

The Spiritual Grace of Giving

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston's sermon emphasizes the profound spiritual significance of sacrificial giving as a reflection of God's grace and love.

Duration: 1:00:30

Scripture: Proverbs 11:24-25, Ecclesiastes 11:1-6, Malachi 3:10, Matthew 6:33, Luke 6:38, Acts 20:35, 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Topics: "Giving"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the theme of redemption and the grace of giving. He begins by acknowledging that the subject of redemption is vast and cannot be fully covered in one sermon. He then reads from Ecclesiastes 11:1-6, using the analogy of clouds emptying themselves of rain to illustrate the concept of giving generously. The preacher emphasizes that the foundation of the spiritual grace of giving is redemption, highlighting the example of the Israelites who were slaves and lived in poverty but experienced God's miraculous deliverance and became rich overnight. The sermon encourages listeners to understand the motivation behind the Israelites' tremendous giving and to apply the principles of grace and generosity in their own lives.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all, without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Well, I'm sure I can express the heart of every father in this room.

We feel overwhelmed with gratitude for your love and your respect, young people. Our prayer to God is that He would allow that mutual love and respect to continue to flow from father to children, from children to father. That's our prayer.

Thank you so much for blessing us that way this morning. Alright, let's bow our heads for a word of prayer. Thank you, Father.

Thank you, Lord, that I can be a father. I understand a lot about you, Lord, because I can be a father. I thank you for that, Lord, that you gave me that privilege all those many years ago, all these many years, that I can be a father.

Thank you, Lord, for these dear young people. They are arrows, Lord. They're the hope, Lord, of this church 15 years from now, God.

We pray blessings upon their heads, even as you promised, Lord, that you would pour out your Spirit upon our sons and our daughters. Do it, Lord. Do it.

Oh, do it exceedingly above what we would even ask. Do that, Father. Now, Lord, we come to another part of this service, preaching of your Word.

Lord, we come in our poverty and we look up unto thee and pray that you will help us this morning, Lord, the hearers and the preacher, all. Help us this morning, Lord, to hear your voice speaking through your Word. We pray this in Jesus Christ's holy name.

Amen. I also give greetings to each one this morning in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's a joy to be here on this, oh, Father's Day.

I am grateful that we live in a country where there is such a day as Father's Day, that our minds can be set a bit more on our privilege and our responsibility. However, talking to Brother Jeff last evening, yesterday afternoon, I was searching the Lord what I should say this morning. And after I talked to Brother Jeff, realized which way he would be going this morning and the way the service would go, I felt the Lord giving me the liberty to speak on another subject.

It would be very easy for me to keep right on going. In fact, I even have a sermon in my Bible to do that. But I don't feel the Lord leading me that way this morning.

But rather to take a little bit of a different direction, to bring a message that I've been waiting on the Lord for, for quite some time. I want to speak this morning about a spiritual exercise, a spiritual discipline that, because it is very physical, it is often not considered spiritual. However, if you study this subject in the whole biblical revelation, you will begin to see that it is one of the most practical and spiritual subjects in the Bible.

The title of my message this morning is, The Spiritual Grace of Giving. The Spiritual Grace of Giving. And I've given the title that way on purpose that we might understand the truly, the true depth of spirituality that is manifested through sacrificial giving.

I use the word sacrificial because as I was preparing for this message, I realized that that's what makes giving deeply spiritual. When it becomes sacrificial, it becomes deeply spiritual. I'm not discounting the other giving, but as I look at the whole of what the Scripture teaches, it seems to become a deeply spiritual exercise when it moves into the realm of sacrificial giving.

As you all well know, if you have \$10,000 in your pocket and you give \$500 of that away, it doesn't require a lot of spiritual exercise. But if you have \$10,000 in your pocket and you give \$5,000 away, it will go much

deeper in your heart and your experience. This message this morning, I want to quickly say, is by no means corrective, but rather affirming.

I purposely have waited and waited till there was no need on the horizon, so that this message could be received without any thought of any motivation of trying to get anybody to give to any need. And as some of you know, sometimes that's a little hard around here, so I waited for the calm. Because I don't want this message to be misunderstood, but rather we could just sit at the feet of the Word of God this morning and look at what God's heart says about this subject.

And I think if you'll look back over the history of our fellowship, I think you'll find we don't preach on giving very much around here. Maybe only that I know of. Maybe I missed a sermon here or there, but maybe 5 or 6 times, maybe 7 in 23 years.

I know that many of us have had different experiences than that. I used to hear about giving every Sunday. Alright, I want us to open our Bibles to 2 Corinthians.

We're going to be looking a little bit here at 2 Corinthians in chapter 8. Where Paul addresses a testimony of some people of God. Paul addresses the testimony of some people of God. We want to read verse 1 through 9. We can actually read 2 whole chapters.

God has given 2 whole chapters here, chapter 8 and chapter 9 to this subject. We will not take all of those verses on this morning. But let's read verse 1 through 9. Moreover, brethren, we do you to wits of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves, praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 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, insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all diligence and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others and to prove the sincerity of your love. 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. Moving now back to verse 1 of this text, we see quite an arresting testimony that Paul is focusing on.

Now, Paul is using the example of some other churches to stimulate and motivate the church at Corinth that they also would join in to meet the same need. The need of the hour? The poor church in Jerusalem. That was the need of the hour.

There was persecution in Jerusalem. There were many difficulties in the city of Jerusalem and the need arose to minister to the saints that were at Jerusalem. Paul is concerned about these brothers and sisters in Jerusalem and therefore he is encouraging other churches to rise up to the opportunity and meet the need of those that are in the city of Jerusalem and the church there.

That's kind of the background of these verses. Paul begins by saying this to the Corinthians, Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. Now that little phrase there, do you to wit, that's old English, it simply means, I want you to know.

Paul is saying to the church there at Corinth, I want to inform you, I want you to take note of some very beautiful things that God is doing in the churches in Macedonia. When we think about the sacrifice that they make, it is amazing that this testimony is written, because this is not the testimony of an individual. I mean, that would be commendable if it was, just like the widow's two mites that Jesus brought focus upon, because she gave all that she had, even though she gave way less than what the many rich that were coming to the temple had given, Jesus focused on her and said she has given more than all of them, because she has given all that she had.

Now that would be commendable if Paul was focusing on one individual and helping us to see the beautiful work that God is doing in their life. But Paul is not focusing on an individual. I want you to note that this morning, not even focusing on a church, but he is focusing on the churches, plural, in Macedonia.

Now I studied that a bit and I believe what he is referring to is the church at Philippi and the church at Thessalonica and also the church at Berea. Those three places received the Word of God at Paul's hand and there a church grew up and was established, and now this church is exercising itself in this grace of giving. Their example borders on the example of the widow's mites.

And in the natural, you would think it would be the last thing that they would do to give the way that they gave. So Paul says in verse 1, I want you to know, I'm bringing the focus of your attention on how the grace of God worked in these churches. And that's where I get my title, the spiritual grace of giving.

Paul is focusing upon these churches and he is focusing on God's grace and saying, Do you see how God's grace manifested itself upon these three churches? And see it by the way that they gave. So Paul, beginning his explanation and testimony of these churches, he puts a very spiritual connotation upon what they're doing from the very beginning. Look how God's grace worked in these churches.

In verse 2, I want you to notice, now he's explaining how this grace worked the way that it did. How that in a great trial of affliction, there was persecution there. If you remember, Paul had to flee for his life from these places.

He barely escaped in Thessalonica and also again in Berea. So, these churches were not established in the good times, but they were established in the hard times. And there was affliction and there was persecution upon them.

And we would look at that and from our natural perspective we would say, well those would be the last places where you would want to look for them to take an offering and help the church that is at Jerusalem. They are under the gun and they are being persecuted and there is much affliction upon them. But yet, in the midst of that affliction, they gave.

Now I want you to notice also, as he continues to explain what their giving was like, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty. So there's two things there. They had abundance of joy, which we know that if you are persecuted for righteousness sake, it brings God's grace down upon your life.

And they were filled with joy. And in that overflowing strength of God's grace, which filled them with joy, abundance of joy, it overflowed in giving. Again, this is a very spiritual thing.

It overflowed in giving. But I want you to notice also the amazing testimony of these churches. It happened in their deep poverty.

They didn't have a lot of money either. But they heard the need. And in the midst of their difficulties, in the midst of their afflictions, their hearts were overflowing with joy.

And in spite of the fact that they were in deep poverty, they responded and met the need or helped to meet the need of the church that was at Jerusalem. It doesn't say how much money it was that they gave. That really doesn't matter, does it? We can see that very clearly when we look at this whole subject from God's perspective.

God does not look at how much we give. God looks more at our heart and what is motivating us to give. Well, the last part here of verse 2, we see these words.

This abundant joy and deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. It overflowed with giving. Now, Paul is focusing on these churches as an example to the Corinthian church.

Look how God's grace worked in them. That's the whole point of these few verses here at the beginning. Notice in verse 3, he goes on to say, For to their power I bear record, or to their ability I bear record, yea, and beyond their power or their ability they were willing of themselves.

Now, what Paul is saying here is they went beyond their abilities. They went beyond what would be reasonable. They brought themselves into a place of sacrifice.

They went beyond their abilities. That's what Paul is saying here. They were willing of themselves, or they were not constrained.

But God was working in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. And they, as a people of God, opened their hearts to that moving of the Spirit of God. It was God working in them, causing them to give beyond their ability, and not only give beyond their ability, but to give willingly.

They gave willingly in that situation. It's very clear as we look at the text here. They were not doing something out of an obligation.

They were not doing something out of a law. They were not doing something because they had been pressured to do it. Oh, people may give some out of pressure.

People may give some just out of obligation. People may give some just because it's the right thing to do at a certain time. But people do not give beyond their abilities because they are asked to out of obligation.

But rather, when the heart begins to flow toward the need by the grace of God working in that heart, it seems then the heart goes beyond the abilities. The spiritual grace of giving is what we're looking at here this morning. Look at verse 4. It's like as if they have entered into this thing so beautifully that they are begging Paul.

Come and join us. Come and enter in with us. Come and enjoy the fellowship that we are having.

Notice the word fellowship there. That word is the word that we understand it to mean. It is the Greek word koinonia.

It is a deep, intimate fellowship. And what they're doing here is they're inviting the Apostle Paul and whoever his workers might have been to come and enter into the joy of this fellowship that they are having in giving. Isn't that interesting? Come, Paul.

Come and help us. Enter into the joy of it. Enter into the fellowship.

Enter into the deep koinonia. Will you take the gift and carry it to Jerusalem? That's what he's referring to there. Will you enter into this fellowship and be the one who will carry it to Jerusalem? Our hearts are overflowing with joy and blessing for having given like this.

We entreat you, Paul. We beg you. We invite you to come enter in with us and enter in to the koinonia fellowship of the ministry of the saints.

That's what they're saying in this verse. They were tasting the joy and they wanted Paul to also taste the joy. I want us to notice also in verse 5, just kind of going down here in the beginning, verse by verse by verse, looking at a few things here, as we look at this subject, the spiritual grace of giving.

Paul goes on giving their testimony. And this they did, not as we hoped. Or, they did more than what we hoped.

They exceeded our expectations, Paul is saying. This they did, not as we had hoped. Or not as we expected.

But they did more. And all we see here, the beauty. The beauty of true New Testament giving is more than reaching into your pocket and putting some money.

It's more than that. Notice in verse 5. But first gave their own selves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God. So what Paul is saying is, we got way more than what we thought.

When we sent to them the news of the need in Jerusalem. We got way more than what we expected. We expected they would rise to the financial need.

And they did do that. But they did more than that. They found it as a beautiful opportunity to consecrate their hearts and lives to God, fresh and new, in a deeper way.

And not only that, they didn't stop there. Also, they gave themselves to us. I see in this verse, both of the great commandments in the Word of God.

Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Both of them are in this verse right here. This is the foundation of the spiritual grace of giving.

It doesn't begin in the pocket book. It begins in the heart. And it even doesn't begin with a heart of compassion.

It begins with a heart that is consecrated to God. They are an example. Oh, what pleasure that brings to God.

When they first give their own selves, then they give themselves to others. Oh, what pleasure it brings to God. Here we see the heart of New Testament giving so clearly spelled out in these words of testimony that Paul is giving to the Corinthian church.

And remember, he is presenting this to them, hoping that they will follow the example. Verse 6, Paul sent Titus to lead the Corinthian church through the same blessed exercise of giving. It was so sweet.

It was so powerful. It was so fulfilling. It was so rewarding that Paul sent Titus to the Corinthian church.

Look at what it says, in so much that we desired Titus that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. So Titus came, maybe bearing this letter, but Titus came to lead this congregation into the same sweet experience of giving themselves completely to God fresh and new, of yielding up their lives to live for those that are around them, and yea, to minister to the needs of the saints in Jerusalem. That was Paul's motivation for writing these verses.

I want you to notice in verse 6 also that he uses the word grace again. It is a grace. It in fact is a gift of grace.

We'll see that in verse 7. Notice he mentions several gifts in verse 7. This is the same church where the previous letter he wrote to them, mentioning many gifts that are being manifested among them. And here he is bringing to their attention another gift, which is a spiritual gift, which is a gift that manifests itself in real life, and he's encouraging them to grow in this gift also. Look what he says, Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, and look at the list that he gave there.

These are some of the very gifts that he mentioned before in 1 Corinthians to them. He's focusing on the fact that these are gifts that manifest themselves to the blessing, to the edifying of God and His people. See that ye abound in this grace also.

The spiritual grace of giving. Corinthians, I want you to abound in this grace also. Now remember, this is the church that is seeking the gifts.

Seek this gift also. Pray that God will so work His grace in your heart, that you will abound in this gift also. That's what Paul is saying.

And I want you to notice in verse 8, he goes on to say, I speak not by commandment. I'm not telling you you have to do this. And I like that that he put that in there.

I'm not telling you that you have to do this. Now, Paul had the authority that he could have wrote them and said, do this. But he says, I'm not telling you you have to do this.

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others. I'm using their example. I'm telling you, look how God's grace manifested itself upon the churches in Macedonia.

And the assumed other side of that is, God's grace will also manifest itself in the same way among you. Give yourself to this grace. That's what he's saying.

So, I'm not telling you that you have to do this. But, I'm taking the occasion of the forwardness of others, and lifting an example up to you. And I would say, let's also take that example.

It is given to us. The Spirit of God breathed this out, that we also could look at the churches of Macedonia, and be staggered by the way they gave, in the midst of their affliction, and in the midst of their deep poverty. How they gave.

So, I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. Show the sincerity of your love. Or, put some shoes on your love.

Put some shoes on your love. So that you can put some shoes on your love. I'm not commanding you to do this.

But, I am simply using them as an example, so you can see how God's grace worked in them, and also, that you might have the opportunity to put some shoes on your love. Praise God. Verse 9. For ye know, ye know, and they all did, ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Or, you know how God's grace manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. Because that's what He's saying there. We're talking about the grace of giving.

And we know that God so loved the world that He gave. Stop there. He so loved the world that He gave.

So, Paul says to the Corinthians, now you know. You know. You know the story.

You know the history. You know His story. You know how the grace of God manifested itself in the life of the Lord Jesus.

How did the grace of God manifest itself in the life of the Lord Jesus? That, though He was rich, yet, for your sakes, He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich. Now we know in this verse, Paul is not talking about financial riches. He has soared way beyond gold and silver and precious stones in that statement.

That, though He was rich, and He was rich, being the Creator of all things, it was all His. He became poor, that through His poverty, we might be made rich. Paul uses this also as a testimony and an example of the grace of giving.

I thought about that verse. You know, that is the foundation of biblical giving. Redemption is the foundation of biblical giving.

It's not obligation. It's not even need. It's not even compassion.

Redemption is the foundation of biblical giving. How God's grace worked in Christ. Now I want us to just flip over for a little bit here into the Old Testament, over in Exodus chapter 35, and get a glimpse of another example of how this redemption works.

It's Exodus 35. The children of Israel have been led out of Egypt. They have crossed the Red Sea on dry ground.

They have seen the enemies of Israel drowned in the sea. They have sang the song of Moses. They have rejoiced in God's deliverance.

And they have been led to the foot of Mount Sinai where they have received the law. Well, they received the law there at the foot of Mount Sinai. They also received from God, through Moses, the directive to build a tabernacle or a dwelling place for God.

And that's the context that we're in. But I want you to notice, these are a people who were slaves. This is a people who lived in poverty.

They were slaves. They were poor. They had very little.

They had no way of escape. They've been living in slavery for scores and scores of years by the time Exodus chapter 14 comes along when they were led out of Egypt. So, it's good for us to put ourselves in their shoes so we can also understand what motivated the tremendous giving that we're going to look at

here in a moment.

This is a people who lived in slavery. This is a people who had no hope of ever getting out of it. This is a people who lived in poverty and by God's miraculous work, they walked out of Egypt and became rich overnight.

Amen? They became rich overnight. That's the setting that we're looking at here. Exodus chapter 35 and verse 5. We're just going to read a few verses here because again, a whole chapter.

Verse 5, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord, whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord, gold and silver and brass and blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goat's hair and ramskin dyed red and badger skins and chitim wood and oil for the light and spices for anointing oil and for the sweet incense and onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod and for the breastplate and every wise hearted among you shall come and make all that the Lord hath commanded. Okay. Here, the directive is being given.

Now let's see their response. Verse 21, And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up and every one whom his spirit made willing and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of a congregation and for all his service and for the holy garments. Verse 22, And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted and brought bracelets and earrings and rings and tablets, all jewels of gold and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord.

Verse 25, And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands and brought that which they had spun, both of blue and of purple and of scarlet and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair. And the rulers brought onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod and for the breastplate and spice and oil and light for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense.

And the children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord. Every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring for all the manner of the work which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses. Isn't that beautiful? Oh, we look at that.

We look at the background. We look at the setting that they were in. We look at all that they had gone through.

And yea, in a sense we could say it doesn't surprise us at all that they would be willing like that to give. But let's read on a little further in chapter 36 where we find these words. Let's see.

Verse 3, And they received of Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary to make it withal. And they brought yet unto Him free offerings every morning. So, here we have them.

They brought these things together and Moses gathered it all up and he gave it to those who were going to do the work. But now it's the next morning. And the next morning they come bringing more and laying that down.

And then the next morning comes and here they come with some more. And the next morning comes and here they come with some more. Every morning.

Morning by morning they just kept bringing more. Look at their hearts. God is looking at their hearts.

So it's free offerings every morning. They're going beyond. Maybe, yes, they felt maybe a bit of obligation at first.

We need to build this tabernacle. God says to build it. Thus saith the Lord.

It should be this way. This much gold. This much silver.

All these stones. All these things. Maybe they came at first and gave because, oh, the need is here and we have to give.

But now it's the next day. Willingly they give a free offering. Oh, I want to give more.

I want to give more than that. And the next morning, oh, I want to give some more. That was their heart.

Verse 5. The workers came to Moses and they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So, the people were restrained from bringing for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

Oh, what a problem to have. Send a proclamation out through the camp. Hold on! Hold back! The grace of giving.

The foundation of the spiritual grace of giving is redemption, brothers and sisters. We see it in the life of Israel here. We see it in the churches in Macedonia.

And if we stop and think about it, we see it in our own lives, every one of us. That same glorious redemption which motivated them should also motivate us. And if you think about it, just like they whom God just miraculously laid in their hands gold and silver and precious stones and all these things, and they went out of Egypt wealthy, so also, God has so blessed us.

And it's not ours. I mean, they knew they didn't have anything. Now they're filled with gold and silver and precious stones.

God gave it all to them. Then God comes around and says, Ah, to build my house? To build my house? Oh, my! Yes, to build your house! Here, Lord! That was their response. Willingly, a willing offering was given.

They were building a dwelling place for the Jehovah, Jehovah God who delivered them. Now, beloved, this grace that worked in Christ will also work in us and develop this same joyful grace of giving if we will allow it to. It will develop the same in us.

So, Paul is teaching, if we can go back now to Corinthians, Paul is teaching on giving two ways. First, he uses the example of the testimony of the church in Macedonia. Then he uses the example of the Lord Jesus Christ just as something for them to look at.

See how they did. Follow their example. But he doesn't stop there.

He goes then a little bit further on in chapter 9, I believe it is. In chapter 9, yes. And verse 6, Paul breaks into just teaching on the principle of giving.

Look at these words. He's encouraging them now. And, oh, how shall I say it? He's pulling back the veil a bit and helping them to see behind the scene of what happens when God's people give like this.

Can I say it that way? He's pulling back the veil and giving them some insight into what happens when God's people give. Verse 6, This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. And he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

He's giving us a spiritual principle. God will bless you if you give. That's what he's saying.

And, oh, how this thing has been twisted by the prosperity preachers of our day and made just to be money when it's so much more than money. But it could be money. God does bless His people who give.

We can't overreact to the prosperity speakers and not mention the fact that God does bless His people when they give. But it's not just materially, as we will see going down through these verses. It's way more than materially.

I mean, I think about C.T. Studd. You know, he, that missionary to China and then to Africa, started the Sudan Interior Mission. I mean, C.T. Studd, he gave away everything that he owned.

He was never a wealthy man. Ever. But he was a wealthy man.

Oh, he was a wealthy man. He was one of the wealthiest men on earth in his day. But he wasn't a wealthy man materially.

But, this I say, I want you to know this, he which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly. And he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, shall let him give.

Notice what he says. Not grudgingly or of necessity. Now, in our day, many preachers would never say those words.

And I know some of you know what I'm talking about. But they would never say those words. They would never say to the people, if you're going to give grudgingly, don't give this morning.

They would never say those words. But God says those words. Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, shall let him give.

Not grudgingly or of necessity. Well, you know, you have to do it. You know, it's the thing.

Everyone else isn't. No. It's all said.

Don't do that. Not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loveth, whoo, loveth a cheerful giver.

Did you see that? God loves that. And then look at verse 8. Here's where he branches out way beyond a piece of gold, which, by the way, is the blacktop in heaven. You know.

God goes way beyond a piece of gold in verse 9. When he talks about reaping. If you sow sparingly, you will reap sparingly. If you sow bountifully, you will reap bountifully.

And God, God is able. God is able to make all grace abound toward you. All grace, manifold grace.

The grace of giving, the grace of sacrifice, the grace of utterance, the grace of revelation, the grace of healing, the grace of wisdom, the grace of knowledge, the grace, the grace, all grace. God is able to make all grace abound toward you to such a degree, Paul says, that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Now, that just bursts out into every area of your life.

Now, I don't claim to understand the depths of what this verse is saying. But it seems to me that it would be a verse that would fit very well along with those verses over there. Is it Luke chapter 16 where Jesus says, if you are faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will give to you the true riches.

Could it fit along with that verse? Could it be that God would be saying to us, even as we sit here this morning, be faithful in the unrighteous mammon that I give to you. Deal with it rightly. Use it rightly.

Give it away. Let it be used for My work to build My kingdom. And I will give unto you the true riches.

Whoa! It seems that this verse would fit alongside of that verse. And then in verse 9, he says some beautiful things here. And if we could, I want you to note, there's a parenthesis there.

Verse 9 and 10 is a parenthesis, which means it's another thought. You could just set it aside and keep on reading and the flow of the subject wouldn't change. You could just read it this way.

Always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work, being enriched in everything, verse 11, to all bountifulness which causes through us thanksgiving to God. You could read it that way. But he puts a parenthesis in there to give us a little teaching.

Again, pulling back the veil to let us see behind the scene of what is involved in this physical, yet very spiritual act of giving. He pulls the veil back again. As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, He hath given to the poor, His righteousness remaineth forever.

Look at that. Now, He that ministers seed to the sower, both minister bread for the food, and multiply your seeds sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. God is saying, two things are happening there.

When you give seed to the sower, two things are going to happen. One, He's going to take some of that seed and make bread out of it, and feed somebody. And if He's a good sower, He'll take the rest of that seed and put it in the ground and grow more seeds.

And your righteousness will multiply over and over and over again. Oh, that's a beautiful thought, isn't it? Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness which causes through us thanksgiving to God. And that's what it's all about, isn't it? That there would rise up out of the hearts of God's people thanksgiving to God.

For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgiving unto God. And that made Paul happy. Paul looked at it very differently.

Yes, it's going to minister to the needs of those people. But not only will it minister to their needs, but as their needs are met, they will rise up and bless and thank God and God will be happy. While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ.

They see these people really have the gospel of Jesus Christ. How can we tell? It has touched their pocketbook. And for your liberal distribution unto them and unto all men.

And by their prayer for you. Oh, now it's come rolling back on you. Now they're going to be praying for you. Their prayer for you which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. And then he finishes by saying thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. There's a redemption again.

There's a redemption again. Oh, there's so many things that we could say. There's no way we can cover this subject in one sermon.

But I want to read these verses to you in closing. Which I think will shine a bit more light on our hearts. After having fought our way through these verses.

Let's read in Ecclesiastes 11. And then I'll be done here this morning. Ecclesiastes 11 verse 1 through 6. Hear the Lord.

Do you have it? Ecclesiastes. It's in the Old Testament. Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days.

Give. Give a portion to seven and also to eight for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. If the clouds be full of rain they empty themselves.

Do you see that picture? Oh, let's be like the clouds. When the clouds get full of rain they empty themselves upon the earth. And what happens? Abundant supply and fruitfulness upon the earth.

And if the tree fall toward the south or toward the north in the place where the tree falleth there shall it be. You die a selfish man, a selfish woman, as the tree falleth there shall it lay. You die generous, giving like the clouds dumping out your fullness.

Verse 4. He that observeth the wind shall not sow. And he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

We can't figure it all out, can we? And we don't need to figure it all out. And maybe we'll reap some here and maybe we'll reap it there. We can't figure it all out.

And it's not for us to figure out. And God doesn't want us to do what we do because we can figure it out. He just wants us to do it.

In the morning, sow thy seed. And in the evening, withhold not thine hand. For thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that or whether they both shall be alike good.

And I wrote down here, and I may be wrong in this, but here's the picture that I got. In the morning, you take your seed and you go sow it out and plant it. In the evening, someone comes to you for bread.

You give them some seed. You don't know which one is going to prosper more, but just do them both. Sow some of it in the ground and give some of it to somebody who asks you for it that they can make bread and eat it.

Ah! Thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that or whether they both shall be alike good. It's not for us to figure. God just says, I am your heavenly Father and I sit on my throne and watch over all your lives.

Do that which is right with that which you have and leave it with me. I shall take care of the rest. May God help us that we also, like the churches in Macedonia, not as an individual only, but as a church as a whole, would abound in this grace of giving.

May God bless.

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