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GIVING WITH GUSTO

One statement Paul makes in the book of 2 Corinthians is perhaps the foundational Scripture reference linking joy with giving: “Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly [reluctantly] or under compulsion [feeling forced because of what others may say or think], for God loves a cheerful giver’ (2 Corinthians 9:7). The term “cheerful” comes from the Greek term *hilaros*, from which we get our word *hilarious*. And it’s placed first in the original statement for emphasis. Literally, “for the hilarious giver God prizes.” Why? Because hilarious givers give, with gusto!

Want to bring back the gusto? Let me remind you of two simple suggestions. Both work for me. First, *reflect on God’s gifts to you*. Hasn’t He been good? Always more than we deserve. Second, *trust God to honor consistent generosity*. Here’s the big step, but it’s essential. Go for it! Release your restraint – when you really believe God is leading you to make a significant contribution – and develop the habit of generosity. I seriously doubt that generosity has ever hurt anyone!

After Araunah offered King David something for nothing, the king replied, “I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God which cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24). David refused a handout. I love the application the great preacher of yesteryear, John Henry Jowett, drew from David’s words “Ministry that costs nothing, accomplishes nothing”

Let’s give as we have never ever given before. Let’s attack our indebtedness with great gusto. And let’s also support God’s work with outstanding offerings of a sacrificial nature. Remember, ministry that cost nothing, accomplishes nothing. AMEN

~ Dr. Charles R. Swindoll

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20

