

GOD'S FULLNESS CULTIVATES HOPE

a devotional by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Read 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15

"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. . . . 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." (2 Cor. 9:8,10)

Full stomachs. Full pantries and freezers. Full wallets and bank accounts. We like fullness. However, the opposite frightens us. Empty stomachs, pantries, and freezers mean hunger pangs and depleted energy to learn and work. Empty wallets and bank accounts spell financial anxiety and sleepless nights.

When we experience fullness — more than enough to eat and live on — we can be tempted to forget hungry people and to hoard the gifts God has given to us. As a result, we fail to understand the great celebration of sharing with the hungry that God is calling us to participate in. To grasp the radical nature of that celebration, we need a biblical view of emptiness and fullness. That view is based on the truth that "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." Notice how often the apostle Paul mentions *all*. *All* grace; *all* things; *all* times; *all* that you need.

The fullness of God is never emptied when blessings are poured out on God's children. God promises the same reality for us. Incredibly, when we share what God has given to us, God promises to multiply our store of seed and enlarge the harvest of our righteousness. Rather than being emptied when we share, we are being filled — filled with hope because God will supply the needs of all his children, filled with thanksgiving because God is the giver of every good gift, and filled with joy because we have heard God's call to share and have obeyed.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we are empty until we are filled by you. Creator and multiplier of seeds, enlarge the harvest of our righteousness. Destroy our greed! Eradicate our selfish fears! Ignite our generosity! Restore our vision of you, the One who "gives food to the hungry." (Ps. 146:7b) In Jesus' name, Amen.

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