

Spiritual How-to's
How to please the Lord
Be a Hilarious Giver
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Intro. Story – Jesus tells a story of a young, rich man. Mat. 19:21-22

- We know he was young and very wealthy
- We know he did his best to keep the law
- And we know he was seeking eternal life & what he should do to get it
- Jesus told him to sell what he had and give to the poor
- He walked away angry
- THIS MAN WAS NOT A HILARIOUS GIVER
- That is our topic for today, We please the Lord by being a hilarious giver

I. 2 Cor. 9:6-8 - "... for God loves a cheerful giver."

A. Throughout scripture we are told there are only **7 things** that **the Lord loves**.

1. the resident foreigner Deut 10:19
2. righteousness in our affairs with others Ps. 11:7
3. justice Ps. 37:28
4. the gates of Zion Ps. 87:2
5. his righteous people Ps. 146:8
6. a hilarious or cheerful giver 2 Cor. 9:7
7. those He disciplines Heb. 12:7

B. So because we love Him, we would do well to **take note of what He loves**

C. He loves a cheerful giver!

D. Clearly, the young man in our opening was not willing or cheerful in giving, so what does that look like in our lives? What is cheerful giving?

II. "Cheerful" in 2 Cor. 9:7 means, "propitious or merry; hilarious ie: prompt or willing: - cheerful. This word signifies that readiness of mind, which is prompt to do anything. (For those like me who don't remember what propitious means = favorable circumstances or showing signs of favorable outcome – suggesting future success.)

A. The Greek word for cheerful is "**hilaros**", **from which we get our word hilarious.**

1. **Hilarious to us** carries the connotation of humorous, funny, and jokes.
2. In the NT Greek, it denotes **being prompt or willing to joyfully, cheerfully do anything**
3. That's a different slant, isn't it?

B. We could then say, God loves the one who is willing and prompt to cheerfully give anything.

- C. That is why the **first part of 2 Cor. 9:7** says this – “Each one must give as he has **decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under** compulsion – for God loves a cheerful giver.”
1. Giving is a predetermined preset of the heart
 2. It is a decision made before the time even calls for giving
 3. God loves the one who has predetermined to give in whatever way is needed
 4. God loves the one who has cheerfully decided to give & not out of some sort of religious duty
- D. **TPT says it this way – “Let giving flow from your heart, not from a sense of religious duty. Let it spring up freely from the joy of giving – all because God loves hilarious generosity.”**
- E. James even tells us that **true religion**, or religious duty is shown when we take care of the orphans and widows. James 1:27
1. When we select and look out for the parentless, comfortless, bereft
 2. As we go and see those who’ve lost their husbands and are alone
 3. As we are cheerful and willing to give to their needs
 4. THAT’S what God loves
 5. THAT is true religion, as it was meant to be

III. **Giving to the poor** is a truth that runs through the **entire Bible** and is at the heart of God’s love and care.

- A. Psa. 37:21 – the righteous is generous & gives
- B. Pro. 14:21 – blessed is he who is generous to the poor
- C. Acts 2:45-46 – selling, distributing to the needy, generous hearts
- D. 1 Tim. 6:18 – be generous & ready to share
- E. Pro. 28:27 – whoever gives to the poor will not want
- F. Pro. 11:24 – there is one who gives freely & grows richer, another withholds & suffers want
- G. Pro. 19:17 – whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord
- H. Pro. 22:9 – when you are generous to the poor, you are enriched with blessings in return

IV. **Back to the Corinthian text and context in 2 Cor. & 9** - They, the Corinthians had **promised to give** a bunch of money to the needy believers in Jerusalem. Paul was saying that **now was the time** to send it to Jerusalem.

- A. Now was the right time for these believers in the capital city in the province of Achaia, to follow through and give their offering to the needy.
- B. Paul reminded them, that even the believers in **Macedonia, in spite of their awful poverty begged to be a part** of the relief and gave generously to the poor there.
 1. The Macedonians gave according to their means
 2. even beyond their means

- C. This is where Paul says, “he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly” 2 Cor. 9:6
- D. Ann Frank said, “No one has ever become poor by giving.”
- E. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “We are rich only through what we give & poor only through what we refuse.”
- F. And remember Jesus, “if you want to be perfect, give to the poor...” Mat. 19:21

V. In these days of such great need, regardless of our personal financial status, we are called to be hilarious givers, those who have already decided in our hearts that we will:

- give \$\$ whenever there is need, whatever we can
- give food or clothes to the needy
- choose to provide for the fatherless & comfortless
- look in on the widows
- give to the poor on the street corners
- find a charity that provides for them & give to it
- live a generous life of cheerfully & hilariously giving
- and you will have pleased God