

The Grace of Giving
The Biblical Model of Tithing
2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Christian giving is not driven by obligation or law, but is a joyful, sacrificial response to the grace of Jesus Christ that results in a sharing of resources.

Giving is a sensitive topic. Especially when we've seen TV evangelist making millions with their fancy houses and jets. For many, it feels like a burden, a legalistic requirement. It is necessary though for the local church to operate. In 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 and 9:6-11, the Apostle Paul reframes the entire discussion, using the word "grace" (charis) multiple times to describe giving not as a tax, but as a supernatural gift from God. The money that He has given us is not ours. **We cannot afford to not give our time, talents, and tithes.** It is all His anyways. Paul is writing to the Corinthian church, a wealthy group, encouraging them to follow through on a collection for the impoverished saints in Jerusalem. To teach them how to give, he points not to a rulebook, but to a model—the churches in Macedonia—and ultimately, to the example of Jesus Himself.

I. The Macedonian Model (vv.1-5) The Macedonian model was generosity in poverty. Paul highlights the Macedonians, who, despite severe trials and poverty, displayed "a wealth of generosity" driven by God's grace (v. 2).

- a. **They were strengthened by grace. (v.1)** Their giving was a result of divine grace, not surplus wealth.
- b. **They were sacrificial. (vv.3-4)** They gave beyond their means, viewing it as a privilege rather than a burden.
- c. **They were surrendered. (v.5)** They first gave themselves to the Lord (v. 5). True generosity is a natural outcome of surrendering one's heart to God first.

II. The Motivation in Giving (vv.6-9) The motivation in giving is The Grace of Jesus.

Paul encourages excellence in giving, grounded in the ultimate example of Christ (v. 9): *"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 by his poverty might become rich."*

- **Christ's Example:** He gave up heavenly glory for our sake.
- **Our Response:** Because we are spiritually rich through Christ, we are freed to give.

Giving is not a transactional effort to get, but a response to what we have already received in Christ. The New Testament doesn't put an amount on how much we should give. Here are some examples of what the Old Testament notes: The requirement to tithe 10% is primarily found in the Old Testament, where God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their produce, livestock, and income to support the Levites, the temple, and the poor. Key verses include Leviticus 27:30, Numbers 18:26, Deuteronomy 14:22–28, and Malachi 3:10, which

describes a 10% tithe as a "tenth" belonging to God. The New Testament model of grace in reality goes above and beyond this. We are not obligated, yet we are in awe of His grace; therefore, we graciously give. While the 10th of one's income is a great principle and practice, I want to give more because of God's grace and mercy!

III. The Method of Giving (vv.10-15) The method of giving should be voluntary, purposeful, and fair.

Paul outlines practical, heart-centered guidelines for giving.

- a. **The method is to be voluntary. (v.10)** Giving should be according to what one has, not under coercion or guilt.
- b. **The method is to be purposeful. (v.11)** Paul urges completion of the pledge to the saints, encouraging planned stewardship.
- c. **The method is to be fair. (vv.13-14)** The objective is to use personal abundance to meet the needs of others, echoing the balanced gathering of manna.

We are called to manage our resources so that others may be supported, ensuring balance within the community of faith.

The Macedonians demonstrate that true giving is a joyous response to God's divine grace. By following their example and focusing on Christ's sacrifice, we are encouraged to give not out of obligation, but as a reflection of our love for Christ.

Allow me to end with Giving According to 2 Cor. 9:6-12

Giving

1. Give Cheerfully. (vv.6-7)
2. Give with the Great Commission in Mind. (vv.8-10)
3. Give with Kingdom Construction Motivation. (vv.11-12)