

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

Read II Corinthians 9:6-15 aloud.

1. What is God's indescribable gift (15)?
Paul probably means salvation through Jesus, but the gifts are infinite.

What is the picture of God in this passage?

If we view God as an angry judge ready to punish, how might that affect our spending habits?

If we view God as a generous giver, how would it affect our daily activities?

2. Why would a farmer sow sparingly?
If you ate too much of last year's crop, you don't have much seed. It takes discipline not to over-eat during the off-season.

What does it mean for a farmer to sow generously?

How is generosity like planting a seed?

What is the principle Paul is describing in verse 6, and how does it apply to the way we use money today?

3. According to verse 7, how do you decide what to give to God?
Jews were told to tithe, but the NT is refreshingly vague. And that helps us to see that ALL of our stuff belongs to God.

Who is able to give more cheerfully – someone with a low income or a wealthy person?

4. What is the promise of verse 8 (repeated in 10-11)?

When has this promise failed to work in your life? When has it proven true?

What are some ways that people can be rich (11)?

What kind of harvest do we enjoy when we live with a generous spirit (10)? How is this better than getting more money?

5. Verse 9 quotes Psalm 112, the story of a righteous person who is generous because he trusts God to provide. Who is "he" in verse 9? *Context sounds like God.*

How does God scatter gifts among the poor? What blessings do we enjoy when we are less able to be financially independent?

In Psalm 112, it sounds like "he" refers to a righteous person. How are we God's partners when we are kind to the poor?
See Proverb 19:17, Luke 4:16-21, or Matthew 25:31-46.

6. What are some ripple effects of giving from verses 12-15?
*You meet the needs of God's people – 12
You cause people to thank God – 12
You serve – 13
You prove your love for God – 13
People praise God when they see your obedience and generosity -13
People will pray for you – 14
You get to share in God's act of giving -15*

7. How is giving to the church a way of sowing generously?

What does II Corinthians 9 call us to that is bigger than giving money to the church?
Could you drop 10% in the plate and still be missing something?

When have people praised God because Christians were generous?

† **The million-dollar question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

What is one specific action or attitude you could develop that would help you be more of a giver?

Resources

Bible notes

In II Corinthians 8-9, Paul was urging the church to participate in a collection among Gentile churches to help Christians around Jerusalem. Many Jewish believers lost their livelihood when they were baptized. The letter of II Corinthians was probably delivered by Titus and other brothers who came to collect the funds.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Send the kids outside and ask each one to bring back a seed. Make sure the younger guys have a grown-up with them so they don't uproot your host's flower bed!

Ask each kid to show their seed and tell how it is planted.

If you wanted a bunch of these, how would you get a lot of plants?

Read II Cor. 9:6-8 aloud.

What is this passage talking about? How do we sow generously?

What are some ways that kids can be givers?

How could kids give with a bad attitude, and how could they give with a cheerful spirit?

What is one specific action that you could do to be a cheerful giver?



June 6, 2010

LIFE Group Guide

II Corinthians 9 – Living generously

By John Grant (jgrant@collegethills.org)

The theme: Living generously means trusting God to provide. It's an amazing adventure with ripple effects that will touch your grandchildren.

This is week 2 of Kevin's series looking at how our actions have a ripple effect. We considered the faithfulness of Abraham and Sarah last week. This week, we discuss the principle of how generosity blesses the giver, the recipient, and many other people.

Leadership tip: Laughter is golden. Cultivate a joyful, even playful, spirit during your gatherings – before, during, and after the discussion. You will be amazed how it blesses you and your group. (That's one reason I try to give you a goofy ice-breaker each time.)

Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ Gimme five...worst pets?
- ❖ When was a time that money was so tight that you thought you would not make it (but you did)?
- ❖ A long-lost uncle dies and leaves you \$10,000. What would you do with it?