

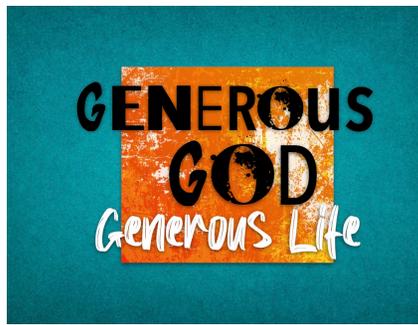
SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

Giving in Response to Grace

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor

March 15, 2026



Let's look at a helpful passage in 2 Corinthians to help us grow in grace giving.

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 (NLT) Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. ² They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. ³ For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴ They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. ⁵ They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do. ⁶ So we have urged Titus, who encouraged your giving in the first place, to return to you and encourage you to finish this ministry of giving. ⁷ Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us —I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving. ⁸ I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches. ⁹ You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich. ¹⁰ Here is my advice: It would be good for you to finish what you started a year ago. Last year you were the first who wanted to give, and you were the first to begin doing it. ¹¹ Now you should finish what you started. Let the eagerness you showed in the beginning be matched now by your giving. Give in proportion to what you have. ¹² Whatever you give is acceptable if you give it eagerly. And give according to what you have, not what you don't have. ¹³ Of course, I don't mean your giving should make life easy for others and hard for yourselves. I only mean that there should be some equality. ¹⁴ Right now you have plenty and can help those who are in need. Later, they will have plenty and can share with you when you need it. In this way, things will be equal. ¹⁵ As the Scriptures say, "Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough."

- **Give joyfully in response to grace.**

¹ "...what God in his kindness [grace] has done through the churches in Macedonia."

⁵ "They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do."

⁹ "You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich."

² "They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity."

- **Give sacrificially out of love.**

³ "For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will."

⁴ "They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem."

⁸ "I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches."

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

- **Give responsibly as a faithful steward.**

¹² "Whatever you give is acceptable if you give it eagerly. And give according to what you have, not what you don't have."

¹¹ "Now you should finish what you started...Give in proportion to what you have."

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

John 3:16 (NLT) "For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

Big Idea: Grace received becomes generosity released.

Container vs Conduit

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used today is the NewLiving Translation (NLT)



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**Giving in Response to Grace
#2 of 3 - March 15, 2026**

Context

- 1) In 2Corinthians 8, Paul describes the generosity of the Macedonian churches during a time of hardship. What do we learn about their situation and the purpose of the collection for believers in Jerusalem? How might that context shape how we understand this passage?
- 2) Paul centers the discussion of generosity on the grace of Jesus in verse 9. How does the gospel—summarized in John 3:16—provide the foundation for everything Paul says about giving?

Observation

- 3) What words or phrases stand out in 2 Corinthians 8:1–15 that describe the Macedonians' attitude toward giving? What surprises you about their response?
- 4) According to Paul, what came before their generosity (v.5)? Why is the phrase "they first gave themselves to the Lord" important for understanding Christian generosity?

Meaning

- 5) Verse 9 points to the generosity of Jesus Christ—that though He was rich, He became poor so we could become rich. What does this verse teach us about the gospel, and how does it reshape the way we think about money and possessions?
- 6) Paul emphasizes willingness, joy, and proportion ("give according to what you have"). What does this reveal about the difference between grace-motivated giving and guilt-driven giving?

Application

- 7) The Macedonians could be described as conduits, not containers—their joy overflowed in generosity. In practical terms, what might it look like for us to live as conduits of God's grace rather than simply containers of God's blessings?
- 8) Where is God inviting you to take a next step in generosity—whether in trust, joy, sacrifice, or consistency? How can remembering the grace of Christ motivate that step this week?



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