

Family Baptist Church: October 2, 2022
The Glory of Grace Giving: 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

Illustration: Asking Dad for \$20 after he transitioned to pastorate.

- His response: "Get a job!"
- My response to FBC this morning: "You have a job to do!"
- Read excerpt from the Church covenant on regularly supporting the financial needs of the church.

ARTICLE V: CHURCH COVENANT

The members of Family Baptist Church, in the presence of God and this congregation, as one body in Christ, will be expected to enter into a covenant with one another, to the limit of their abilities and understanding. The covenant reads as follows:

Section 1. FOR OURSELVES:

- A. We have been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and
- B. we have made a public profession of this faith and
- C. we have been baptized by immersion in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and
- D. we desire to live lives that honor Christ, to present ourselves to the world as a Christ-honoring congregation.

Section 2. TOWARD OUR CHURCH:

- A. To walk together in Christian love;
- B. to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort;
- C. to promote its prosperity and spirituality;
- D. to attend its services regularly;
- E. to uphold its worship, ordinance and doctrines;
- F. to give it a sacred pre-eminence over all institutions of human origin;
- G. to give faithfully of our time and talent in its activities;
- H. to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God enables us, for the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout all the world;
- I. to support and submit to the biblical discipline practiced by this local church;
- J. to unite with another church of like faith and practice as soon as possible if or when we move from this community. In the event there is no such church, we shall seek to establish one.

Section 3. TOWARD OTHERS:

- A. To maintain regular family and private devotions;
- B. to train up our children by following the principles of the Word of God;
- C. to teach our children to follow the principles of the Word of God;
- D. to seek the salvation of our family and friends;
- E. to live Christ-like in this present world;
- F. to be just in our transactions, faithful in our commitments and a good testimony in our conduct;
- G. to avoid all gossip, backbiting, malice, jealousies, envies, strife and actions done in anger.

Section 4. AS A WITNESS:

- A. To avoid activities that bring dishonor to our Lord Jesus Christ;
- B. to avoid activities that knowingly, or with wanton disregard for the souls of others, cause fellow believers to stumble;
- C. to avoid activities that hinder a witness to others of Christ.

Section 5. AS A BROTHER OR SISTER:

- A. To encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return;
- B. to be considerate of one another in brotherly love;
- C. to remember each other in prayer;
- D. to aid each other in sickness and distress;
- E. to cultivate Christian empathy and courtesy in speech;
- F. to be slow to take offense and always ready to reconcile, being ever mindful of the commandments of our Savior to seek it without delay.

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

Grace giving begins with a proper understanding of:

1. **OWNERSHIP** "divine resources" (Matt 6:25-34; "cattle on a thousand hills" Ps 50:10)

Psalm 50:10 -- 10 For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.

Matthew 6:25-34 –

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

2. **OBLIGATION** "meet human needs" (Galatians 6:1-2; 10; Romans 13:8)

Romans 13:8-10

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. **9** The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not

steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” **10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

3. **METHOD** “through loving channels” (Matthew 22:39; Gal 5:13-15; I John 3:14; 4:7-12)

I John 4:7-12

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Ownership, Obligation, Method...

4. **MOTIVATION** “for the glory of God” (I Corinthians 10:31; Col 3:17; I Peter 4:10-11)

I Corinthians 10:31

31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17

17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

I Peter 4:10-11

10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: **11** whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-8 (ESV)

8:1 We want you to know, brothers, [\[1\]](#) about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, **2** for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. **3** For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will, **4** begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— **5** and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. **6** Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. **7** But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you [\[2\]](#)—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

- **A Lack of Appreciation for God's grace. (1)**
- **A Lack of Understanding about our need. (2)**
- **A Lack of Direction regarding how to give. (3-7)**

The Background of Grace Giving (vs. 1-2)

The last time Paul mentioned giving was in I Cor 16:1-4. Matthew Henry – “How cautious ministers should be, especially in money-matters, not to give occasion to those who seek occasion to speak reproachfully!”

The story behind the gift from the churches in Macedonia

The area of Macedonia included Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, had at one time been rich. The Romans had taken possession of the gold and silver mines and the country was “like a lacerated and disjointed animal” (Alfred Plummer).

The Macedonian churches that Paul was using as an example had experienced severe difficulties, and yet they had given generously. They had not simply gone through “affliction”; they had experienced a “great trial of affliction” (2 Cor. 8:2). They were in *deep poverty*, which means “rock-bottom destitution.” The word describes a beggar who has absolutely nothing and has no hope of getting anything. Their difficult situation may have been caused in part by their Christian faith, for they may have lost their jobs or been excluded from the trade guilds because they refused to have anything to do with idolatry.

But their circumstances did not hinder them from giving. In fact, they gave joyfully and liberally! No computer could analyze this amazing formula: great affliction and deep poverty *plus grace* = abundant joy and abounding liberality! It reminds us of the paradox in Paul's ministry: “as poor, yet making many rich” (2 Cor. 6:10).¹

Illustration: It would be like the group of men and women who stand at the intersection of West Broadway and HWY 94 requesting hand-outs, combining their money to support the needs of a small church in Indonesia who suffered from the aftermath of a Tsunami like the one in December 26, 2004 (over 220,000 estimated dead in Indonesia alone because of the Tsunami).

¹Wiersbe, W. W. 1996, c1989. *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. Victor Books: Wheaton, Ill.

Like Paul, the Macedonian churches had learned that God's grace is sufficient to take their weaknesses and through them to display God's power (4:7-12; 12:9; Phil. 4:13).²

“We want you to know” – (pres. Act. Ind) we draw your attention to

“the grace” – the generous giving on the part of Christians

“that has been given” – (per. Pass. Part) the state or condition with ongoing results

“overflowed in a wealth of generosity” – SINGLENES OF MIND

- **A Lack of Direction regarding how to give. (3-7)**

The Guidelines for Grace Giving

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] “According to their means” **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY** (Explain the tithe from OT perspective) – Make Giving a Priority in your house!

I cannot go very far in this area of proportionate giving without saying that the average American, cannot begin to comprehend the extent of global poverty. We think we have to cut corners in our giving because we are unwilling to sacrifice a regular stop at Starbuck's coffee!

Consider how much more we could do as American churches if we proportioned more of our giving into training nationals and sending professional teachers abroad to equip the people right where they live!

God sets no fixed amount or percentage and expects His people to give based on what they have (Luke 6:38; I Corinthians 16:2)

Luke 6:37-38

37 “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; **38** give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

I Corinthians 16:1-2

16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. **2** On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, **as he may prosper**, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

²Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

Tithe in the OT:

1. Before the LAW (Abraham to Melchizedek in Gen 14:18-20 = 10%)
2. Under the LAW (3 Types of Tithes (tithe=tenth) Required of the Jewish people = over 23% of total income each year.)
 - a. The Clergy or Levitical Tithe: Used to fund the theocracy by sustaining the priests and Levites who served the people (Lev 27:30-33; Numbers 18:21-32) [Given Yearly]
 - b. The Religious Festival Tithe: Used for the celebration of convocations of worship at the sanctuary [Given Yearly or as often as the crop produced...] (Deut 14:22-27)
 - c. The Welfare Tithe: Used to feed the Levites, the orphans, the widows, and the stranger. On year 3 and 6 of the 7 year sabbatical cycle, rather than taking this tithe to the central sanctuary, it was instead stored up within the individual cities in the Land (Deut 26:12; Num 18:26-32)

... note the lack of obedience in Neh 13:10-13

... note God's response to this lack of obedience in Malachi 3:8-10

In recent years, there's been a popular teaching in Christian churches that boils a God-honoring lifestyle down to a nice-neat-formula: 10-10-80. 10% Giving, 10% Saving, 80% for the rest of my expenses. That's memorable, it sounds nice, and it would put most people in good financial shape. It's certainly wise in God's eyes to give regular forethought to our spending plan and to think in advance what we're going to give, and save, and keep for other expenses. The only problem is, God's will is not a one-size-fits all formula. Frankly, for most of us, 10% is probably way under the mark of truly sacrificial giving and 80% is probably way more than God wants us to spend on ourselves. For most of my Christian life, I've tried to stay well above that 10% figure just to keep from getting legalistic about it. As I've worked through this study, I realize again how much growing I've got to do.

It's not what you do with the million if fortune should ere be your lot, but what are you doing at present with the dollar and quarter you got. -- [Unknown](#).

2 Corinthians 8:12

12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.

The trouble is that too many people are spending money they haven't yet earned for things they don't need to impress people they don't like. -- [Unknown](#).

Application: What kind of a priority does giving have in your commitment to Christ? When was the last time you compared God's grace in salvation, sanctification, and daily provision to your response to the needs of the local church, global missions, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger?

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] “According to their means” **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] “Beyond their means” **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY** (Mark 12:41-44; Phil 4:9)

The Widow's Offering (Mark 12:41-44)

41 And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. **42** And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. [\[1\]](#) **43** And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. **44** For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

I went into church and sat on the velvet pew. I watched as the sun came shining through the stained glass windows. The minister dressed in a velvet robe opened the golden gilded Bible, marked it with a silk bookmark and said, "If any man will be my disciple, said Jesus, let him deny himself, take up his cross, sell what he has, give it to the poor, and follow me."

[Soren Kierkegaard, in "And I looked Around and Nobody was Laughing."](#)

Does your lifestyle dictate your giving or your giving dictate your lifestyle?

Jim Eliot said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Application: What are you willing to sacrifice out of deep appreciation for your salvation?

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] “According to their means” **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] “Beyond their means” **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY** (Mark 12:41-44; Phil 4:9)
3. [v.3c] “Of their own free will” **GIVE VOLUNTARILY** – God’s people are not to give out of compulsion, manipulation, or intimidation. Freewill giving has always been God’s plan (9:6; **Gen 4:2-4**; Num 18:12; Deut 16:10, 17; Prov 3:9, 10; Luke 19:1-8)

Reason for having an offering basket in the back as opposed to passing plates

2 Corinthians 9:6

6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-5)

4:1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten [\[1\]](#) a man with the help of the LORD.” **2** And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. **3** In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, **4** and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, **5** but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.

Deuteronomy 16:10, 17

10 Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.

17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

Proverbs 3:9-10

9 Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;

10 then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

On a blood-bank poster which read: "Be a volunteer Blood Donor," somebody had printed, "That's the best kind." -- [Ed Freeman, quoted by Herb Cain in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.](#)

Illustration: Students at Maranatha "volunteering" to give \$1 toward the college extension ministry which allowed the students to wear business casual on Friday's.

Application: Have you been giving out of duty or delight? God's people are not to give out of compulsion, manipulation, or intimidation.

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] "According to their means" **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] "Beyond their means" **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**
3. [v.3c] "Of their own free will" **GIVE VOLUNTARILY**

4. [v.4] "Begging us earnestly... to take part" **GIVE EAGERLY** (9:6-7) – They pleaded for the privilege of sharing!

When We Give Enthusiastically (2 Cor. 8:3–4)

It is possible to give generously but not give enthusiastically. "The preacher says I should give until it hurts," said a miserly church member, "but for me, it hurts just to think about giving!" The Macedonian churches needed no prompting or reminding, as did the church at Corinth. They were more than willing to share in the collection. In fact, *they begged to be included!* (2 Cor. 8:4) How many times have you heard a Christian *beg* for somebody to take an offering?

Their giving was voluntary and spontaneous. It was of grace, not pressure. They gave because they wanted to give and because they had experienced the grace of God. Grace not only frees us from our sins, but it frees us from ourselves. The grace of God will open your heart *and your hand*. Your giving is not the result of cold calculation, but of warmhearted jubilation!³

Spiritual Blessings in Christ – Ephesians 1:3-10

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, **4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love **5** he predestined us [\[1\]](#) for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, **6** to the praise of his glorious

³Wiersbe, W. W. 1996, c1989. *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. Victor Books: Wheaton, Ill.

grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **7** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, **8** which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight **9** making known [2] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ **10** as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Illustration:

A mother wanted to teach her daughter a moral lesson. She gave the little girl a quarter and a dollar for church "Put whichever one you want in the collection plate and keep the other for yourself," she told the girl. When they were coming out of church, the mother asked her daughter which amount she had given. "Well," said the little girl, "I was going to give the dollar, but just before the collection the man in the pulpit said that we should all be cheerful givers. I knew I'd be a lot more cheerful if I gave the quarter, so I did." -- *Bits & Pieces, February 4, 1993, p. 23.*

Application: When was the last time that you looked for an opportunity to volunteer your gift of grace in the local body? **BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR SOMEONE IN NEED!**

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] "According to their means" **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] "Beyond their means" **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**
3. [v.3c] "Of their own free will" **GIVE VOLUNTARILY**
4. [v.4] "Begging us earnestly... to take part" **GIVE EAGERLY**

5. [v.5] "They gave themselves first to the Lord and then, by the will of God, to us" **GIVE WORSHIPFULLY** (note the priority of God first... then neighbor – Matthew 22:37-40)

Romans 12:1-2

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, [1] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] **2** Do not be conformed to this world, [3] but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply acknowledging a great debt we owe to our God, which we can never repay? Is that a sacrifice which brings its own reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny? It is emphatically no sacrifice. Rather it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, danger, foregoing the common conveniences of this life--these may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver, and the soul to sink; but let this only be for a moment. All these are nothing compared with the glory which shall later be revealed in and through us. I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk, when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father's throne on high to give Himself for us. -- *David Livingstone.*

Application: Do you take the time to prayerfully consider your gift as first and foremost to God and then for the needs of others in the body of Christ? Pause and meditate on God as you give!

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] "According to their means" **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] "Beyond their means" **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**
3. [v.3c] "Of their own free will" **GIVE VOLUNTARILY**
4. [v.4] "Begging us earnestly... to take part" **GIVE EAGERLY**

5. [v.5] “They gave themselves first to the Lord and then, to us” **GIVE WORSHIPFULLY**
6. [v.6] “Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace” **GIVE DILIGENTLY** (finish what you start)

2 Timothy 4:7 -- 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Paul was concerned that Titus finish what he started with regard to the giving. (cf. vs 11)

It is often easy to start strong then fade away... get up and go only to procrastinate later...

Illustration on the danger of procrastination:

A farm boy accidentally overturned his wagonload of corn in the road. The farmer who lived nearby came to investigate. "Hey, Willis," he called out, "forget your troubles for a spell and come on in and have dinner with us. Then I'll help you get the wagon up."

"That's mighty nice of you," Willis answered, "But I don't think Pa would like me to."

"Aw, come on, son!" the farmer insisted.

"Well, okay," the boy finally agreed. "But Pa won't like it."

After a hearty dinner, Willis thanked his host. "I feel a lot better now, but I just know Pa is going to be real upset."

"Don't be foolish!" exclaimed the neighbor. "By the way, where is he?"

"Under the wagon."

Application: How many goals, projects or objectives are you currently attempting? May be you need to reprioritize your life and focus on the follow-through of that which lasts for all eternity!

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

1. [v.3a] “According to their means” **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
2. [v.3b] “Beyond their means” **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**
3. [v.3c] “Of their own free will” **GIVE VOLUNTARILY**
4. [v.4] “Begging us earnestly... to take part” **GIVE EAGERLY**
5. [v.5] “They gave themselves first to the Lord and then, to us” **GIVE WORSHIPFULLY**
6. [v.6] “Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace” **GIVE DILIGENTLY**
7. [v.7] “But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you (or love for us) – see that you excel in this act of grace also” **GIVE HOLISTICALLY** (giving is one of the many ways we demonstrate our appreciation for God’s grace)

GIVING IS ONE OF THE SIGNS OF UNDERSTANDING THE GRACE OF GOD

2 Peter 1:3-8

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to **[1]** his own glory and excellence, **[2]** **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. **5** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, **[3]** and virtue with knowledge, **6** and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, **7** and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection

with love. **8** For if these qualities [4] are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Excel in this grace = Don't get satisfied with successfully arriving until you have completely mastered the depths of God's grace!

Illustration: Putting together a puzzle with Heather and being "satisfied" with completing the edges... completing the edges demonstrates progress but it is simply one measure in many to finishing the picture.

Application: Do you find yourself content with compartmentalizing your giving ("I give my tithe" or "I must give more than him!") or do you view giving as one of the measures of understanding and applying God's grace for you personally?

Application:

Proposition: Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels for the glory of God.

General Observations from 2 Corinthians 8-9

- Giving must be motivated by the grace of God not a fixed percent. (begins in 8:1 and ends in 9:14-15)
- Giving must be managed by discipline not personal comfort. It is easy to begin but difficult to continue... especially when finances are tight! (8:10-11; 20-24)
- Giving must be measured by the attitude of the giver not the amount of the gift (giving reveals the spiritual temperature of a church or individual)

The best way to inventory your willingness to sacrifice is through your personal journal (aka bank account)

- If you are not keeping track of your money, you have no idea if you are sacrificing
- If you are keeping track of your money, what does the Quicken File or Check Book reveal about your understanding of God's grace (your willingness to sacrifice)?

1. [v.3a] "According to their means" **GIVE PROPORTIONATELY**
Application: What kind of a priority does giving have in your commitment to Christ?
2. [v.3b] "Beyond their means" **GIVE SACRIFICIALLY**
Application: What are you willing to sacrifice out of deep appreciation for your salvation?
3. [v.3c] "Of their own free will" **GIVE VOLUNTARILY**
Application: Have you been giving out of duty or delight?
4. [v.4] "Begging us earnestly... to take part" **GIVE EAGERLY**
Application: When was the last time that you looked for an opportunity to volunteer your gift of grace in the local body? **BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR SOMEONE IN NEED!**
5. [v.5] "They gave themselves first to the Lord and then, to us" **GIVE WORSHIPFULLY**
Application: Do you take the time to prayerfully consider your gift as first and foremost to God and then for the needs of others in the body of Christ? Pause and meditate on God as you give!

6. [v.6] “Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace” **GIVE DILIGENTLY**

Application: How many goals, projects or objectives are you currently attempting? May be you need to reprioritize your life and focus on the follow-through of that which lasts for all eternity!

7. [v.7] “But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you (or love for us) – see that you excel in this act of grace also” **GIVE HOLISTICALLY** (giving is one of the many ways we demonstrate our appreciation for God’s grace)

Application: Do you find yourself content with compartmentalizing your giving (“I give my tithe” or “I must give more than him!”) or do you view giving as one of the measures of understanding and applying God’s grace for you personally?