

## A TIME TO GIVE THANKS

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December 21

I didn't grow up particularly well off or wealthy. Don't get me wrong, we never went without food in our mouths or clothes on our backs but we were never so wealthy that we could just not worry about money. Now don't get me wrong, being a middle-class family in Canada where we have one of the highest qualities of life on the planet has me pretty well off in the grand scheme of things. Even so I always found myself asking why we couldn't have more? I would look at my mother and father, who both had to work incredibly hard to provide for us, and still had it in them to give their whole hearts to the people around them. Isn't it unfair that some of the most well-off people in this world also seem to be some of the worst? Doesn't the bible say that those with the most generous spirits are also those who will receive the most?

### **Please read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15**

A straightforward understanding of this passage would make one think that's how it works. "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously." Doesn't this mean that my family should be better off than the corrupt CEOs of the world? And yet that didn't happen. No one showed up at our door to say "we realized there's been a mistake! You're MUCH better people than Jake Corruptington, here's all his money!"

I think it's easy to feel this way, easy to feel hard done by and entitled. Even as followers of Christ when we know that we shouldn't covet worldly wealth it's hard to look at someone with 12 Lamborghinis and not feel like it doesn't make sense.

But this passage isn't talking about worldly wealth. It's talking about spiritual wealth. I remember a day I spent with my mom in the city hunting down a homeless woman she had found on Facebook and purchased blankets and pillows for her among other things. This generosity wasn't rewarded with a basket on our front door and a "you're a great person" award. It was rewarded with the smile and thanks of the woman and the knowledge that she would be a little bit warmer at night. My parents have taught me that good people do good things because it's the right thing to do, not for any sort of reward.

As the Christmas season draws near, we give thanks for the greatest gift of all. Out of Christ's love for us we are called to love one another and give generously, regardless of what it does for us.

*"Father, Today I celebrate the reality of Your presence in my life. I celebrate Your birth, Your life, Your death, and Your resurrection. And as I celebrate, Lord, help me to be "God with skin on" to those in need around me. Open my eyes and let me see them as You see them! I love You. Happy birthday Jesus! In Jesus name, Amen."*

— Mary Southerland