

“For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.” Romans 15:27 ESV

lectio // Romans 15:22-33

The Apostle Paul obviously felt comfortable associating “spiritual” blessings with actual physical money. However, not directly to them, but to their poor in Jerusalem. Still, the idea is that GRATEFULNESS can translate well into GIVING. The Jewish believers had given so much in regards to bringing the gospel of Jesus, the good news of salvation to the Gentiles... the world. This is just a small way to say “thank you” by blessing their poor and needy in the city. I love the fact that generosity doesn’t just have to be a specific transaction, but rather it can be translated into other kinds of blessings. And, oftentimes, it can work in reverse and so many other ways other than just money. In this case loyalty and sacrifice to God from the Jewish people can be reciprocated by financial means to their biggest concern - the poor, “For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.” I believe this “translated transaction” should be used often among us still today. This also works well with “outdoing one another in love!” Romans 12:10.

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Dad,

There is no end to your creativity when it comes to generosity! It is always a wonderful challenge of gratitude to think of ways to be giving back. And, not all those ways are financial. This is just one example of spiritual to physical, but I’m sure it works the other way as well - from physical receiving to spiritual blessings of prayer, care and time. I know some of the greatest blessings I have received from friends is their time, encouragement and care.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root