

A Fear of Good Deeds

Let's face it, when we hear a lot about good deeds we know where it is going to hit us the hardest—the wallet. Obviously, not every good deed is a monetary good deed. But sooner or later, we can't help but notice that in Scripture many of the good deeds affect us financially. Whether we are talking about hospitality, sending aid to Christians who are going through a famine, being a good Samaritan, feeding and clothing our brothers and sisters, or helping the poor, eventually our good deeds are going to cost us money.

That's what makes these good deeds so scary, especially when the news tells us the economic sky is falling. This is where **II Corinthians 9:8** comes in. Paul wrote, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work" (ESV).

Now this is not a promise from God to drop any amount of money or material goods in your lap that you claim you'll give to others. However, it does point out that when we are a blessing to others, God will bring blessings to us. That is exactly why God blesses people. Not so they can hoard the blessings, but so they can share them. We are not alone in this work of good deeds. God is extending His grace so we can be sufficient for performing these good deeds.

If I clinch my fist around whatever blessings I have received, my hand will be closed to the blessings God may want to give me. However, when I open my hand to others, it becomes open to receive more of God's blessings.

This is not the health and wealth gospel that makes good deeds a selfish investment, hoping I can give \$10 to some preacher and receive \$100 back for my trouble. That motivation isn't about being zealous for good deeds at all. Rather, this is an extension of God's promise in **Matthew 6:33**. If we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, He'll take care of us.

If we have contentment with our blessings such that we can share them with others, God will continue to bless us. If we are so discontent that we cannot share, God will stop blessing us. It's that simple. Of course, if I have contentment and I don't receive a greater blessing, I'm still okay with that. I simply use what God has given me knowing that "it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have" (**II Corinthians 8:12**, ESV).

Be content. Be a blessing. Then and only then will God truly bestow His richest blessings upon us.

—Edwin L. Crozier