

- I) V1-5 INTRO: Now concerning the **ministering to the saints**, it is superfluous for me Paul is continuing his encouragement for them to give their offering
- II) The church in Jerusalem was in financial need and they had promised to help  
The churches of Macedonia had been moved to help, and had done so
- III) The Corinthians were also touched, but it had been a year and they hadn't moved  
It is time for them to **demonstrate** their sincere love towards their family in Christ  
**APPLICATION**
- IV) This is what Christians do: we care for those in **urgent needs**  
We don't simply finance every irresponsible financial situation
- V) What we do is help when the need is genuine  
Titus 3:14 Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide **for urgent needs** and not live unproductive lives.
- VI) They have openly stated that they would help, and now it is time for them to do so  
**AT THIS POINT**
- VII) Paul continues his instructions to the church concerning giving their offering
- VIII) V1 Now concerning the **ministering** to the saints  
In V4 he used this phrase when speaking of the Macedonian churches  
He spoke of **ministering to the saints**  
**DEVELOP**
- IX) **Ministering** is a Greek word that speaks of serving, supporting, or of **relieving**  
Ministering to the saints speaks of rendering financial aid to a needy church  
This spoke of delivering a financial offering to the church in Jerusalem
- X) Often when we think of **ministering**, we think of praying for, or teaching them  
Of course, praying for and teaching them **is ministering**  
By doing so, we strengthen their spirits and encourage them with hope  
**BUT THE FACT IS**
- XI) We need to remember that meeting physical needs **is also ministering**  
Jas 2:15-17 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

- I) In their giving to supply the physical needs of the Church, **ministry occurs**  
They are caring in a practical way: It is God's love revealed by His children  
Gal 6:10 As we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

**THE FACT IS**

- II) Americans who practice the Christian faith are the most generous  
The average American considers taxes to be sufficient to care for the poor  
Christians not only pay their taxes, but also sacrificially give of their finances

- III) A 2022 report by **The Baptist Standard** found that the vast majority of practicing Christians (95%) gave to charities compared to 51% of nonbelievers. They found that, when people practice a meaningful Christian faith, **they give more.**

- IV) The Corinthians were well aware of this  
Jas 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

**THIS IS WHY HE SAYS**

- V) V1 It is **superfluous** (unnecessary to say more plainly) for me to write you
- VI) V2 For **I know your willingness** about which **I boast of you** to the Macedonians that  
The reason it is unnecessary is because **you were ready** to minister a year ago  
Their desire to help touched Paul deeply, and he spoke of it to the Macedonians
- VII) (8:1-3) He had earlier used the Macedonians as an example to them  
He now says he has **used them** as an example to the Macedonian churches

**THE RESULT**

- VIII) V2 **Your zeal** has stirred up **the majority**  
You have had the effect on them of being a great example of faith and sacrifice  
Ro 12:11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord
- IX) Their zeal to care for the church produced a greater response in the Macedonians  
Heb 10:24 And let us consider one another in order **to stir up** love and good work
- V) V3-4 Yet I have sent the brethren lest **our boasting** of you should be in vain in this  
The brethren refers to the men he had spoken of in ch 8:16-24: Titus and 2 men  
They were coming to Corinth to receive the lavish gift for Jerusalem

- I) He had earlier told them to begin preparing the gift and be ready  
He wanted them to have the money set apart and ready to be transported  
1 Co 16:1-2 Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.
- II) Titus and the team were arriving before Paul came  
He wanted everything to be ready before he came to Corinth
- III) With this in mind it would be good for you to complete what you began a year ago  
**WHY?**
- IV) V3 lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect that as I said
- V) V4 lest **if** some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared  
Macedonians may come with me and **what will they think** if you are not ready
- VI) It will embarrass you, and it most certainly could **embarrass me**  
After all, I have been bragging about you to them!
- VII) V5 I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you **ahead of time** and  
The team was to go before Paul to make sure things were ready when he came
- VIII) This falls under the category of **budgeting**  
This would prevent any last-minute collections
- IX) This is the administrative side of ministry: things must be prepared in advance  
It is never good to have to rush to complete what should have *already been done*
- X) V5 prepare your **generous gift** beforehand, which *you had previously promised*  
They had a year to prepare which should mean the offering would be larger  
**NOTICE**
- XI) Your *bountiful* gift, which *you had previously promised*  
It was now a matter of them keeping their word, which was voluntarily given
- XII) V5 It is given as a matter of **generosity** and not a **grudging obligation**  
**Generosity**: This speaks of a gift that is a blessing, filled with praise for God

- I) It speaks of desire born out of **love for God** and is spontaneous  
It is a gift that is given out of praise to God, expecting to bless others
- II) **Grudging obligation** is a greedy desire to have more: covetousness, or avarice  
It speaks of giving because you are being forced to give; extortion  
They should rejoice to care for others, and not desire to keep it for themselves  
**WHY**
- III) This is important because giving reflects knowledge of what God has done for us  
It reveals spiritual *maturity* as well as faith, godly priorities and love for others  
Pr 22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor
- IV) At this point Paul teaches the Corinthians (and us) **principles for giving**
- V) V6 But this I say: He who sows **sparingly** will also **reap** sparingly and he who sows  
**FIRST**
- VI) To illustrate how one gives, Paul uses a farming illustration  
This is a picture intended to illustrate **faith** and **dependence** on God
- VII) Farmers have no control over the weather  
He won't sow seed where it has no chance of producing a crop  
He normally won't sow seed on **rocks** or **dry** ground
- VIII) When a farmer sows seeds, he is doing his part while assuming the seed will grow  
His sowing seed is in fact, **an act of faith**, trusting that the rain will come  
**IN THE OT**
- IX) God had told Israel that if they were faithful to Him, He would provide rain for them  
Dt 11:14 **I will give you the rain** for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.
- X) They sowed their seed, but as they did so **they depended on God to send the rain**
- XI) After sowing the seed there was nothing left for them to do but to await the rain
- XII) This they did, patiently and expectantly  
Jas 5:7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer **waits** for the precious fruit of the earth, **waiting patiently** for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

- I) This was a picture of them sowing seed *in faith*
- II) When you sow **financial seed**, there is an element of faith that *God will bring fruit*  
When the farmer throws the seed, it can appear he is throwing it away!

- III) When sown in faith, **to the Lord**, it produces a crop  
Mal 3:10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.

### **SECOND**

- IV) He points out that **it only makes sense** to be generous in giving  
**Why?** Because, if a farmer only sows **a few seeds**, he will reap a very small crop  
Pr 11:24 There is *one* who scatters yet increases more; And there is *one* who withholds more than is right, but it *leads* to poverty.

### **PRINCIPLE**

- V) To **give** financially is **to sow** into the Kingdom of God  
If you desire blessings from the Lord, do not withhold from Him  
Pr 3:9-10 Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine

- VI) V7 Let each one give as he **purposes in his heart**, not *grudgingly* or of *necessity*

### **THIRD**

- VII) He encourages **proportionate giving** based on **a decision** of the heart  
Sometimes people ask about how much they should give? 10%?

### **UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES**

- VIII) People did not give only 10%, but a variety of tithes were given  
Nu 18:21-24 says 10% goes towards the support of ministry  
It was called the Levitical tithe

- IX) Dt 12 says 10% goes towards the support of festivals (religious feasts)  
This was called the festival tithe

- X) Dt 14:28-29 *every third year*, 10% was given as welfare (widows and orphans)  
This was the poor tithe  
Ex 30:11-16 speaks of a mandatory offering of 1/2 shekel for upkeep of the temple

- I) What would happen if someone withheld his tithe, needing to borrow it?  
Lev 27:31 If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add 1/5 to it
- II) V7 **Each one** gives as he purposes in his heart  
Each one has the responsibility to decide how much they desire to give
- III) This is the way we practice giving in our fellowship  
We each give as we have purposed in our heart
- IV) The heart of giving begins with the giving of the heart  
2 Co 8:5 says the Macedonians **first gave themselves to the Lord**  
This is where true giving originates  
**ILLUSTRATION**
- V) King David is a good example of someone who gave from a heart of love  
David loved the Lord, and wanted to build a house for Him  
1 Chron 22:5 David said, "Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD **must be** exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will now make preparation for it." So David made **abundant preparations** before his death.  
**LATER**
- VI) David revealed the amount of his personal contribution to the Temple  
1 Chron 29:3-5 Moreover, because **I have set my affection** on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, *my own* special treasure of gold and silver: 3,000 talents of gold (of the gold of Ophir) and 7,000 talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; the gold for things of gold and the silver for things of silver, and for all kinds of work to be done by the hands of craftsmen
- VII) V7 Paul tells us God loves a cheerful (joyous) giver  
This described King David  
1 Chron 29:17 (David's prayer) I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have **willingly** offered all these things; and now **with joy** I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You.
- VIII) The mature Christian finds giving to be a joyful experience, a genuine pleasure

- I) V8-9 God is able to make all grace abound toward you that you, always having all God will supply your material needs and make it possible to *continue giving*  
**QUOTE**
- II) He will bless the increase of those who give cheerfully, that they may have, not an excess so they can live *in selfish luxury*, but the *sufficiency* with which all genuine believers ought to be content
- III) Pr 11:25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.
- IV) V10-11 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food supply God has supplied seed to the sower  
God is the One who has blessed you in the first place
- V) You are only giving *out of* what He has first *been given* to you  
1 Ch 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.  
1 Co 4:7 For who makes you differ *from another*? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive *it*, why do you boast as if you had not received *it*?
- VI) Paul says God will continue to give them finances that can be used for the Lord  
**NOTICE THE WORDS HE USES**
- VII) He will *supply, multiply, increase, enriched, liberality, and thanksgiving*  
May He keep blessing you that you may keep giving to others and His cause
- VIII) V12-13 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the He closes with a word concerning the practical fruit of giving  
It not only supplies the needs of saints, but abounds in blessings to the giver
- IX) The result is they will glorify God for supplying their needs through *obedience*
- X) It is a evidence of the unity of the church: Gentiles caring for Jewish brethren  
Ro 15:27-28 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.

- I) V14 And by their prayer for you who long for you because of the exceeding grace  
**YOUR BENEFIT**
- II) Prayers have been lifted on your behalf  
This will bless them so much that they will lift you in prayer, with gratitude for you
- III) V15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift: Jesus  
Indescribable: Without the ability to communicate all that He is
- IV) If God gave us this indescribable gift, it is not hard to give to Him in return  
1 Jn 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another