

EXCEL IN GIVING

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PLEASE TURN TO: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Giving is a challenge of spiritual magnitude. It ties to the fabric of our physical being whilst determining the destination of our spiritual outcome. This is often because giving is contrary to human nature. It is the hurdle over which many believers fail to clear and in doing so fail to experience the full extent of what God has for us. God gave us His most precious thing through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that we may receive His best and in turn return to God our best.

But since you excel in everything in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you see that you also excel in this grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7, NIVUK)

“Excel in this grace of giving”

There are broadly two ways a person can give. There is an important difference between them:

Grace: The God given ability to do something beyond ourselves or our weaknesses. To compete, endure or endeavour greater than we are able to do so on our own.

Google Definition: The free and unmerited favour of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings.

Giving in...

_____ **Strength**
 _____ (Acts 5:2)
 Appease guilt (1 Samuel 6:3)
 From _____ (Luke 21:1-4)
 Sow without return (Genesis 4)
 Gone to the birds (Matthew 13:4)
 Measured by _____ (Luke 21:1-4)
 Limited ability (2 Corinthians 8:8)
 We remain bound (Genesis 3:17-19)
 People and money worshipped (Matthew 6:24)

_____ **& Faith**
 Inspired (2 Corinthians 8:3-4)
 Fulfilled obedience (1 Samuel 1:25-28)
 From what we have (Luke 21:1-4)
 Gods _____ system (Mark 11:22-25)
 Lend to God (Proverbs 19:7)
 Measured by _____ (Luke 21:1-4)
 Test of our love for Christ (2 Corinthians 8:8)
 Gods people blessed (2 Corinthians 9:11-13,15)
 God is glorified (Matthew 6:24)

Grace to give comes by faith and confidence in who God is. He gets the glory. Human strength to give comes from our own plans. We get the glory.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! (Galatians 2:20-21, NIVUK)

Types of Givers - 2 Corinthians 9:7, Acts 5:1-11, 2 Corinthians 8:7:

- Reluctant.
- _____
- Cheerful.
- _____

Thoughts that arise when it's time to give:

- "I don't _____ to give."
- "I'll give big when I have it."
- "I already give something/now and again."
- "I don't understand why I should give."

Barriers to giving:

- Doubt God / _____
- Fear.
- _____
- Confusion.
- Anger / Unforgiveness.

Giving is either easy or hard.
It all depends on where your heart is.

The Holy Spirit is our internal barometer for what direction to take and for decision making. We can try and lie to the Holy Spirit, even though He resides within us, and convince ourselves we are doing the right thing.

Givers of the bible:

- David had a heart after the Father. This is visible in his _____ (1 Chronicles 29)
- Widow put in the two pennies. (Luke 21:1-4)
- Erastus. (Romans 16:23)
- The Magi's gifts. (Matthew 2:11)
- Ananias & Saphira. (Acts 5:1-11)
- _____ giving to Jews as they left _____ (Exodus 12:36)

Grace filled giving, by faith:

- Is biblical (Malachi 3:10)
- Is a form of _____ (Hebrews 7:6-7)
- Keeps money from controlling my life. (Matthew 6:21, 1 John 2:15-17)
- Expands the Kingdom and the witness of Christ to the world.
- Mysteriously increases the _____ (Philippians 4:17-19)
- Is an outlet of God's love to His people. (1 John 3:17-19)
- Is key to Gods economic system. (Mark 11:22-34)
- By _____ laws God has given us access to.

Preparing to excel in the grace of giving:

- Willing to _____ "What do you have that you didn't receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7)
- Willing to _____
- Understand the difference between _____ (2 Corinthians 9:10)
- Prepared to _____

When we explore giving from the position of drawing closer to God, we realise that not only is He our provider entirely but when done in faith we gain access to a range of tools intended for His people to use and benefit from. If the fool says in his heart there is no God, he would also think that he loses when he gives anything toward the local Church or Gods people. Let's strive to be better givers and in turn operate on another level to see His provision change ours and others lives.