

2 Corinthians 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

Analysis

For the administration of this service (ἡ διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας ταύτης)—Paul uses two ministry words: *diakonia* (διακονία, "service/ministry") and *leitourgia* (λειτουργία, "public service/priestly ministry"). *Leitourgia* originally described civic service wealthy citizens performed for the state but came to mean priestly service in the temple (Luke 1:23, Heb 8:6). Financial giving is priestly worship, a sacred liturgy offered to God.

Not only supplieth the want of the saints (οὐ μόνον ἔστιν προσαναπληροῦσα τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν ἀγίων)—*prosanaplēroō* (προσαναπληρόω, "fill up, supply fully") indicates complete provision for genuine **want** (*hysterēma*, ὑστέρημα, "lack, deficiency"). Christian giving meets real needs, not superficial desires. But "not only" signals something greater.

But is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God (ἀλλὰ καὶ περισσεύονσα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ Θεῷ)—the verb *perisseuō* (περισσεύονσα, "overflows, abounds") describes thanksgiving multiplying exponentially. One gift creates **many thanksgivings** (πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν). Each recipient thanks God; observers thank God; givers thank God for the privilege; future generations thank God. Generosity unleashes a tsunami of worship that reverberates eternally. The earthly transaction generates heavenly glory.

Historical Context

The Jerusalem church's poverty resulted from persecution, economic marginalization, and possibly the failed experiment of total communalism (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37). Paul's collection provided material relief but also theological statement: Gentile and Jewish believers are one body in Christ. This wasn't charity condescension but covenant solidarity. The resulting 'many thanksgivings' from Jerusalem believers validated Gentile Christianity and unified the fractured early church.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does viewing your giving as 'priestly service/liturgy' elevate it from secular transaction to sacred worship?
2. When you give, do you consider only the immediate material impact or also the exponential thanksgiving it generates to God's glory?
3. What 'wants of the saints' in your community or globally has God positioned you to help supply?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι ἡ διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας ταύτης οὐ μόνον
For G3588 the administration G3588 service G3778 not G3756 only G3440
G3754 G1248 G3009 G3756 G3440

ἐστὶν προσαναπληροῦσα τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν ἀγίων
supplieth G4322 G3588 the want G3588 of the saints G40
G2076 G5303 G40

ἀλλὰ καὶ περισσεύουσα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ
but also is abundant by many thanksgivings G3588
G235 G2532 G4052 G1223 G4183 G2169 G3588

θεῷ
unto God
G2316

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:25 (Parallel theme): Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

1 John 3:17 (References God): But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?