

# 2 Cor 8:1-9:15

## Corinthians, Session Fifteen

Did you know? These two chapters form the lengthiest discussion on the subject of Christian stewardship in the Scriptures.

### **Learning from the Giving of Others (8:1-15)**

The collection taken up in Macedonia (and Galatia, Asia and Achaia) is destined for \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 16:1-3; Rom 15:25-28). Why did the Jewish believers in Jerusalem need this offering?

- 1) Famine from natural disaster (Acts 11:29)
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_

Paul knew the Corinthians need to give in order to \_\_\_\_\_.

How does this transformation happen?  
severe trial → abundant joy  
extreme poverty → wealth of generosity

“God’s grace is a giving grace; it centers around his gift of Jesus Christ and his redemptive work on our behalf. That grace moves the Christian to be gracious—to freely, gladly give everything, including his material goods, back to the Lord” (Valleskey, 135).

Take a close look at v. 5. What’s the key to giving?

This section reads like a stewardship campaign. One appeal I can recall is “not equal giving, but equal sacrifice.” Is this a good giving principle?

Apparently, the Corinthian congregation had been an eager participant in this offering, but then things started to lag. So Paul encourages them to “finish the task” (v. 11).

Is it appropriate to mention the giving of other Christians in order to spur others to give?

V. 15 recalls the mutual provision and sharing of manna/quail in Ex. 16:18. None had need.

### **Managing Well What is Given (8:16-24)**

V. 18 The brother that is sent with Titus is unnamed, but what kind of person is he?

The brother could have been Sopater, Aristarchus or Secundus. As it turns out, the seven men mentioned in Acts 20:4 and Luke accompany Paul with the offering on the way to Jerusalem.

Proper safeguards, a second or even third set of eyes...these practices are just wise—then and now—in order to avoid criticism (v. 20). It’s all about not putting a stumbling block in anyone’s way (6:3).

## **Seeing the Spiritual in the Secular (9:1-15)**

Where did you learn about giving?

Why would a farmer sow sparingly?

What emotions are involved in giving?

The old Adam gives under compulsion (acts externally for the sake of appearance)

The new Adam gives cheerfully (happily responds to needs and opportunities)

“You can’t outgive God.” – E.H.

How does v. 7 compare/contrast with the concept of tithing?

V. 8: “God is able to make every grace overflow to you...” Why does He do this? So that we excel in every good work = give! Has there been a time when God just made money appear when you needed it?

T / F Psalm 112:9 is about what God does.

Psalm 111:

Psalm 112:

It’s interesting to see how Paul could hold up the Macedonians as an example for the Corinthians to follow (8:1-8) and at the same time he used the Corinthians as a model for the Macedonians to emulate. This is good reminder to us that we can both be an example and learn from an example.

What if the brothers came away from Corinth empty-handed? What would that say?

Wisdom about giving: Proverbs 3:9-10; 11:24; 22:9

We don’t give in order to be blessed, but we know that the Lord blesses giving and the giver. As Jesus said, “It’s more blessed to give than receive.”

“Not only would the Corinthians be able to help alleviate a critical physical need through the offering. Not only would this offering be a way by which the Corinthians could worship their God from whom all blessings flow. Not only would the offering result in thanksgiving to God on the part of those who received it. The offering would also strengthen the ties of Christian fellowship between the church in Jerusalem, which consisted largely of Jews, and the churches Paul had founded, which were made up primarily of Gentiles. To fully appreciate what this means, one has to remember the attitude Jews had toward Gentiles. They wanted to have nothing to do with them. It had even been difficult to convince the Jewish Christians that the gospel, without any restrictions, was meant also for the Gentile world” (Valleskey, 170).

## **Take Away Thoughts**