

2 Corinthians 9:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Analysis

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly (ὁ σπείρων φειδομένως φειδομένως καὶ θερίσει)—The agricultural metaphor of speirō (σπείρω, "sow seed") and therizō (θερίζω, "reap harvest") establishes a spiritual law: generosity generates abundance. The adverb pheidomenos (φειδομένως, "sparingly, stingily") appears twice, emphasizing the direct proportion between sowing and reaping. This isn't prosperity gospel—Paul isn't promising financial return—but a principle of spiritual fruitfulness.

And he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully (ὁ σπείρων ἐπ' εὐλογίαις ἐπ' εὐλογίαις καὶ θερίσει)—literally "the one sowing upon blessings shall also reap upon blessings." The phrase ep' eulogiais (ἐπ' εὐλογίαις) pictures blessing as the field in which seed is sown and from which harvest comes. The repetition creates rhythmic emphasis.

This principle appears throughout Scripture: "Give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6:38); "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD" (Prov 19:17). The harvest may come in this life or the next, in material or spiritual blessing, but God's economy never wastes seed sown in faith. Jesus Himself is the ultimate demonstration: His self-giving produced a harvest of redeemed humanity (John 12:24).

Historical Context

First-century Mediterranean agriculture was subsistence farming where the amount of seed sown directly determined survival. Farmers faced the constant temptation to eat seed grain rather than plant it, especially in lean years. Sowing "bountifully" required faith that God would provide. Paul applies this familiar agricultural reality to Christian generosity: giving requires faith that God will provide for the giver.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How has God proven faithful in providing when you've given generously beyond what seemed prudent?
2. What 'seed' are you holding back from sowing—and what fears drive that hoarding?
3. How does viewing giving as 'sowing' rather than 'losing' change your perspective on generosity?

Interlinear Text

Τοῦτο	δέ	ὁ	σπείρων	φειδομένως	φειδομένως	
this	But	G3588	I say He which soweth	sparingly	sparingly	
G5124	G1161		G4687	G5340	G5340	
καὶ	θερίσει	καὶ	ὁ	σπείρων	ἐπ'	εὐλογίαις
also	shall reap	also	G3588	I say He which soweth	bountifully	G2129
G2532	G2325	G2532		G4687	G1909	
ἐπ'	εὐλογίαις	καὶ	θερίσει			
bountifully	G2129	also	shall reap			
G1909		G2532	G2325			

Additional Cross-References

Luke 6:38 (Parallel theme): Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Proverbs 22:9 (Parallel theme): He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

Proverbs 19:17 (Parallel theme): He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

2 Corinthians 9:10 (Parallel theme): Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Hebrews 6:10 (Parallel theme): For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Proverbs 11:18 (Parallel theme): The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.

Ecclesiastes 11:6 (Parallel theme): In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

Ecclesiastes 11:1 (Parallel theme): Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Galatians 5:16 (Parallel theme): This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 3:17 (Parallel theme): And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org