



A Twenty-One Day Digital Devotional

Day Nineteen

French Fries and Finances

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. - 2 Corinthians 9:7

I am from South Texas, which means I was raised on a steady diet of 13-hour smoked brisket, Mexican food from any one of the 35 Taquerias within 5 miles of my house, and the holy grail that is Whataburger. Although all three food groups mentioned above were beneficial and necessary, Whataburger was the favorite in the Atkinson household. However, every time my dad would buy my brother and I Whataburger, he would do this annoying thing most dads do. Once those crispy potatoes were poured out of their orange and white striped papery prisons, my dad would reach across the table and proceed to steal a small handful from our plates. Without fail, we would throw a fit and unsuccessfully attempt to swat those golden treasures out of his hand while saying something like, “Hey those are mine!” To this my dad would always respond with the same statement, “Oh they’re yours, huh? I’m sorry, I’ll go ahead and let you pay for them next time.” This was the checkmate. The unarguable statement. The trump card, if you will. After all, he was right. But humorous as it may be, our selfishness reflected a deeper heart issue.

This brings us right to Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 9. Let us reread verse 7 as he explains the way we should give and steward our finances: ***“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”***

This makes the cut for top 5 most frustrating verses in the Bible. Not necessarily because of what God is commanding, but how He is commanding us to do it. Simply “handing over the fries” is not enough for Him? I mean, does He really expect us to give away our hard-earned treasure with a smile on our face? The simple answer is yes. But let us look at a couple of reasons why He would ask us to do this.

1.) It brings God glory when we acknowledge our finances are His to begin with. (See Malachi 3:8-10)

Just like my dad is overjoyed when I hand over my (his) fries cheerfully, so is God. Why? Because our response to this command is a window into the depths of our heart. When we reluctantly and begrudgingly give to God, we are building an altar before Benjamin Franklin or Thomas Jefferson, or whoever's face may be plastered on that green 'god' we call money. However, when we are willing to hand over our treasures to Him willfully and cheerfully we are saying, "God, You are my greatest treasure, Your glory is my desire, and what You say goes." I imagine those words pierce the heart of God with joy and delight.

2.) It reminds God of the willful and cheerful sacrifice of His Son on the cross. (See Hebrews 12:2, Isaiah 53:10)

I am thankful Jesus did not give His life begrudgingly or reluctantly. Do not get me wrong, the work of the cross is beautiful and sweet regardless of the way it was done. But to know it was done with joy and delight is stunning and awe-inspiring. It is this life-changing event that motivates us to give and steward cheerfully. The Son gave His life, the Father gives us all things, and we simply give back as a response. So in light of Paul's words and the two reasons above, let us loosen our grip and steward those fries cheerfully, knowing God's blessing is coming.

Questions To Consider

Are you a cheerful giver? Why or why not?

How does the glory of God and the work of Christ on the cross motivate you to give more cheerfully?

Prayer Focus

Lord, thank You for blessing me with what I need to get through this life. Give me wisdom, and generosity as I steward all that You have given me. And, thank You for the gift of Your Son. Thank You for the fact You willingly and cheerfully gave of Yourself. I pray this beautiful and stunning truth would impact my heart deeply, causing me to give more cheerfully. Amen

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