

The Economy of Grace

Harvesting Faith in a Sour Season

2 Corinthians 8:1-9 & John 15:1-5



2 Corinthians 8:1-9
John 15:1-5



Omphax

unripe or sour grape

(ὄμφαξ) is an ancient Greek word that means an unripe or sour grape. It is not a specific grape variety or cultivar, but rather a descriptive term used in classical antiquity for grapes that have not yet grown ripe.



Growing Through the Sour Season

 Observe the Sour Season: Acknowledge the hard reality without fear.

 Maintain the Attachment: Stay closely connected when the heat rises.

 Prune the Fear: Give deliberately to break the bottleneck.

 Harness Every Resource: Everyone brings a dish to the table.

 Act in Faith: Take a faithful step, no matter how small.

 eXpect the Sweetness: Trust God for the harvest of joy.

0 – Observe the Sour Season

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 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. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints...

— 2 Corinthians 8:2 (The Macedonian Church)

M – Maintain the Attachment

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:4-5



P – Prune the Fear

The Bottleneck of Fear

Fear creates a massive bottleneck in our spiritual lives. It whispers that if we don't have a surplus of cash, time, or energy, we have absolutely nothing to offer the Kingdom.

The Deliberate Cut

Giving when margins are tight is a deliberate, faith-filled cut. It breaks the bottleneck of fear and declares, "My ultimate security is not in my bank account; my security is in Christ."

H – Harness Every Resource

The Potluck Principle

The church potluck is the perfect picture of the economy of grace. No one person provides the whole meal, but everyone brings something to share.

God isn't asking any one person to cater the whole event. He is just asking everyone to bring a dish to the table.



The Three Pillars



Evangelism

Reaching out to spread the gospel and plant the seeds of salvation, supporting vital mission works locally and abroad.



Edification

Building up, nurturing, teaching, and strengthening the faith of our church family and youth.



Benevolence

Showing compassion by meeting physical and practical needs, from feeding the homeless to offering crisis support.

Time, Talents, & Treasures



Bring What Is In Your Hands

Our costs to maintain this facility—our greenhouse of faith—have risen. We face a gap between what it takes to fully fund our vital ministries and what is currently coming in.

If your financial budget is at absolute zero right now, God is still asking you to bring what is in your hands. Bring your Time and your Talents to build this church up.

A – Act in Faith

Maturity requires movement.

Jesus celebrated the widow's two small coins because her gift was about total trust, not a surplus.

Don't wait for a sweet season to take a faithful step.

X - eXpect the Sweetness



The Harvest of Righteousness

The end of the Omphax stage is that time and attachment eventually produce sweet fruits. When we give out of our lack, we don't always get an immediate deposit in our bank account.

But over time, God transforms our sacrifice into deep, unshakable spiritual maturity and joy. Stay on the vine, and trust the Master Viticulturist.

Offer Your Omphax

Take one deliberate, defiant step of trust this week;
break the bottleneck of fear.

Bring your unripe, sour grape to the Lord.

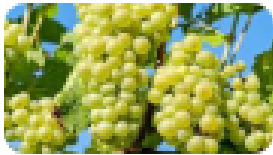
Stay Attached. Stay on the Vine.

Image Sources



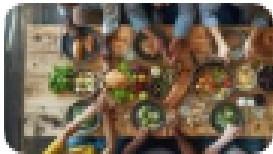
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