

Doctrine of Grace Giving

New Testament Principles of Giving

2 Corinthians 8

(The Living Bible)

1. Principle: Only Christians have a right to give to the work of the ministry.

- *1 Now I want to tell you what God in his grace has done for the churches in Macedonia.*

Despite being persecuted by the Romans and reduced to extreme poverty the Christians still wanted to give to the work of the ministry in Jerusalem.

- *2 Though they have been going through much trouble and hard times, they have mixed their wonderful joy with their deep poverty, and the result has been an overflow of giving to others.*

2. Principle: Giving is to be according to grace and apart from coercion.

- *3 They gave not only what they could afford but far more; and I can testify that they did it because they wanted to and not because of nagging on my part.*
- *4 They begged us to take the money so they could share in the joy of helping the Christians in Jerusalem.*

3. Principle: Prior to giving of money the heart should be given to God.

- *5 Best of all, they went beyond our highest hopes, for their first action was to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us, for whatever directions God might give to them through us.*

5. Principle: Gracious giving encourages others.

- *6 They were so enthusiastic about it that we have urged Titus, who encouraged your giving in the first place, to visit you [in Corinth] and encourage you to complete your share in this ministry of giving.*

6. Principle: One area of Christian grace enhances another.

- *7 You people there [in Corinth] are leaders in so many ways-- you have so much faith, so many good preachers, so much learning, so much enthusiasm, so much love for us. Now I want you to be leaders also in the spirit of cheerful giving.*

7. Principle: The giving of financial resources is a great indication of the true status of the heart.
 - *8 I am not giving you an order; I am not saying you must do it, but others are eager for it. This is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond mere words.*
8. Principle: Christ has set the best example of giving.
 - *9 You know how full of love and kindness our Lord Jesus was: though he was so very rich, yet to help you he became so very poor, so that by being poor he could make you rich.*
9. Principle: Grace giving is planned as well as spontaneous. There is a settled commitment to make giving a part of one's Christian ethics.
 - *10 I want to suggest that you finish what you started to do a year ago, for you were not only the first to propose this idea, but the first to begin doing something about it.*
 - *11 Having started the ball rolling so enthusiastically, you should carry this project through to completion just as gladly, giving whatever you can out of whatever you have. Let your enthusiastic idea at the start be equalled by your realistic action now.*
10. Principle: Giving is to be based upon financial reality. In the Old Testament economy giving was a fixed portion of one's income. In the New Testament the principle is not as rigid.
 - *12 If you are really eager to give, then it isn't important how much you have to give. God wants you to give what you have, not what you haven't.*
11. Principle: God's people are not to exploit one another.
 - *13 Of course, I don't mean that those who receive your gifts should have an easy time of it at your expense,*
12. Principle: God and God's people will honor and remember those who honor and remember others in time of need.
 - *14 but you should divide with them. Right now you have plenty and can help them; then at some other time they can share with you when you need it. In this way, each will have as much as he needs.*
13. Principle: The New Testament saints are not to be overshadowed by the Old Testament believers.

- *15 Do you remember what the Scriptures say about this? "He that gathered much had nothing left over, and he that gathered little had enough." So you also should share with those in need.*

14. Principle: The guidelines for grace giving are reasonable being rooted in love and concern.

- *16 I am thankful to God that he has given Titus the same real concern for you that I have.*
- *17 He is glad to follow my suggestion that he visit you again-- but I think he would have come anyway, for he is very eager to see you!*

15. All moneys given to the work of the Lord should be accounted for.

- *18 I am sending another well-known brother with him, who is highly praised as a preacher of the Good News in all the churches.*
- *19 In fact, this man was elected by the churches to travel with me to take the gift to Jerusalem. This will glorify the Lord and show our eagerness to help each other.*
- *20 By traveling together we will guard against any suspicion, for we are anxious that no one should find fault with the way we are handling this large gift.*

16. Principle: Christians should be concerned what God and man says about their financial dealings.

- *21 God knows we are honest, but I want everyone else to know it too. That is why we have made this arrangement.*
- *22 And I am sending you still another brother, whom we know from experience to be an earnest Christian. He is especially interested as he looks forward to this trip because I have told him all about your eagerness to help.*
- *23 If anyone asks who Titus is, say that he is my partner, my helper in helping you, and you can also say that the other two brothers represent the assemblies here and are splendid examples of those who belong to the Lord.*
- *24 Please show your love for me to these men and do for them all that I have publicly boasted you would.*

2 Corinthians 9

17. Principle: Excessive pleas for money is beneath the dignity of the Christian minister and is a poor reflection of faith and trust in God's people to do right in this area.

- *1 I realize that I really don't even need to mention this to you, about helping God's people.*
- *2 For I know how eager you are to do it, and I have boasted to the friends in Macedonia that you were ready to send an offering a year ago. In fact, it was this enthusiasm of yours that stirred up many of them to begin helping.*

18. Principle. God does hold His people accountable for what they do with the resources entrusted to them. While Paul commends the Christians at Corinth he also holds them accountable.

- *3 But I am sending these men just to be sure that you really are ready, as I told them you would be, with your money all collected; I don't want it to turn out that this time I was wrong in my boasting about you.*

19. Principle. There is shame when God's people give large sums of money to matters that do not promote the kingdom of God and the salvation of souls.

- *4 I would be very much ashamed-- and so would you-- if some of these Macedonian people come with me, only to find that you still aren't ready after all I have told them!*
- *5 So I have asked these other brothers to arrive ahead of me to see that the gift you promised is on hand and waiting. I want it to be a real gift and not look as if it were being given under pressure.*

20. Principle: There is a spiritual principle of sowing and reaping.

- *6 But remember this-- if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.*

21. Principle: The spirit in which money is given to the work of the ministry is just as important as how much is given.

- *7 Everyone must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes.*

22. Principle: Those who put the interest of God's work first will not lack funds.

- *8 God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more so that there will not only be enough for your own needs but plenty left over to give joyfully to others.*
- *9 It is as the Scriptures say: "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."*
- *10 For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on good crops to harvest and eat, will give you more and more seed to plant and will make it grow so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest.*

23. One reason why God gives us resources is so that we can give to others.

- *11 Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them they will break out into thanksgiving and praise to God for your help.*

24. Principle: Grace elicits a spirit of thanksgiving to God and appreciation.

- *12 So two good things happen as a result of your gifts-- those in need are helped, and they overflow with thanks to God.*
- *13 Those you help will be glad not only because of your generous gifts to themselves and to others, but they will praise God for this proof that your deeds are as good as your doctrine.*

25. Principle: Grace giving enduces prayer.

- *14 And they will pray for you with deep fervor and feeling because of the wonderful grace of God shown through you.*
- *15 Thank God for his Son-- his Gift too wonderful for words.*

Conclusion.

Let these principles of grace giving prevail in a congregation and there will never be a lack of resources for God's work.