

## KINGDOM GENEROSITY

### 2 Corinthians 8

Now, brethren, we *wish* to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, <sup>2</sup>that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. <sup>3</sup>For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, <sup>4</sup>begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, <sup>5</sup>and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

**2 Corinthians 8:1-5 NASB**

- The churches of Macedonia
  - Churches like Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea
  - They were blessed and touched by the favor of the Lord, and they were incredibly gracious to the churches of Judea...they had endured poverty and difficulty and gave help to those who were experiencing the same issues. They had gone through a real ordeal of affliction and still had an abundance of joy and a heart to give.

Nor [was this gift of theirs merely the contribution] that we expected, but first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us [as His agents] by the will of God [entirely disregarding their personal interests, they gave as much as they possibly could, having put themselves at our disposal to be directed by the will of God]—

**2 Corinthians 8:5 AMPC**

... “I must confess, I had expected a mere cash payment. Instead, they made a complete dedication of themselves, first to the Lord, and then to us...”

**2 Corinthians 8:5 Phillips**

so that the Lord may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’

**1 Kings 2:4 NASB**

- This is the right confession but the wrong king.

So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. **Galatians 6:10 NASB**

<sup>6</sup>So we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well. <sup>7</sup>But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we

inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also. <sup>8</sup> I am not speaking *this* as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also. <sup>9</sup> For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. <sup>10</sup> I give *my* opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do *this*, but also to desire *to do it*. <sup>11</sup> But now finish doing it also, so that just as *there* was the readiness to desire it, so *there may be* also the completion of it by your ability. **2 Corinthians 8:6-11 NASB**

- The church at Corinth had a lot going for them, and Paul is now appealing to their generosity.
  - He reminded them of the wonder of Jesus' generous giving.

### THE GREAT EXCHANGE

<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

**Philippians 2:5-8 NASB**

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

**Hebrews 2:14-15 NASB**

For if the [eager] readiness to give is there, then it is acceptable *and* welcomed in proportion to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.

**2 Corinthians 8:12 AMPC**

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you. **Deuteronomy 16:17 NASB**

Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **2 Corinthians 9:7 NASB**

- No selfishness here, all the giving being done is meeting needs.

<sup>12</sup> rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, <sup>13</sup> contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. **Romans 12:12-13 NASB**

<sup>12</sup>For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what *a person* has, not according to what he does not have. <sup>13</sup>For *this* is not for the ease of others *and* for your affliction, but by way of equality— <sup>14</sup>at this present time your abundance *being a supply* for their need, so that their abundance also may become *a supply* for your need, that there may be equality; <sup>15</sup>as it is written, “He who *gathered* much did not have too much, and he who *gathered* little had no lack.” <sup>16</sup>But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus. <sup>17</sup>For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord. <sup>18</sup>We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of the gospel has spread* through all the churches; <sup>19</sup>and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness, <sup>20</sup>taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; <sup>21</sup>for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. <sup>22</sup>We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of *his* great confidence in you. <sup>23</sup>As for Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, *they are* messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ. <sup>24</sup>Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

### **2 Corinthians 8:12-24 NASB**

- We have regard for what is honorable in the sight of God and the sight of man, too.
  - Integrity, wholeness, before everyone.
  - Internal integrity and external integration...vertically to God and horizontally before people.
- Titus is Paul’s co-worker, part of this apostolic team.
  - The brethren...the people from the local churches, chosen by their leaders to be on this team...not just Paul’s ‘fan club’...they brought offerings from their local church to help the churches in need.
  - They were part of the team sent to minister to the people and the Bible calls them ‘a glory to Christ’...God was working through them.

## God – He is a giver and a Forgiver

### **2 Corinthians 8&9**

Therefore, openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you. **2 Corinthians 8:24 NASB**

- Giving and forgiving, like God, are proofs of our love.

For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints; <sup>2</sup>for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, *namely*, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them. <sup>3</sup>But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared; <sup>4</sup>otherwise if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to speak of you—will be put to shame by this confidence. <sup>5</sup>So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.

**2 Corinthians 9:1-5 NASB**

- Paul is being sure that the Church of Corinth is ready to give generously to the Macedonian churches.

<sup>6</sup>Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup>Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; <sup>9</sup>as it is written, “HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER.” <sup>10</sup>Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; <sup>11</sup>you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. <sup>12</sup>For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. <sup>13</sup>Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for *your* obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, <sup>14</sup>while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you. <sup>15</sup>Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

**2 Corinthians 9:6-15 NASB**

[Remember] this: he who sows sparingly *and* grudgingly will also reap sparingly *and* grudgingly, and he who sows generously [that blessings may come to someone] will also reap generously *and* with blessings. **2 Corinthians 9:6**

**AMPC**

By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. **Hebrews 11:11**

**NASB**

- Giving or sowing is “powerful for the laying down of seed...” (**NASB – Margin**)

“He who sows generously will reap a genuine harvest” **2 Corinthians 9:6 Moffatt**

But into the second [division of the tabernacle] none but the high priest goes, and he only once a year, and never without taking a sacrifice of blood with him, which he offers for himself and for the errors *and* sins of ignorance *and* thoughtlessness which the people have committed. **2 Corinthians 9:7 AMPC**

“God loves a man who is glad to give.” **V7 Goodspeed**

#### **Various versions of 2 Corinthians 9:8:**

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: **KJV**

And God is able to give you an overflowing measure of all good gifts, that all your wants of every kind may be supplied at all times, and you may give of your abundance to every good work - **Conybeare**

God has power to shower all kinds of blessings upon you, so that, having, under all circumstances and on all occasions, all that you can need, you may be able to shower all kinds of benefits upon others - **TCNT**

God is able to bless you with ample means, so that you may always have quite enough for any emergency of your own and ample besides for any kind act to others - **Moffatt**

God has the power to supply you abundantly with every kind of blessing, so that, with all your needs well supplied at all times, you may have something to spare for every work of mercy - **Knox**

After all, God can give you everything that you need, so that you may always have sufficient for both for yourselves and for giving away to other people - **Phillips**

And it is in God’s power to provide you richly with every good gift; thus you will have ample means in yourselves to meet each and every situation, with enough and to spare for every good cause - **New English Bible**

Seed to the Sower, for growing, bread to the eater, for food. **2 Corinthians 9:9**

“He will multiply your seed for sowing...multiply your means of giving” ...**Wuest NT**

- You will be in everything, in every way so as to show liberality all of which blesses others and causes more people to honor and worship God, plus you, the giver, gets blessed, too.
- A God honoring ministry of generosity and compassion for all involved.
- God is worshipped, people in need get helped, and those who give get blessed and prayed for...a win, win, WIN!

### **Giving God’s Way: What’s in Your Account?**

#### **John 3:16, Philippians 4:15-20**

- God is the model of Giving and Forgiving. (**John 3:16**)
  - Giving is modeled by God.
  - Giving is motivated by love, not guilt or greed, or regret but by love.
  - Giving is manifested in actions; God didn’t just propose or conjecture, He gave.
  - Giving is measured by its value; He gave His only Son.
    - See **Romans 8:32**
- New Testament giving is based on His desire for us to be blessed...His motive is to bless our loving obedience.

<sup>15</sup>You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first *preaching* of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone; <sup>16</sup>for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. <sup>17</sup>Not that I seek the gift *itself*, but I seek the profit which increases to your account. <sup>18</sup>But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup>And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup>Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

#### **Philippians 4:15-20 NASB**

Not that I seek *or* am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek *and* am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account]. **Philippians 4:17 AMPC**

- Paul is not after their gift; he wants the fruitfulness. He wants their growth, maturity, and increase in the Lord.

- Note in **V15**...this is a matter of giving and receiving...there is reciprocity in giving.
  - Paul knows that God is a giver with a tremendous heart to give and show favor.
    - See **Matthew 6:19-21**
    - See **Luke 6:38**
  - Paul's motive for people to give was clear; he benefited from the giving to support his work, and they were blessed by the 'profit' that was placed in their 'kingdom' account.
- What is our motive in giving?
  - Giving is a love issue. **1 John 4:19**
  - Giving is a heart issue. **2 Corinthians 8:7-12**

For if the [eager] readiness to give is there, then it is acceptable <i>and</i> welcomed in proportion to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.
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**2 Corinthians 8:12 AMPC**

If you are eager to give, God accepts you according to what you have, not according to what you don't have. <b>2 Corinthians 8:12 Beck Translation</b>
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- How do we give?? What is tithing?
  - Tithing shows that we love God and that He is first in our lives...the purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God first in your life. See **Deuteronomy 14:23**
    - None of us can deny that money plays an important part in our lives.
    - Where we put our money demonstrates our true affections and priorities.
  - Tithing reminds us that everything we have was given to us by God.
  - Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you the power to make wealth. See **Deuteronomy 8:18**
- It is humbling to admit that even our ability to work and earn is a gift from God. Instead of thinking, "I'm giving 10% of my money to God" we should realize that God is letting us keep 90% of His money. God owns everything.

<sup>8</sup> "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! <sup>10</sup> Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there
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may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. <sup>11</sup> Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast *its grapes*,” says the Lord of hosts. <sup>12</sup> “All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,” says the Lord of hosts. **Malachi 3:8-12 NASB**

- Tithing breaks the stronghold of “the love of money” in our lives.

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

**1 Timothy 6:10 NASB**

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. **Matthew 6:24 NASB**

- As Christians, our highest calling is to love and worship Jesus Christ with all that we have and all that we are. Nothing in our lives should compete with Jesus as our top priority.
- Materialism can easily become a priority for Americans. If “the love of money” has taken a hold in your life, the practice of tithing will enable you to overcome the pull of materialism. Faithfully bringing our tithe is a significant and tangible expression of Jesus being first in our lives.