

NT Giving - II Corinthians 8:1 - 9:15 - Comments on the Text

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The Macedonians were referred to as an example of giving in that they:

1. Gave liberally while in trials and poverty (2).
2. Gave beyond their ability, probably meaning sacrificially (3).
3. Gave willingly (3).
4. First gave themselves (5; cf. Matthew 6:21).

Chapter 8

Giving:

1. Is a test of our love (8).
2. Is an opportunity to emulate Jesus (9).
3. Is also to the advantage of the giver (9).
4. First requires a willing mind (12).
5. Is accepted according to what one has and not what he does not have (12).
6. Should not be disproportionate among the churches (13-15).

Chapter 9

7. Is rewarded according to how one sows; sparingly or bountifully (6).
8. Is to be determined by the giver and with a cheerful or hilarious spirit (7).
9. If done biblically, guarantees God's blessing upon the giver (8).
10. Gives assurance of giver's needs being met (8).
11. Causes the results to multiply in their effect (9,10).
12. Causes giver to be enriched and enjoy thankfulness (11).
13. Supplies the needs of the saints (12).
14. Glorifies God by the giver's obedience (13).
15. Encourages receiver to pray for giver (14).

Some thoughts about Tithing

The N.T. does not make use of the tithe or firstfruits. Jesus said much about possessions but only mentions the tithe in three places; these somewhat negatively and *not* as a command to do. (Luke 18:12; Matt. 23:23 and Luke 11:42).

Paul said much about giving but reference to the law of tithing is conspicuously absent. Neither Jesus nor Paul made the tithe as the basis for Christian stewardship.

Why not the tithe? It may be that the tithe simply is not a sufficiently radical concept to embody the carefree unconcern for possessions that marks life in the Kingdom of God. Jesus is Lord of all our goods, not just ten percent. It's quite possible to obey the law of the tithe without ever dealing with our mammon lust.

We can feel that our monthly check to the church meets the new law of Jesus and never once root out reigning covetousness and greed. It's quite possible to tithe and at the same time oppress the poor and needy.

Tithing is not necessarily wrong and it may be right for some. It *is* wrong to put us back under the Law (Rom. 6:14; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:1). Under Mosaic law, the tithe belonged to the LORD (Lev. 27:30). In this age, it all belongs to God (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20). We are stewards of all that God has allowed for us to use (I Cor. 4:2). It is on loan to us to use for His Glory (Col. 3:23). We should give as we love. That may even be more than 10%. God will bless us accordingly (II Cor. 9:6).

Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

The key to giving is not to preach about giving more but to get the heart right and then we will give right.

II Corinthians 9:6b, " ...God loves a cheerful giver".

Romans 12:2, " ...Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

Please see studies on tithing:

"Tithing, What Does the Bible Really Teach?"

<http://www.caic.org.au/biblebase/abuse/tithing.htm>

"The Doctrine of Tithing: Modern Applications of Tithing to Taxation"

<http://www.kukis.org/Doctrines/tithing.pdf>

"Tithing is Unscriptural Under the New Covenant"

<http://www.bible-truths.com/tithing.html>

II Corinthians 8:1 - 9:15

Chapter 8

- 1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;
- 2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
- 3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;
- 4 Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.
- 5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.
- 6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.
- 7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.
- 8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.
- 9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.
- 10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.
- 11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.
- 12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.
- 13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:
- 14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:
- 15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.
- 16 But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.
- 17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.
- 18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;
- 19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:
- 20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:
- 21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.
- 22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.
- 23 Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.
- 24 Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

Chapter 9

- 1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:
- 2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.
- 3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:
- 4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.
- 5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up before hand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.
- 6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.
- 7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
- 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:
- 9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.
- 10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)
- 11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.
- 12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;
- 13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;
- 14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.
- 15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.