

An Abundance of Grace

Read: 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Main idea: Generosity is a fundamental sign in the life of a believer that they have experienced the grace and love of a generous God.

Key Verses: “I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. 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 by his poverty might become rich.” **(8:8-9 ESV)**

Key Principles:

- Generosity is one of the primary fruits of a mature disciple alongside faith, speech, knowledge and love.
- Generosity is not dependent upon wealth or material possessions, rather it is dependent upon God’s grace and joy in your life.
- Giving should be a joyful act of sacrifice that flows from a commitment to Christ rather than an obligation.
- Giving begins by first giving yourself to God before you ever consider financial or material contributions.
- Giving is not simply a duty but a response to the grace believers have received in Christ, motivating them to be gracious to others.
- Jesus is the ultimate example of sacrificial love which reminds us that generosity flows from a heart that recognizes and values Christ’s ultimate sacrifice.

Discussion:

1. What does God’s grace or favor mean to you? Why does our view of generosity begin with understanding God’s grace?
2. How does God’s grace lead to our joy? What is joy and how can you have it during difficult circumstances?
3. How do you view the church with regard to money? What are the characteristics of giving?
4. Why do you think it is important to not be emotionally manipulated into giving? How do some religious figures or institutions practice manipulation?
5. How should God’s grace compel you to keep giving to gospel mission and ministry?
6. How should Jesus and the gospel shape your view and commitment toward giving? What is the proper motivation for giving?

Prayer:

- Pray that we would remember that God cares about our heart more than our stuff.
- Pray:
 - That we know that generosity is about God’s grace and not wealth or possessions.
 - That we would give out of an attitude of selflessness and not an obligation.
 - That we remember the ultimate sacrifice of our Savior when we consider giving.

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- I. You can be generous because God is gracious. 8:1-4**
 - 1. Don't let circumstances be an obstacle. 8:1-2
 - 2. Don't let difficulty hinder an opportunity. 8:3-4

- II. You can be effective because God is gracious. 8:5-7**
 - 1. Give yourself to the Lord. 8:5
 - 2. Give your resources for the Lord. 8:6-7

- III. You can love others because God is gracious. 8:8-9**
 - 1. Let your love be genuine. 8:8
 - 2. Let your rewards be in Christ. 8:9

NEXT WEEK:
The Grace of Giving
2 Corinthians 8:10-9:5