

*Generous
Christian Living*



Ancient Corinth



2 Corinthians 8:1

1 We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia...

2 Corinthians 8:2-4

2 ...for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, 4 begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—

2 Corinthians 8:5

5 ...and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

2 Corinthians 9:12-13

12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.

13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others

2 Corinthians 9:14

14 ...while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

Our Call to Christian Generosity

1. Christian generosity is not something we manufacture within ourselves. Rather it bubbles up from our own experience of God's grace in our lives.

“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.”

(2 Corinthians 8:9)

Our Call to Christian Generosity

2. God desires our generosity to be according to our means.

“For if the readiness is there, [our generosity] is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.”

(2 Corinthians 8:12-14)

Our Call to Christian Generosity

3. God desires us to use our money for His kingdom purposes. Our generosity should demonstrate the genuineness of our love, bring honor to God's name, and strengthen the bonds of unity between God's people.

Does the New Testament command
us to tithe?

“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

(Acts 4:32-35)

“I will share the responsibility of my church...by giving consistently and generously.”

(Elim's Membership Covenant)

Generosity spurs within us an intellectual protest. Does God really need my money?

“For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.” (Psalm 50:10-15)

The call to generosity is itself a gift
that saves us from harm.

“Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.”

(Proverbs 30:8-9)

“But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.”

(1 Timothy 6:6-8)

“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things.” (1 Timothy 6:9-11)

Generosity spurs within us a crisis of trust. Can an invisible God be trusted to meet our very tangible needs?

Generosity opens us up to receive and
channel grace, enabling us to see and
know God.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:8-9

8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

2 Corinthians 9:10-11

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.