

Chapter 9

He proceedeth exhorting them to the foresaid contribution, 3. to verifie his commending of them. 6. And to doe it liberally, that fo they may merit the more, and God be the more praifed.

For concerning the minifterie that is done toward the Saints, it is superfluous for me to write vnto you. ² For I know your prompt mind: for the which I glorie of you to the Macedonians: That Achaia also is ready from the yeare past, and your emulation hath prouoked very many. ³ But I haue sent the Brethren, that the thing which we glorie of you, be not made void in this behalfe, that (as I haue said) you may be ready: ⁴ lest when the Macedonians shal come with me, and find you vnready, we (that we say not, ye) may be ashamed ^a in this substance. ⁵ Therefore I thought it necessarie to desire the Brethren that they would come to you, and prepare this blessing before promised, to be ready fo, as a blessing, not as auarice. ⁶ And this I say, he that soweth sparingly, sparingly also shal reap: and he that soweth in blessings, of blessings also shal reap. ⁷ Euery one as he hath determined in his hart, not of fadnes or of necessitie. ⁸ For *God loueth a cheerful giuer.* ⁹ And God is able to make al grace abound in you: that in al things alwaies hauing al sufficiencie, you may abound vnto al good workes, ¹⁰ as it is written: *He distributed, he gaue to the poore: ^b his iustice remaineth for euer.* ¹¹ And he that ministreth feed to the fower, wil giue bread also for to eate: and wil multiply your feed and wil augment the increafes of the fruits of your iustice: ¹² that being enriched in al things, you may abound vnto al simplicitie, which worketh by vs

Ecclef. 35, 11.

Pf. 11, 9.

^a That is, in this matter of almes. *Chrysof. Theoph.*

^b The fruit of almes is the encrease of grace in al iustice and good workes to life euerlasting: God giuing these things for reward & recompense of charitable workes, which therefore be called the feed or meritorious cause of these spiritual fruits.

thankes-giuing to God. ¹³ Because the minifterie of this office doth not only fupplie thofe things that the Saints want, but aboundeth alfo by many thankes-giuings in our Lord, ¹⁴ by the prooffe of this minifterie, glorifying God in the obediēce of your confeffiō vnto the Ghofpel of Chrift, and in the fimplicitie of communicating vnto them, and vnto al, ¹⁵ and in their praying for you, being defirous of you becaufe of the excellent grace of God in you. ¹⁶ Thankes be to God for his vnſpeakable guift.

ANNOTATIONS

1 Toward the Saints.) By the Apoftles earneft and often calling vpon the Corinthians to giue almes for relieuing the faithful in diftreffe, the Paftours of Gods Church may learne that it ſpecially pertaineth to their office to be Proctours for holy men in prifon, pouertie, & al other neceffitie, ſpecially when their want commeth for confeffion of their faith.

Proctours for
Catholike Prifon-
ers.

5 Not as auarice.) The couetous man that parteth with his peny painefully and with forrow, as though he loſt a limme of his body, is noted; and cheerful, ready, voluntarie, and large contribution is commended.

Cheerful giuing.

6 Soweth ſparingly.) Almes is compared to feed. For as the feed throwen into the ground, though it feeme to be caſt away, yet is not loſt, but is laid vp in certaine hope of great encrease: fo that which men giue in almes, though it feeme to be caſt away & to periſh in reſpect of the giuer, yet indeed it is moſt fruitful; the benefit therof manifoldly returning to him againe. Whereupon the Apoftles conclufion is cleere, that according to the meafure of the almes or feeding (which is more or leſſe in reſpect of the wil & abilitie of the giuer) the encrease & abundance of harueſt, that is, of grace and glorie ſhal enfue. See S. Auguſtin in *Pfal. 49. circa med. & q. 4. ad Dulcitiū*

The greater almes,
the greater merit
and reward.

13 Doth not only fupply.) When almes are giuen, ſpecially to holy men, not only the giuers obtaine great benefits thereby, and the wants of others be fupplied, but God alfo by the receiuers continual praiers and thankes-giuing therfore, is exceedingly honoured: fo that charitie beſtowed in this fort, is an acte of Gods worſhip and of religion.

Almes redoūd to
God's honour.