

The Grace of Giving

Chapter 11

Audio Lesson: New Testament #54



Objective: To understand Paul's teaching about Christian stewardship.



Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

—2 Corinthians 9:6-8

In 2 Corinthians 8-9, Paul writes about an offering he was collecting for persecuted believers in Jerusalem and asked the Corinthians to contribute. He shares with them about the giving practices of the Philippians, in whose city he was staying at the time he wrote this letter, because they were excellent examples of generosity and faithful stewardship. As Paul describes the faithful stewardship of the Philippians, he gives us a masterpiece on the subject of faithful stewardship.

Paul would never coerce or manipulate people to participate in an offering because he wanted them to give because the Lord was leading them to give. It is important for our gifts to God to be voluntary. We give because we love Him, because we are grateful for what He has done for us, and because we are full of joy and want to give back to Him. God accepts our gifts not based on how large they are—the Philippians gave generously even in their poverty—but on the attitude with which we give them. Paul called giving a “grace” because we are enabled to give by His power and blessings on our lives. And in response to our generosity, God is able to provide for us and make sure that we have all we need.

1. **True** or false? Paul urged Christians to be distinct from unbelievers and to not make binding partnerships with them.
2. **True** or false? Paul tried to comfort the Corinthians because his words in a previous letter had made them feel sorrowful.
3. True or **false**? Money has nothing to do with our spiritual life, and Christians are not supposed to have any regard for it.
4. True or **false**? Paul wrote to the Corinthians about stewardship because he needed to raise money for his own expenses.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Why did Paul take up a collection from his churches?

- a. **To help Jewish Christians who were suffering in Jerusalem**
- b. To pay off Roman authorities who demanded bribes from Christians
- c. To build a Christian temple in Jerusalem next to the Jewish temple
- d. To fund his writing of much of the New Testament



6. Which church did Paul use as an example of giving with the right attitude?

- a. The Jerusalem church
- b. **The Philippian (or Macedonian) church**
- c. The Roman church
- d. The Galatian church

7. According to Paul, which of the following attitudes and motives are appropriate for giving an offering to God's work? (choose all that apply)

- a. Joy
- b. Guilt
- c. Obligation
- d. Love
- e. Impressing others
- f. Pressure from others
- g. A cheerful heart
- h. Earning God's favor
- i. Bribing God to answer a prayer
- j. Gratitude

8. What did Paul say about those who sow generously?

- a. They will earn a higher place in heaven.
- b. They will be poor throughout their lives.
- c. They will also reap generously.
- d. They will certainly become wealthy.

9. Which of the following best describes Paul's approach to the subject of stewardship?

- a. Coercing people to give
- b. Making people feel guilty for not giving
- c. Promising a specific blessing to those who give
- d. Explaining the blessings and benefits for those who give with a right motive

10. According to Paul, who should give to God's work?

- a. Only those who are wealthy
- b. Those who are poor and who want to be wealthy
- c. Those who owe God a sacrifice for their sins
- d. Those who can give with love, gratitude, and a cheerful heart

11. Which kind of gift does God appreciate most?

- a. Large gifts from wealthy people
- b. Sacrificial gifts given with right motives
- c. Gifts to support spiritual needs rather than physical needs
- d. Gifts that cost us nothing



When you give an offering to God for His work, what motivates you to do so? Why do you think God wants us to give out of our love and gratitude rather than out of guilt or obligation? Why is it important for gifts to be voluntarily given? In what ways can you expect God to respond to your generous gifts?



Thank God for this study from the church in Corinth. Thank Him that He has given His grace so freely to us and has blessed us with so many blessings. Ask Him to help you give back to Him with a cheerful heart, and ask Him to show you ways to demonstrate your love for Him.



Going Deeper

1. How can you personally apply 2 Corinthians 9:8 that God is able to make all grace abound toward you? _____

2. How many promises does Paul give in this one verse regarding the grace that God can give you personally? _____

3. What is the specific area of work or ministry to which Paul was applying this most superlative verse in the Bible about the grace of God? _____

4. As Paul holds up the giving pattern of the Philippians to challenge the Corinthians, what were the characteristics of the Philippian giving, and how can you apply them? (Consider 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9) _____

5. Explain some of the reasons why Paul did not accept personal support from churches in Corinth, Ephesus and others, but only from the Church in Philippi. _____

6. Explain the reality that God loves a cheerful giver. _____

7. How are you to personally relate the declaration of Paul in chapter 6: 14-18 about unequal yokes with unbelievers to marriage, business partnerships, and other dealings with unbelievers? _____
