

**Faith In Community, February 5, 2006**  
**THE JESUS JOURNEY: SEVEN THINGS TO PACK**  
**“Get Planting”, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15**  
**By Lisa Wohnlich**

**CHARTING THE COURSE**

*This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 2 Cor. 9:12*

*“There’s a throne above the world. There’s a man on the throne. He has a plan for things down here during this time of turmoil and strife. His Spirit is down here to get that plan done. He needs each one of us. He puts His Hand on each Christian life and says, “Separate yourself from all else for the bit I need you to do.” His Hand is on you. Are you doing it? Anything else classes as failure.”*

*--The Bent Knee Time, Springs Valley 7-7*

*The above passage was a handwritten note found in a book from the used book sale at Bel Air United Methodist Church.*

*God loves it when the giver delights in the giving. 2 Cor. 9:7b The Message*

*A man there was and they called him mad; the more he gave, the more he had. John Bunyan, Pilgrim’s Progress.*

**PACKING TRAIT #1: GIVER: A Giver manages ones life and creation for God’s purposes. (5 minutes for the question below)**

Share an example of a gift from a child. It can be a gift a child has given you or a gift you gave when you were a child.

Discuss the following statement:

A child’s gifts are simple and from the heart giving joy to both the giver and the receiver.

**COME, FOLLOW ME . . . (20 minutes)**

**Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15.**

Jesus often used parables to help us understand more abstract concepts. The importance agriculture played during Jesus time was evident in many of His teachings. As we read this passage, let’s see how Jesus used the farmer to describe what He wants from us.

**Planting Your Crop**

Take a look at the following verses and answer the questions. Remember, our crop is the fruit of our lives.

How should we sow our seed? (v. 6)

How should we till our soil? (v. 7)

**The Harvest**

If our crop is the fruit of our lives, it bears to ask, who reaps the harvest of our sowing?  
Vv. 8 -14 give us our answer.

v. 8 – 11:

v. 12:

vv. 11 – 13:

vv. 13-14:

Paul uses repetition to make a point in this passage. Take a final look at verses 11-15 below. Underline the words *thanks* and *praise*. Circle the word *God*. Now, draw an arrow from the underlined words to the circled words to show the linkage. Studying the structure of a passage often helps us to understand the scripture.

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

When we generously and cheerfully give from our heart, God uses our gift to bring blessings to all. Calling us to be cheerful givers is a perfect gift from God.

*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! v 15*

Now, Paul's message in verse 6 bears repeating:

*Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. v. 6*

### **WHERE GIVING CONNECTS WITH LIFE (15 minutes)**

We can sow many types of seeds. Giving doesn't begin and end with our checkbook. A generous spirit touches our whole life, and ultimately, that is what God is asking of us.

Look up some of the scriptures below. Which one is most encouraging to you? Which one challenges you? Why?

Deuteronomy 26:2

Colossians 3:23

Matthew 16:19-20a

John 5:12-13

Get Planting!

## **STEPS IN MY PERSONAL JOURNEY**

Open your devotional to the center page to find the “Jesus Journey” path. The signposts mark some steps each of us can take as a Giver, who “manages ones life and creation for God’s purposes”. The rocks along the path indicate the scriptures that guide our steps. Consider where you are on the path. Pray for the Holy Spirit to direct this reflection time. Look up scriptures as you are led. What step will you take to intentionally grow during “The Jesus Journey”? Circle the step and the scripture. If you are led to take a step that is not on the path, write or draw this in. Use this reflection page to guide you through the week. If there is time, share your “next step” with the class.

## **MARKERS IN THE ROAD**

Singing Hymns and Songs is a wonderful way to both praise God and keep our promises on our heart. The lyrics to a recent Casting Crowns song echo what we’ve learned today.

*Lifesong by Casting Crowns*

*Empty Hands held high  
Such Small sacrifice  
If not joined with my life  
I sing in vain tonight*

*May the words I say  
And the things I do  
Make my lifesong sing  
Bring a smile to you*

*Chorus:*

*Let my lifesong sing to You  
Let my life song sing to You  
I want to sign your name  
to the end of this day  
Knowing that my heart was true  
Let my lifesong sing to You*

*Lord, I give my life*

*A Living sacrifice  
To reach a world in need  
To be your hands and feet*

*So may the words I say  
And the things I do  
Make my lifesong sing  
Bring a smile to you*

*Chorus*

*Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
Let my lifesong sing to You*

### **PRAYER AND CLOSING**

As you close, pray that you will live each day so that you can say:

“I want to sign Your name to the end of this day, knowing that my heart was true. Let my lifesong sing to You.”

### **For Study at Home: from lesson on Worship**

#### **For Personal Meditation**

Review your plans for today. Based on your plans, what is the purpose of your day? Do you need to adjust your plans? Does the same ring true for your week? How can we manage the responsibilities of our job and the responsibilities of our life?

God supplies bread for our immediate need and seed for our future needs.

*“The generous giver, like the farmer, is dependent from start to finish on God: he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.” Intersity Press New Testament Commentary*

#### **For further reading:**

1. The Message: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. (Attached)
2. “The Life You’ve Always Wanted” by John Ortberg, Zondervan
3. “31 Days of Praise” by Ruth Myers, Multnomah Books

## 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (The Message)

Remember: A stingy planter gets a stingy crop; a lavish planter gets a lavish crop. I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving.

God can pour on the blessings in astonishing ways so that you're ready for anything and everything, more than just ready to do what needs to be done. As one psalmist puts it,

He throws caution to the winds,  
giving to the needy in reckless abandon.  
His right-living, right-giving ways  
never run out, never wear out.

This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God.

Carrying out this social relief work involves far more than helping meet the bare needs of poor Christians. It also produces abundant and bountiful thanksgivings to God. This relief offering is a prod to live at your very best, showing your gratitude to God by being openly obedient to the plain meaning of the Message of Christ. You show your gratitude through your generous offerings to your needy brothers and sisters, and really toward everyone. Meanwhile, moved by the extravagance of God in your lives, they'll respond by praying for you in passionate intercession for whatever you need. Thank God for this gift, his gift. No language can praise it enough!