



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

August 1, 2021

Pastor James Enderle

10th Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: [2 Kings 4:42-44](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 84

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [2 Corinthians 9:8-11](#)

Gospel Lesson: [John 6:1-15](#)

FAITH RESPONDS BY HELPING THOSE IN NEED

1. God has supplied all that we need
2. Share _____ in need
3. "You First"

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

In order to get the context, I have the whole Chapter of [2 Corinthians 9](#) below. We will read through [Verses 1-15](#) to begin just so you get a better understanding of why Paul is writing.

***9** There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the Lord's people. **2** For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. **3** But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. **4** For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. **5** So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.*

***6** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **7** Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **8** And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. **9** As it is written:*

*"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever."*

¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

Maybe you've heard stories like this, or even on old TV shows you've seen the gifts given to a wife on her birthday or an anniversary where the husband (I think this is a really famous one) gives a bowling ball because the husband likes to go bowling. That's maybe not the love or desire that the wife has. Or maybe something similar to that where on that anniversary or birthday the wife gets a vacuum cleaner. It's a need. It's something that is needed, but it's maybe not exactly what the wife really wants on her birthday or anniversary. You can think of gifts or maybe you've experienced times like that where you don't exactly get what you need or want.

In relationships I think we see it sometimes even when they talk about it with the love languages where someone might be giving gifts but the person is looking more for quality time. What they need is different than what the person is giving or they are giving time or that gift but what the other person needs is these words of affirmation, words that show you care and you love them and that person is special to you.

Sometimes what someone needs is a little bit unknown. Sometimes we might be giving but we don't really meet the needs of the other person. Sometimes it's hard to give what we need to give and to give the right things.

When it comes to giving and knowing how to give, Paul encourages the Corinthians how to give and why we can give. He begins and he tells them most of all why we can give and why it's important that we do give. He says this (listen to how many times he says the word "all" in Verse 8): ***And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all***

things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. Did you hear that? ***...bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*** Do you feel that you have everything that you need? Do you feel that God has blessed you and you don't have anything on that list where you say "I want this" or "I need this"? I think it's very easy for us to not be content. The more we get the more things we want. I don't think it has to be just monetarily. Maybe it has to do with relationships. Maybe there is some relationship that is lacking and you say, "God, how could you take that relationship from me" or "How come you haven't given me this relationship"? Here He says *I will give you all things at all times and all that you need* and you're saying "You've never done that. I'm still lacking this thing. How can you say that?" I think it's very easy for us to question that God has given us everything we need.

But the truth is He has. Even though we struggle with contentment and thinking that we have what we need, He has given us His grace and mercy, which is much more than we ever deserved. Later it says in Verse 13: ***Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!*** He's talking about the gift that the Corinthians are going to give, but He is focusing on the grace and that indescribable gift that God has given them that causes them to give.

There is so much in this world that we think we want and we need, but Jesus is what we really need. He has given us more. He has forgiven us. When we fail and others have failed, He does not fail.

There was a story of the new pastor for Time of Grace. He wrote a book recently. He was talking about when he wrote the book that they were nervous. "What if we don't sell copies?" They were in this meeting. "If we don't make enough money and sell enough copies, what if the offerings aren't enough?" "What if I lose my health?" "What if this happens?" "What if that happens?" "What happens if we lose those things or if we don't have that?" "So we'd be left with Jesus?" Jesus is enough. Jesus gives us this love and forgiveness and hope that we really, really need. Sometimes those other things need to be stripped away so that we see that Jesus IS the most important thing for eternity. All these other things can cloud us and we can think that we don't have enough. But when we see that Jesus has given us all that we need and He has provided more than we need, it helps us to share with those who are in need. We can abundantly share what we have.

It speaks here about those who sow sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. We know that. When you think that you can't give anything more, and then you give a little bit more, you see that you reap back even

more. It's not just about money. Yes, this most of all is talking about our gifts and in this situation was an offering of money, but we can think about other ways that we can give and share with those in need. We can share with those in need by giving our time. Maybe someone is going through a difficult time and is hurting and they just need time. Maybe they need help doing something, like fixing up their house or fixing a problem that money is not going to fix but your time can. Your time is very important and our time is priceless. We can't get it back. Maybe it's just sitting there and listening and giving support and comfort to someone who is really, really in need. There are many different ways that we can share with those who are in need.

If you notice though, under the title above I left a blank. There isn't any answer there but as we share with those who are in need, there is something also that is important that needs to happen. The people who are in need, they need to share that they are in need. You also need to share when you are having problems. Isn't that one of our biggest problems that we struggle with? Think about the Corinthians. What if the people there giving the gift never asked and never said that they were in need? They wouldn't have had this opportunity. Paul wouldn't have been able to share and encourage them in this giving.

How often do we share when we are in financial need? Probably not very often, right? Maybe more importantly, when you are struggling emotionally? When you are feeling depressed or sad or you're struggling with life? It's not easy to share that, is it? Or if you are struggling with your marriage...do you share that? Do you share that you are in need and that you need help? I think more often, instead of actually sharing that, what do we do? We are ashamed and we hide that and we don't allow God to provide and help us. We see that God can and will provide and how often He does that. He does that through those around us. When you're struggling with things, when you are struggling in marriage, when you are struggling with addictions, you can say "I need help," but so often we don't share that, do we?

How can God help us and give us people and the answers when we are unwilling to ask for the help? God will provide and God will give those in our lives to help us. God has the answers. But so often we don't ask or say that we're in need.

As it goes with sharing and serving, God says that He gives us abundantly and that we have all that we need at all times and in all ways and that we are going to abound in every good work. We've talked about different ways to share and to serve and to help those in need. But I want to talk about one other way of sharing with those in need because sometimes we don't really know or sometimes our actions get in the way.

There is a phrase above that says "You First." One of the easiest ways to help those who are in need is to take a step back and to actually think about what someone else might need and to put my needs behind. So often we are focused on the things that I think are right, my opinions, my ways, and the ways I have always done it or what I think is

right that we're not really thinking about the needs of those around and we're not putting other people first.

The joke in the old, long-term congregation, like a congregation of 150 years, is that seat. Everyone has their seat. Imagine that new family comes in and they are sitting in your seat, so you go up and tap them on the shoulder and say "Hey, you're in my seat." Hopefully that doesn't happen, but maybe that's what we're thinking and feeling and as much as we probably don't do that anymore, that idea is a good example of that "You First." Thinking *that is often where I sit but it's not important today.*

Think about those other things in our lives, in church life and at home, where it's not a big need but there are little things that build up and we often put ourselves first and we make it all about us instead of serving and saying "What do you really need? What little things can be done that I can put down my desires, my hopes, my saying that it MUST be done this way so I can say 'You First'?" When we do that, we don't make it about ourselves. When we're saying "Me First," it's all about us. When we say "You First," who are we making it about? We are making it about Jesus and the Gospel. That's the purpose of all of this.

When we look at that whole section, so many times Paul speaks about the purpose of their gift—that people will see this and they will praise God and they'll look at Jesus and they'll look at the Gospel. Our purpose of loving and serving is not to get credit, not to earn anything but to point people to Jesus and for more people to come and to learn about Jesus. If you want to think about "You First" and serving and giving what is needed for others, Jesus was the greatest of all at this. He looked at us when He was in heaven (He is God and He is perfect) and what did He do? He came down to live among us; to live among sinful people and then not to live a cushy life and to not have a home, then to be berated and to be hated and finally to suffer on the cross for our sins? He did not deserve to be on the cross, but He looked at us and said "You First," and He knew what we needed. We were in such need of salvation and the Savior and the forgiveness of sins, so that's what Jesus came to do—to put you, every one of us, first.

As we look to Him and know that we're forgiven and we are loved and He has given us more than we can ever imagine, we can look and see how we can serve others. How we can put the needs of others ahead of our own. We can ask "How can I help you? What needs do you have? How can I give abundantly?" If it's money or time or just by listening, it's giving. As we serve and give to those who are in need, God will use that to bless one another. But most of all, He will use it bring people to Jesus so that they can praise their God and know of their Savior who has blessed us more than we can imagine and so that we know that we have heaven in store. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ([Philippians 4:7](#).) Amen.