get the English word *hilarious*. It is such an unusual word it appears only here in the New Testament.⁶

The word hilarious can also be translated as, "joyful, lively, animated, having good spirits, full

of life, moderately joyful."⁷ It also means "propitious, merry" and

"gracious."⁸

A literal translation of the text would be: "For God loves the cheerful/hilarious giver." This is the most usual significance of the word, "expressing a

Generosity begets generosity. Selfishness begets selfishness. {1T 149.4}

"...There can be no true generosity where it is not practiced" (5T 400)

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¹ 2 Corinthians 9:6

² People's New Testament Commentary, Commentary on 2 Corinthians 9:7

³ 2 Corinthians 9:7

⁴ A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, Volume IV, page 248.

⁵ Ellen White, Manuscript Releases, Volume 11, page 46

⁶ A. T. Robertson, page 248.

⁷ King James Dictionary.

⁸ Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

“As a class, Seventh-day Adventists are a generous and warmhearted people” (5T 386)

degree of animation less than mirth and jollity.”⁹ It means “prompt to do anything”¹⁰

The cheerful giver “carries the idea of one who is uproariously delighted to give... Living by the Law of Hilarious Generosity, one does not give under the whiplash of necessity, complaining inwardly or being bitter in any way. Rather, one is thankful to even be able to give.”¹¹

Do you know why God prizes the hilarious giver?

God prizes the hilarious giver because that person gives generously. The individual may have no special possession, gift, skill or amount of money that he holds unto. “When the heart is full of cheer, it is amazing how it causes the pockets to turn inside out.”¹²

To be *generous*, in the Biblical idea of the word, has more to do with our *attitude* in giving than with the *amount* that we give.

Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need.

Acts of generosity and benevolence were designed by God to keep the hearts of the children of men tender and sympathetic, and to encourage in them an interest and affection for one another in imitation of the Master, who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. The law of tithing was founded upon an enduring principle and was designed to be a blessing to man. {3T 547.1}

This type of giving is prompted by the Holy Spirit. It is God working in your life and in your pocket book. By nature I am very selfish. But God’s nature is extremely generous. I look out for myself; God is on the lookout for others. I don’t want to help others; God wants to help others. I don’t want to share; God is in

The Macedonians gave:

Joyfully – “overflowing joy” (2 Cor. 8:2)
Generously – “rich generosity (2 Cor. 8:2)
Sacrificially – “beyond their ability” (2 Cor. 8:3)
Willingly – “of their own accord”(2 Cor. 8:3)
Eagerly – “begging us with much entreaty”(2 Cor. 8:4)
Bountifully – vr. 5
Spiritually – “they first gave themselves to the Lord.”(2 Cor. 8:5)
Deliberately – “according to the purpose of his heart” (Cor. 9:7
Cheerfully – “for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7)
Freely – “not grudgingly” (2 Cor. 9:7)
Gracefully – 2 Cor. 9:7

the sharing business. My selfish nature does not want to give; God’s nature is to constantly give

God wants us to give *happily*, because that is how God Himself gives! True giving *comes* from a happy heart, and it also *gives* us a happy heart.

I give grudgingly, but when God comes into my life and transforms my pocket book, I give joyfully, generously, sacrificially, cheerfully, eagerly and willingly.

God Himself never gives out of an attitude of grudging obligation, and neither should we.

God is the ultimate cheerful giver. He delights to give to us. God himself is such a cheerful giver that He desires to see this characteristic restored in us, those He created in His image.

Incredible outrageous hilariously generosity is giving from the heart because we love to give, not because we are bound to give.

“We should give liberally, with an open hand, and cheerfully, with an open countenance, being glad we have ability and an opportunity to be charitable”¹³

As Christians we are not forced to give, we do it voluntarily and eagerly because giving determines our spirituality. Every Saturday, give with a smile when the offering plate comes around. Actually, the text says we should break out in a hilarious joy when we give because God love a “hilarious” giver. As a Seventh-day Adventist, we should be always happy to contribute to God’s cause. Ellen White states, “As a class, Seventh-day Adventists are a generous and warmhearted people.”¹⁴

If we have a generous spirit, don’t you think that God will provide the means of expressing it?

All who possess the Spirit of Christ will have a tender, sympathetic heart, and an open, generous hand. Nothing can be really selfish that has Christ for its absorbing object. (Spalding and Magan Collection, 1985, page 18.2)

⁹ The King James Dictionary on cheerful.

¹⁰ The New Testament Greek Lexicon on cheerful

¹¹ Dave Sutherland and Kirt Nowery, The 33 Laws of Stewardship, pages 34, 35.

¹² Charles R. Swindoll, Living Above the Level of Mediocrity, page 198.

¹³ Matthew Henry, “Commentary on 2 Corinthians 9.” Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible Blue Letter Bible. 01 March 1996. 8 Nov. 2004.
<http://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/2Cr/2Cr009.html>.

¹⁴ 5T 386