

THE GENEROSITY OF GOD

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

God is cheerfully generous. He enjoys giving. He loves multiplication. Consider the number of seeds in a tomato. Each seed has the power to multiply - to produce a plant with a considerable number of tomatoes, each of which again contains many seeds ready for reproduction. The number of tomatoes which can be produced from a single seed in five years is awesome! It's very evident in nature that our Creator God enjoys being generous. He also delights in watching people imitating His cheerful generosity. 2 Cor. 9:7 says: "...God loves a cheerful giver." The New Testament Greek word for "cheerful" is "hilaron" from which the word "hilarious" is derived. A hilarious giver could be described as "exuberantly cheerful in generosity".

God loves to multiply. If you give Him your energy, He multiplies it. If you give Him your time, He multiplies it. If you give Him your money, He multiplies it. If you give Him your talent, He multiplies it. The principle is seen in seeds. 2 Cor. 9:10 says: "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. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion..." The message is clear: **GOD WILL INCREASE THE THINGS YOU DO THAT HAVE HIS APPROVAL!**

Farmers know that seed must be given away for it to increase. If kept in a sack, it won't reproduce. Plant it and it multiplies. God promises to multiply whatever you give away out of love for Him to whatever good and noble purpose. The multiplication works to benefit the giver as well as the recipient. Three common areas in which Christian stewards practice their cheerful generosity are: Church - Missions - Charities. God has no delight beholding the miserliness of a "tightwad" - tightly holding a wad of money. He thoroughly enjoys watching those who, like Himself, are cheerfully generous. Happily He rewards them. "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously." (2 Cor. 9:6) One thing that is clearly apparent to Christian stewards who are cheerfully generous is this: **NO ONE CAN OUT-GIVE GOD!**