

Grace Giving!

I. Slide#1 Intro:

- A. Slide#2 Chapter 8 dealt w/the *principles of giving*, now ch.9 deals w/the *promises of giving*.
1. Both of these chapters deal w/**giving** as a **Christian grace!**
 - a) “Grace” is used **6x**’s in these 2 chapters.
 2. Paul explains it as a **blessing** not as a **legal obligation**.
 - a) 3 levels of giving: You have to (law). You ought to (obligation). You want to (grace)
 3. If a Christian has a problem w/biblical giving, **it’s** a **heart** problem.
 4. One very important point I need to reiterate from ch.8 is from vs.5 when Paul talks about giving he is ONLY referring to “**believers**”. **They first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.**
- B. Slide#3 Title: **Grace Giving!**
- C. Outline: Giving to Bless Others! Giving with the Right Heart! Giving to the Glory of God!

II. Slide#4 **GIVING TO BLESS OTHERS! (1-5)**

- A. (1) **Superfluous**(*suPERfluous*) or, “*beyond what is required*”. Need I say more?
1. If I wrote any more on this relief offering for the poor Christians, I’d be repeating myself. Msg
- B. (2) In ch.8:1 Paul used the **Macedonian** believers as examples to encourage the **Corinthians**.
1. **Now** he uses the **Corinthians** to encourage the **Macedonians**.
- C. Slide#5a **Giving is Enthusiastic & Contagious!** (2) Your zeal has stirred up the majority.
1. Christians ought to encourage one another in giving!
 - a) Heb.10:24 Let us consider **one another** in order to stir up love and good works.
 2. Your zeal has stirred up the majority - **Or**, as NIV has it, **your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.**
- D. Slide#5b **Giving is a Blessing not a Burden!** (5) Generosity...not grudgingly.
1. **Generosity** = blessing.
 2. Paul wanted them to look upon this as an opportunity to **be** a blessing & **get** a blessing, & **not** as a yoke on their necks.
 3. The idea here is “**be ready with it as a gift & not as something wrung from you!**” (Barret, LKGNT)
 4. **Giving** is always a blessing to both the **receiver** (it *supplied their needs*, vs.12) & the **giver** (**It is better to give than receive**).

III. Slide#6 **GIVING WITH THE RIGHT HEART! (6-11)**

A. Slide#7a **Giving works like Gardening!** (6) Sow...reap.

1. Paul uses an **agricultural metaphor** to illustrate a **spiritual truth**.
2. As did Solomon; **and** a greater than Solomon...*Jesus!*
 - a) Prov.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.**
 - b) Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**

B. (6) We've all driven by acres of grain. **How did they plant all of that? Seed by seed? Nope**, they use massive seed Distributors.

1. One farmer once said, "If you're ever going to be cheap, don't be cheap with the **seed.**" **One bushel of seed invested, yields 30 bushels of grain harvested in a good year.**
 - a) **30 to 1** - not a bad return; **if** you are ready to believe **and** willing to invest.
 - b) **Giving is an investment in our eternal future.** The bigger the investment the greater the return!

C. **Reap bountifully** (w/blessings) – God will be no man's debtor!

1. Prov.19:17 **He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.**

D. Slide#7b **Giving is Individual!** (7a) **Each one.**

1. At some point you need to **stop studying** about giving & **start giving!**

E. Slide#7c **Giving is a Personal Decision!** (7b) **As he purposes.**

1. Giving starts at home on your knees, not in the foyer on your feet.
 - a) Make it a habit to decide **there**, not if & when you remember **here!**

F. Slide#8a **Giving is a Heart Issue!** (7c) **In his heart.**

1. Giving isn't so much **how much** we give, **but how** we give!
2. "God looks not to the quantity of the gift **but** to the quality of the giver." (Francis Quarles)
3. **Heart** – Jesus said, **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** & vice-versa
 - a) Bob Hope said, "If you haven't got any **charity** in your **heart**, you have the worst kind of **heart trouble.**"

G. Slide#8b **Giving is not Grudgingly nor by Compulsion!** (7d) **Not grudgingly or of necessity.**

1. I wish I could apologize for all the **pastors** & churches that have **taken advantage & abused** the precious gift of giving.
2. God isn't even interested in money given *grudgingly*.
 - a) We've had a standing policy, "If you've given *grudgingly*, ask a pastor for it back & we'll give it to you back." [not, hey I put in a \$100 bill, I'd like it back]
 - b) To give either *grudgingly* or out of necessity...is to miss the whole blessing of giving!
3. I also need to apologize **myself** for swinging too far the other way & not talking about it enough!

H. Slide#8c Giving is Cheerful! (7e) Cheerful giver.

1. God loves - Interesting only here & in Deut.23:5 does it put *those 2 words* together.
2. Why does God love when we give? Because we are saying to Him, "I believe you & I trust you!"
3. God loves a **hilarious giver** - (Gk. *hilaron*)
4. **Cheerful** – It is often part of the African culture in religious, spiritual worship, that the people **dance** as they bring their offerings forward.
 - a) The music is going, and they individually turn it into a production as they bring that offering to the offering plate. The offering could go on for a long time because they are dancing all the way down the aisle. Interestingly, it's the only time in the service when they smile...when they're giving their money!

I. Slide#9blank (8) Note the **all's**...nothing is left out!

1. Do you read here "God will use you up & then throw you away!"
 - a) *I don't think so*...this is packed with **blessings**!
2. **God is able** – Stop & think about that for a minute.
 - a) The *present tense* reminds us He is **continually able!!!**
 - b) We just went from, the **immediate giver** to focus on the **ultimate giver!**
 - c) We know, *every good gift and every perfect gift is from above*. Jam.1:17
3. **Abound** – to have more than enough, to overflow.
 - a) Slide#10 Malachi 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.**
4. Slide#11blank **All sufficiency** – actually *self-sufficiency*. Oh, Not being **independent** of God **but** a **sufficiency** that is **independent** from external circumstances & other people!

5. *Humanly speaking*, the person who **gives** should be the person who **loses**; **but** that's not the case when *spiritually speaking*!
 - a) **It is more blessed to give than receive** & when we do **whatever measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**
 - b) Though, this doesn't mean we **bargain** with God, **or** look at giving as a means of **purchasing** God's blessing!
 - c) **Rather**, we should look at **Giving** as another way to show our **love** toward God & to show our **trust** in His word!
 - d) **The Christian Industrialist R.G. LeTourneau used to say, "If you give because it pays, it won't pay!"**
- J. (9) Here Paul quotes OT scripture Ps.112:9 to show **"God blesses the person who is faithful in giving!"**
 1. **Slide#12,13** Msg Bible, *They lavish gifts on the poor - A generosity that goes on, and on, and on. An honored life! A beautiful life!*
- K. (10) God not only **supplies** the **seed** but will even **multiply** it.
 1. *So many times, you can't see anything happening week to week. Spiritual growth takes place beneath the surface.* Stuart Briscoe
- L. (11) If you want spiritual **enrichment** from your giving **you must practice enjoyment** and **be glad** for opportunities to give.
 1. Just as we *learn to pray by praying*, **so** you will *learn to give by giving*.
 2. **You must practice giving!**

IV. Slide#14 **GIVING TO THE GLORY OF GOD! (12-15)**

- A. (12-14) God enriches **us**, we enrich **others**, & God receives the **thanksgiving** & **glory**!
 1. **So, giving stimulates praise & thanksgiving & glory** to God!
 - a) **That ought to be reason enough!**
- B. (15) Paul closes this chapter with *a shout of Praise!*
 1. This Gift is of course **Jesus**...the Greatest **Gift** ever!
 2. The Giver is of course **God**...the Greatest **Giver**!
 - a) **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**
- C. Tell story from Max Lucado, *No Wonder they call Him Savior*.
 1. **Slide#15** Longing to leave her poor Brazilian neighborhood, **Christina** wanted to see the world. Discontent with a home having only a pallet on the floor, a washbasin, and a wood-burning stove, she dreamed of a better life in the city. One morning she

slipped away, breaking her mother's heart. Knowing what life on the streets would be like for her young, attractive daughter, **Maria** hurriedly packed to go find her. On her way to the bus stop she entered a drugstore to get one last thing. **Pictures**. She sat in the photograph booth, closed the curtain, and spent all she could on **pictures of herself**. With her purse full of small black-and-white photos, she boarded the next bus to Rio de Janeiro. Maria knew Christina had no way of earning money. She also knew that her daughter was too stubborn to give up. When pride meets hunger, a human will do things that were before unthinkable. Knowing this, Maria began her search. **Slide#16** Bars, hotels, nightclubs, any place with the reputation for street walkers or prostitutes. She went to them all. And at each place she left her picture - taped on a bathroom mirror, tacked to a hotel bulletin board, fastened to a corner phone booth. And on the back of each photo she wrote a note.

It wasn't too long before both the money and the pictures ran out, and Maria had to go home. The weary mother wept as the bus began its long journey back to her small village. It was a few weeks later that young Christina descended the hotel stairs. Her young face was tired. Her brown eyes no longer danced with youth but spoke of pain and fear. Her laughter was broken. Her dream had become a nightmare. A thousand times over she had longed to trade these countless beds for her secure pallet. Yet the little village was, in too many ways, too far away. As she reached the bottom of the stairs, her eyes noticed a familiar face. She looked again, and **there on the lobby mirror was a small picture of her mother**. Christina's eyes burned and her throat tightened as she walked across the room and removed the small photo. Written on the back was this compelling invitation. "Whatever you have done, whatever you have become, it doesn't matter. Please come home."¹

a) **Slide#17** The **picture** God has placed throughout the Scriptures is **Jesus hanging on a wooden cross**. - It is God's way of saying, "whatever you have done, whatever you have become, it doesn't matter. Please come home!"

D. **Slide#18,19** See, **Grace Giving** is what God is all about!

1. Grace **doesn't** point a **condemning finger** or read us the **riot act**.
2. Grace comes to us **in the darkness** & accepts us **in our sin**.
3. Grace stoops to where we **are** & lifts us to where we **ought to be**.
4. Grace is always **greater than** *our own resources, our own pain, our own need, even our own sin*.
5. The Grace of God is a **perfume** that permeates every page of His Holy Word!

¹ Max Lucado, No Wonder They Call Him the Savior, Multnomah Press, 1986, pp. 158-9.