

SERMON NOTES

Sunday 8th October

sunnysidechurch

Harvest Festival: The Grace of Giving

Bible passage: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Introduction

- The passage links to Harvest Festival for two reasons:
 - Paul references agricultural images (verses 6 and 10)
 - He is writing to support a collection for the those in need, for the church in Jerusalem
- In that context, he says a number of things about Christian giving

Giving is a response to Grace (8:9)

- We give as a response to what Jesus has done for and in us

Giving is an Investment (verse 6)

- We give as an investment in God's kingdom

Giving is Fun (verse 7)

- We give not grudgingly, but joyfully

Giving is about Trust (verse 8)

- We give as an expression of our trust in God

Conclusion

- John Wesley said: 'Gain all you can; Save all you can; Give all you can'.

Some questions for discussion

1. How do you react when people start talking about giving?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 and Romans 15:30-32. With 2 Corinthians 8-9, what do they suggest about how important the task of making a collection for the church in Jerusalem was for Paul?
3. Do you think being grateful is our motivation for giving, that our giving is how we know that we are grateful or both?
4. What does Paul mean when he says that 'whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously' (verse 6). What is it that we reap?
5. What do you think of the idea that giving should be joyful? What is your experience?
6. 'And God is able to bless you abundantly' (verse 8). What do you think is the connection between trust in God's future for us and giving?
7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these verses? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

Why not spend some time praising God for his goodness to you, and asking him to help you see how you could grow in the grace of giving?

Archdeacon Charles