

**Spiritual Checkup Series**  
**Generosity & The Grace of Giving**  
**2 Corinthians 8-9**

**Generosity**  
**gen er os i ty**

**noun: generosity**

**1. the quality of being kind and generous**

**The Collection for the Lord's People - Offering Guidelines**

**Excel in the Grace of Giving**

**2 Corinthians 8:1-7**

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

- In the midst of a severe trial
- Overflowing joy + extreme poverty = rich generosity
- Exceeded expectations - (on their own)
  - gave themselves to God
  - then to the others
- Excel in everything

**Sincerity Test**

**Vss. 8-11**

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.

- Comparing with earnestness of others
- Willingness matched by completion

**What is the Goal?**

**Vss.12-15**

For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have. Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is

equality, as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little." (see Exodus 16)

- Equality

### **Titus Sent to Receive the Collection**                      **Vss. 16-21**

Thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you. For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.

- Honor God
- Avoid criticism of men

### **Generosity Encouraged**                      **2 Corinthians 9:6-11**

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also **supply** and **increase** your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

- Sow Generously
- Sow Cheerfully
- God supplies seed and bread - Do we believe it?
- Are you eating your seed?
- Generosity results - Thanksgiving to God

### **Generosity results - Thanksgiving to God**                      **Vss. 12-15**

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

- Giving is a witness
- Obedience that accompanies your confession