

Small Group Guide: New Testament Giving

2 Corinthians 9

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Giving is a grace from God** - It's not a natural human inclination but a gift God gives us to enjoy supporting His work.
2. **Give from what you have** - God doesn't want us to give from borrowed funds or what we don't possess (*2 Corinthians 8:12*).
3. **The principle of sowing and reaping** - "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, but he who sows bountifully will reap bountifully" (*2 Corinthians 9:6*).
4. **Give as God directs your heart** - "Let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver" (*2 Corinthians 9:7*).
5. **We are stewards, not owners** - Everything we have belongs to God; we manage His resources for His glory.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text:

1. What does it mean that giving is a "grace" from God rather than just an obligation? How does this change our perspective?
2. The pastor mentioned that the Macedonian churches "gave beyond their ability." What enabled them to do this? (*Reference 2 Corinthians 8*)

3. Why does Paul emphasize preparing our giving "beforehand" rather than giving impulsively in the moment?

Personal Reflection:

4. Have you ever experienced the principle of sowing and reaping in your own life? Share your story.
5. What's the difference between tithing as a "law" versus giving as the Holy Spirit leads? Where do you currently stand in your understanding?
6. The sermon stated, "We cannot out-give God." Do you believe this? What might hold us back from testing this truth?

Practical Application:

7. How can we cultivate a "cheerful giver" heart rather than giving grudgingly or under pressure?
8. The pastor said, "If it doesn't cost us anything, it really won't mean anything." What does sacrificial giving look like in your current season of life?
9. Beyond finances, what other areas of stewardship might God be calling you to be faithful in? (*Time, talents, abilities, relationships*)

Going Deeper:

10. Read Malachi 3:10 together. God invites us to "test Him" in the area of giving. Why do you think this is the one area where God says to prove Him?
11. How does understanding that "God is the supplier of the seed" (verse 10) change the way we view our resources?
12. The sermon emphasized that giving should flow from our relationship with God, not from church attendance alone. How can we develop this kind of daily walk with God?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

- **[] Pray and Purpose:** Spend time in prayer asking God what He would have you give. Write down what He puts on your heart and commit to it.
- **[] Evaluate Your Stewardship:** Take inventory of all God has blessed you with (not just money, but time, talents, relationships). Ask God how He wants you to steward these resources.
- **[] Practice Cheerful Giving:** The next time you give (whether financially or in service), check your heart attitude. Are you giving cheerfully or grudgingly?
- **[] Sow Bountifully:** Look for one specific opportunity this week to give generously beyond your normal pattern—whether that's time, encouragement, resources, or finances.
- **[] Share Your Testimony:** Tell someone about a time when God provided for you or blessed your faithfulness in giving.

Memory Verse

2 Corinthians 9:7 "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Closing Prayer Points

- Thank God for His indescribable gift of Jesus Christ
- Ask for wisdom and clarity about how God wants each person to give
- Pray for cheerful, generous hearts in your group
- Ask God to multiply the seeds that are sown for His kingdom
- Pray for those who may be struggling financially

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive that people are in different financial situations
- Emphasize that this is between each person and God—no pressure or comparison
- Focus on the heart attitude more than dollar amounts
- Share your own journey with giving if appropriate
- Remember: the goal is growth in relationship with God, not guilt about giving