

## 2 Corinthians 8-9

### Chapter 8

#### Verses 1-5:

--(1) **Moreover** introduces a new line of thought in Paul's epistle. Now that he has shared his heart and motives with them, Paul is going to address the practical matters on his mind.

Particularly, the offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem he had written about in **1 Cor. 16:1-4**.

--This section is extremely important when it comes to the issue of Christian giving. \*We really don't talk about this all the time! If you are new here at CCPhilly, we will address money and giving issues as we teach verse by verse through the Bible and the Word of God brings it up.\*

--Now, Paul is going to use the Macedonian believers as an example of **the grace of God** in terms of Christian giving. Paul uses the Greek word for grace (*charis*) 7 times in this chapter: **1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 16** (where "**thanks**" is the Greek word for grace), **19** and more in chapter **9**.

--(2-4) Paul, says that the Macedonian's gave despite **great trial** and **deep poverty**. No doubt, their experience of affliction and necessity made them want to give to their needy brothers and sisters in Jerusalem.

--Not only that, but they gave **freely willing**—no pressure from Paul. In fact, they implored Paul with **much urgency** to accept their liberal and abundant gift! They didn't need to be worked up or guilted into giving. They only needed the opportunity. \*So much like our church—Ukraine; Florida; Nigeria; Peru; Guatemala; Maui; Israel; Acapulco; etc.\*

--(5) Paul lets us in on the secret as to why these Macedonian Christians were who they were—because **they first gave themselves to the Lord**. First, meaning in priority. They were fully Gods!

--This is always the true order of things in spiritual life. The rest of what we are or what we have is used rightly when God has our whole heart. The person who is not given to God is the first to complain about the cross, quit the ministry, or conveniently betray Christ for a bit of silver when they are required to give life or living to others.

--To a person giving *first* to the Lord—cost will never be incidental.

**\*2 Samuel 24:24: Nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing.\***

#### Verses 6-7:

--(6) This would be in reference to a future visit from Titus (**17**).

--(7) Paul had spoken about the gifts that this church abounded in while writing his first epistle (**1 Cor. 1:5**). But this type of God-honoring giving was also something he knew they needed to learn to abound in by the grace of God.

### Verses 8-9:

--(8) Paul, as an apostle, would not command them in their giving. In fact, he didn't need to as he would explain in the following. But he would exhort them to realize that their giving was a test of their sincerity and Christian love.

**\*1 John 3:17: *But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?\****

--(9) Here is why Paul didn't have to command them. Jesus made this giving grace abundantly clear through His own life. This is our **Lord!**

--This is not to be a point of doctrinal dissertation on what exact riches Jesus left or His eternality or even the Incarnation. This verse is inspired by the Holy Spirit as a moral example.

\*So many of the most beautiful and memorable passages of Scripture on the Person of Christ are not given in a doctrinal context but as moral examples—**Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Peter 2:21-25;** etc.\*

--The Lord Jesus Christ became **poor**—which is the only time this particular Greek word is used in the Bible and it refers to being a *beggar* or *pauper*.

--The Heir of all things becomes the owner of almost nothing—living with the clothes on His back, borrowing coins for illustrations, and sleeping by the free hospitality of His creation.

--This is the center of Paul's appeal to godly giving: The life and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ—not videos of sad faces; urgent appeals of need; condemning stories of failure due to lack of funds; threats of communism; or sociological and geographic data studies.

--Paul wants us to look at our Master, the **Lord**. Paul wants us to see our Savior, **Jesus**. Paul wants us to weigh and worship the Anointed One, **Christ**.

--Paul simply reminds them about the **grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**.

--The Greek word *charis* or **grace** was first used in Greek literature to describe things considered high in contrast to things low—beauty/ugliness; strength/weakness; purity/impurity; etc. Then in time (still in secular Greek writings) it took on the idea of the desire to impart these “high” things to others.

--Then, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the NT writers (especially Paul) took this word *charis* and gave it the highest honor of nearly any word by using it to describe God's desire to impart the highest things of His to lowly and undeserving sinners.

**--For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.**

--Do you need grace to give? Do you need grace for life? Look to Him and ask.

### Verses 10-12:

--Having pledged themselves to this work over a year ago, Paul exhorts them to follow through, otherwise it would only mean injury to themselves. Doing good is good for us!

**\*James 4:17: *Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.\****

--Notice this! How much are they to give? **According to what one has, and not according to what he does not have!** \*Boreham's David Glendenning story\*

--There is no tithing here or in the NT. A ten percent rule is fine but should not be mechanical.  
\*Certainly no coercive “faith giving” of what we don’t own here!\*

--This rule for giving is so freeing. God knows if our heart longs to give more but cannot. Also, I am not responsible for what I don’t have.

--And if I am not giving, what am I? If I am not a giving person I am then a worldly, idolatrous, and covetous person. This is a very real danger for us in America where we have so much!

\*Piper (A Hunger For God): *“The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison but apple pie. It is not the banquet of the wicked that dulls our appetite for heaven, but endless nibbling at the table of the world. It is not the X-rated video, but the prime-time dribble of triviality we drink in every night. For all the ill that Satan can do, when God describes what keeps us from the banquet table of his love, it is a piece of land, a yoke of oxen, and a wife (Luke 14:18-20). The greatest adversary of love to God is not his enemies but his gifts. And the most deadly appetites are not for the poison of evil, but for the simple pleasures of earth. For when these replace an appetite for God himself, the idolatry is scarcely recognizable, and almost incurable.*

*Jesus said some people hear the word of God, and a desire for God is awakened in their hearts. But then, “as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life” (Luke 8:14). In another place he said, “The desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” (Mark 4:19), “The pleasures of life” and “The desires for other things”—these are not evil in themselves. These are not vices. These are the gifts of God. They are your basic meat and potatoes and coffee and gardening and reading and decorating and traveling and investing and TV-watching and Internet-surfing and shopping and exercising and collecting and talking. And all of them can become deadly substitutes for God.”\**

--God knows giving is good for us!

### **Verses 13-15:**

--This is not a form of Christian communism. In fact, Paul doesn’t want the Corinthians struggling in giving and others living large. \*2 Thess. 3:10-12 balances the abuse of this type of giving to actual needs.\*

--The idea is that of meeting the necessities of other believers in actual need. In fact, the Scriptures make an emphasis of believers caring for one another specifically.

**\*Galatians 6:10: Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.\***

--Paul ends this section by quoting “the manna principle” from **Exodus 16:18**. The Israelites would gather what they needed and share any excess because to hoard would mean rotting!

### **Verses 16-24**

--Here we see that Paul is sending Titus to them again with this offering in mind—Titus going willingly and likely carrying this second epistle.

--Not only that, but two other honorable men are traveling with Titus to make sure this lavish gift is handled above reproach and with accountability in the sight of God and men. \*Judas\*

## Chapter 9

### Verses 1-5:

--(1) Here Paul admits that he doesn't really need to make any further appeal for them to give. He knows that they are willing to do so. Instead, he appeals to their state of heart in giving.

--(2) The church at Corinth and the surrounding area had agreed to be a part of this gift over a year ago, and Paul had even used their willingness as an example to the churches in Macedonia.

--(3-5) So, being in Macedonia, Paul is telling them to be ready because he could come soon, likely with some Macedonian brethren with him. In that, he didn't want there to be any collections when he came (**1 Cor. 16:2**). He wanted the offering ready, otherwise it would look bad for them having already had a year to do so.

--Notice again, Paul wants nothing to do with **grudging obligation** when he arrives. Grudging obligation is a sign of covetousness.

### Verse 6:

--Instead, of obligation Paul wants them to think about this clear Biblical principle. The context here is clearly material things, but the same Biblical principle is used in regard to giving, prayer, mercy, service, etc. It will always be both material and spiritual.

--To state it simply: *There will always be direct and proportional correlation between all our sowing and reaping—material or spiritual.*

--This is spiritual law is repeated throughout the Word of God: OT, by Jesus, NT.

**\*Proverbs 11:24-25: *There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.\****

**\*Matthew 10:41-42: *He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.\****

**\*Luke 6:38: *Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.\****

**\*Galatians 6:8: *For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.\****

### Verses 7-9:

--Why does God love a **cheerful giver**? Because God is a cheerful giver! He will never be out-given by His creation.

--Paul now tries to say something about what type of Giver God is. We have no conception of what a deep reservoir of resource of God is! He is so deep, and so giving, that we take it for granted every day! \*Think of how many water taps there are in the city of Philadelphia, spilling out water per day. We never think of the reservoir of water needed. What if it went dry? What if we couldn't count on it?\*

--God gives continual living water from our innermost being. Water that is cleansing, watering, satisfying thirst, enabling life, joy, and provides us with an unconcerned contentment we could never know outside of His giving nature.

**\*John 1:16: And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.\***

--His fullness and giving grace meet our needs graciously, aboundingly, and sufficiently in **all things**—good or bad, sacred or secular, physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual. God has resources of grace that we don't know about. Resources so deep that it makes our appropriation—our asking—look shallow.

--God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is the most giving being in existence and that is why Jesus commonly said: **It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).**

--Who else would know that? Could know that? No one has ever given more than He has! There will never be a giver equal to Him, but He invites us to be givers like Him.

--So Paul uses a quote from **Pslam 112:9** to sum up what he has been saying. \*God is more ready to give than we are to even ask or receive!\*

#### **Verses 10-11:**

--When it comes to giving—God will provide both the grace to give and the means to give. He is the Original Supplier. The very first Provider.

--When the Great Giver of all things wants to disperse His goodness abroad—He looks for liberal hearts to share His supplies with. \*I have no doubt that God has opened doors for our church to share, because we will share!\*

--God is then thanked through the gifts.

#### **Verses 12-15:**

--Here we find God's portion in all of this as well. He is thanked **(12)**, glorified **(13)**, and petitioned **(14)** through godly giving.

--For the saints, needs are supplied **(12)**, fellowship is enriched **(13)**, and prayers are born **(14)**.

--**(15)** Paul ends this section praising God the Great Giver who made all this possible. There is really only one **indescribable**—or **unspeakable**—gift. That is the gift of the Son of God.

--That word for **indescribable** is used only here in the Bible. It means that it cannot be expounded in full. To describe something you need: thought, language, and voice.

-Thought requires comprehension. To understand the concept or thing spoken of.

-Language requires words. To say the right thing in the right way.

-Voice requires sound. To say something audibly.

--Funny enough, all these seem to fail when we come to the most important and deepest moments of life. \*F.W. Boreham's story of the pastor over fifty years at one fellowship unable to speak at his retirement celebration.\*

--You see, Incarnation solves the issue of our lack in thought, language and voice. We learn much more from a flush in a persons' face, from a halting voice, or from trembling lip than from mere words. In fact, in the most serious moments of life, eloquence would engender mistrust but Incarnation makes up for our lack in description.

--And when we come to that realization, we have come to edge of eternity.

***\*Ephesians 2:7: That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.\****

***--Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!***