

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

23 August 2026

The Grace of Giving

Text: "Therefore, as you abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also." 2 Cor. 8:7.

"Every person according as they purpose in their heart, so let them give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7.

Full Text: 2 Corinthians 8: 1-7 and 9: 6-8.

People attending a church have left that church when the pastor started a series on giving.

Some member say that it is not the pastor's business to talk about giving.

I talk about giving most Sundays.

God gave his best to us and asks us to give our best to him.

We are saved to give.

I believe God desires for us to give him 100% of who we are.

We are in the first place because he gave us life and abilities.

We are his creation, all we are is because of him.

Today let us think about what God might want each of us to give in response to his great giving to us.

To keep growing in his grace, we need to know the grace of God in giving.

God's grace gives salvation, peace, eternal life, access to God, and many other spiritual blessings.

Giving is an outward expression of an inward work of God's grace.

When we give according to God's way, it is the grace of God at work in us.

There are countless forms of giving.

We give encouragement.

We give thanks to God and to others.

We give praise, a smile, and a kind word.

We give time, money, and offerings.

One of the most beautiful demonstrations of the grace of giving in the New testament is the generosity of the Macedonian churches.

What caused them to give to people they did not know?

Only the grace of God.

Giving of ourselves and our money cannot be dismissed lightly.

It is not always easy.

God calls us to sacrifice, to give until it hurts.

Let's delve into two aspects of giving: What are the causes of an inability to give, and what can we do to enhance our ability to give?

What is wrong when we fail to give?

The Macedonian churches had the gift of giving, but the Corinthian church did not.

The Corinthians abounded in many things but the grace of giving was missing.

How did this happen?

How can it happen today?

Unconfessed sin in the church.

There was immorality in the church in that a man had his father's wife.

Sin deadens the spirit of a church.

Bitter strife in the church.

Some of the members were having differences with one another.

They were going to court, divided in loyalties, criticizing and complaining.

Their selfish preoccupations squelched their desire to give.

Doctrine instability in the church.

The Corinthians were theologically unstable due to the heresy of Gnosticism and emphasized knowledge over spiritual reality.

This was reflected in their family lives through wrong marriages and divided homes, thus making the grace of giving difficult to experience.

A lack of training to give.

Paul received no financial aid from the church at Corinth.

He earned his own way by tent making.

The church received his services for free.

This is not healthy for a church.

We need training about the grace of giving so we may see God at work at close range.

A lack of personal consecration.

Macedonian Christians gave themselves to the Lord.

This is Paul's challenge to all of us.

It is not enough to be born again; we need to grow in the Christian life.

Christians really begin to grow when they commit themselves to giving.

How do we give sacrificially?

God wants all of us to abound in the grace of giving, as *1 Corinthians 8:7* and *9:7* indicate.

Here are some characteristics of true giving that may help us to experience fully the abounding grace of giving.

We give sacrificially.

"For to their power, I bear record, yes, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves." *2 Cor. 8:3*.

Sacrificial giving, then, is beyond our ability and alters our lifestyle in giving.

The highest example of sacrificial giving is none other than that of Jesus Christ.

Secondarily, Jesus identified total giving in the widow giving her two mites.

We give willingly.

A willing mind is first.

Acceptable giving is an act of our will.

This is grace in giving; God giving us both the will and the power to give his way.

We give victoriously.

Victorious giving is getting beyond the spirit of covetousness to a spirit of unselfishness, described in *Luke 12:15* and *Hebrews 13:5*.

Let us not be like the young man who found a five dollar bill on the street.

It gave him so much pleasure that from that time on he never looked up while walking.

During his lifetime he accumulated 10,000 buttons, 22 cents, 14000 pins, a bent back, and a miserable disposition.

We give generously.

Second Corinthians 9:6 says, "He which sows sparingly will reap also sparingly."

The measure of blessing equals the measure of giving.

Giving is God's way for us to keep his wealth in circulation.

We give purposefully.

Verse 7 says every person should give as they have purposes in their heart.

This means we give decisively and prayerfully.

We give not by reason alone, but as the Holy Spirit directs.

This delivers us from mechanical, cut and dried giving.

We give enthusiastically.

Verse 7 says that we should not give grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.

This means that we are not to give resentfully, but cheerfully, even hilariously.

When we surrender to God's will, he gives us grace to give and joy to go with it.

We give testimonially.

This is found in *verse 12-14*.

We give so that we become a testimony.

This brings thanksgiving to God and encouragement to others.

We give unconditionally.

God has given to us freely, and we are to give to him freely.

We are to give without demands, without telling him how to use his gift.

Rather, we are to release it unconditionally and thereby release ourselves to the Lord.

There was once a slave who was a great Christian and often told his master about the Lord.

His master came to him one day and said, "you know, whatever you have, I want it. You have peace and joy and contentment. How can I get these things"?

The slave said, "Go to the house, put on your white suit and come down here and work in the mud with us slaves, then you will have it".

The master answered, "I could never do that. That is beneath my dignity."

The master came back two months later and said, "I must ask you again, What is it you have, and how can I have it?"

The slave repeated, "Go put on your white suit, come down and work in the mud with us, and you will have it."

The master was furious and walked off.

Finally, in desperation he came to the slave again and said, "I don't care what it takes; I'll do anything."

The slave said, "Go put on your white suit and work in the mud. Will you do that?"

"Yes," the master agreed.

The slave said, "Then you don't have to."

The point is that pride and selfishness were standing between the master and Christ.