

**The Grace of Giving: It's Not About the Money!**

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**II Corinthians 8:1-15** <sup>1</sup>Now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the churches of Macedonia. <sup>2</sup>In the terrible ordeal they suffered, their abundant joy and deep poverty overflowed into rich generosity. <sup>3</sup>For I testify that they gave according to their ability and even beyond it. Of their own accord, <sup>4</sup>they earnestly pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. <sup>5</sup>And not only did they do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us, because it was the will of God. <sup>6</sup>So we urged Titus to help complete your act of grace, just as he had started it. <sup>7</sup>But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness, and in the love we inspired in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. <sup>8</sup>I am not making a demand, but I am testing the sincerity of your love in comparison to the earnestness of others. <sup>9</sup>For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. <sup>10</sup>And this is my opinion about what is helpful for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give, but even to have such a desire. <sup>11</sup>Now finish the work, so that you may complete it just as eagerly as you began, according to your means. <sup>12</sup>For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. <sup>13</sup>It is not our intention that others may be relieved while you are burdened, but that there may be equality. <sup>14</sup>At the present time, your surplus will meet their need, so that in turn their surplus will meet your need. Then there will be equality. <sup>15</sup>As it is written: “He who gathered much had no excess, and he who gathered little had no shortfall.” (BSB)

**Intro:** The famine in Jerusalem was severe and the offering mentioned in this passage was a Christian **response** to this catastrophe.

**I.** Here are the details about this passage.

- A.** The main theme in this passage is not money but **grace**. **Grace** means unmerited favor. V. 1
- B.** The Macedonians were going through a great **ordeal**. V. 2 Macedonia was in the northern part of Greece and had been pillaged by Rome when they took over the Greek empire. This was an impoverished area.
- C.** Because of the Grace of God, they wanted to **give** grace to others. V. 3-5
- D.** Paul wants the Corinthian church to give this **same** grace as the Macedonian churches had done. V. 6-8
- E.** Jesus Christ is the prime **example** of giving grace to others. V. 9
- F.** The Corinthian church had decided to start this but had forgotten their **commitment** to give. V. 10-11

- G. Godly giving is not about the amount, it is about a heart of **gratitude** for the grace that they had received from God. V. 12
- H. **Hoarding** blessing doesn't usually work out the way that we want it to go. V. 15 This is a reference to the giving of Manna in the Old Testament.

II. What can we learn from these truths?

- A. We must go back to our own **relationship** to God. We cannot give godly grace unless we have been given grace. This applies for mercy and forgiveness to others. A real understanding of what our destiny would look like without grace is the beginning of giving grace.
- B. Real grace expects **nothing** in return.
- C. **Hoarding** blessings for ourselves is actually a bad way to live. It is ok to be blessed. Owning nice things is ok but at what point do they begin to own you?