

Some Key Principles for Biblical Giving

From 2 Corinthians 8 & 9

2 Corinthians 8

1. *Christian giving is an expression of the grace of God (1)*
Paul begins by referring to the generosity of God – behind the generosity of Christian giving is the grace of God. Paul’s teaching on Christian giving begins and ends with the grace of God in His giving to us – look at 9:15, His *indescribable gift* – Jesus.
2. *Christian giving not impeded by poverty (2)*
3. *Christian giving is according to ability not mandate (3)*
There is no NT mandate, like the tithe of the OT, which was a tax, and actually combined came to over 18% of earnings.
4. *Christian giving is proportionate (3)*
A tithe is a good measure to use as a base for giving. That is 1/10th from our gross earnings. But only using a tithe may limit giving.
5. *Christian giving is by choice – free will not mandated (3)*
6. *Christian giving is a privilege not an obligation (4)*
As we will see Christian giving is an opportunity to soar to wonderful heights that will enlarge and enrich the soul – not cramp it and hurt it.
7. *Christian giving should be sought as an opportunity (4)*
8. *Christian giving is founded on the Lordship of Christ (5)*
When He truly is our All in all, giving back is a privilege not a drudgery.
9. *Christian giving sometimes needs to be compelled (6)*
Although I seldom speak of finances, there would be nothing biblically wrong for me to encourage greater giving if the Lord led me to do so – Paul certainly did not back away from doing so with the Corinthians.
10. *Christian giving is a virtue on par with others (7)*
Faith, speaking (tongues), knowledge – now in giving!!!
11. *Christian giving can be a test of our love (8)*
I do not nor have I ever, nor will I ever KNOW WHAT YOU GIVE. But Paul says this is a test of your sincere love to God.
12. *Christian giving can be compared to others giving (8-9)*
Paul used the comparison to compel to greater giving.

13. *Christian giving is all wrapped up in the cross of Christ* (9)

14. *Christian giving is according to a plan* (10)

15. *Christian giving should be consistent not sporadic* (10)

16. *Christian giving is a measure of our faithfulness* (11)

17. *Christian giving is in line with our income* (12)

18. *Christian giving contributes to equality* (13-15)

Equality does not mean Egalitarianism. Even in Acts 5:4 when they had all things in common, Ananias's money after the sale of his land was still in his control. Paul's intention was not so that the Corinthians should go into poverty and the saints in Jerusalem enter into wealth – rather, those with are to help those without – with the manna, large families took more, smaller families less – but only what could be used in a day – no hoarding because it rotted. This equality means that we work to alleviate extreme poverty with our resources. “No man is ashamed of his poverty in the light of another's affluence, and no man has to be ashamed of his affluence in the light of another's poverty.”¹

19. *Christian giving and finance should be open to scrutiny* (20-12)

20. *Christian giving can be made much of by leaders* (24)

2 Corinthians 9

1. *Our giving can be a motivation for others to give* (1-2)

2. *Our giving should be fulfilled according to intention* (3-4)

This shows forethought and planning and promises to give a specific amount – and Paul is admonishing them to KEEP IT.

3. *Our giving can be sourced in a faith-promise* (5)

4. *Our giving may need encouragement by leadership* (5)

5. *Our giving can be hampered by covetousness* (5)

Grasping for money at the expense of others. Causes can range from fear and lack of trust in God to take care of us, to an inordinate craving for indulgence in things, rest and comfort.

6. *Our giving will result in generous blessings from God* (6)

7. *Our giving should be the result of careful planning* (7)

¹ Julius Nyerere, ex President of Tanzania...

8. *Our giving will bring the love of God as He sees our cheerful sacrifice (7)*
9. *Our giving will result in God's generosity toward us (8)*
Our giving will never outstrip God's generosity
He will always replenish, sometimes with the grace for sacrifice
10. *Our giving will be blessed with more to give (9-11)*
Not like the Prosperity preachers preach but in reality as God has promised – vs. 8, “*you will always have all sufficiency in everything, so that you have an abundance for every good work.*” This is all based in proper attitude behind your giving.
11. *Our giving results in the elevated spiritual blessing of blessing others (12-13)*
“The Apostle tenderly leads the Corinthians on until with him, they have risen to that spiritual height from which they are able to see Christian giving in the splendid sweep of its true perspective – not as a burden which cramps life and engenders regret, but as a privilege of grace that ENLARGES AND ENRICHES THE SOUL OF THE GIVER, relieves the wants of others, and in tis outworking causes many to return praise to God.”²
12. *Our giving will result in prayers for us and deep fellowship (14)*
13. *Our is one way we can follow God's supreme example (15)*

4 Basic Commitments Of Christian Giving And Finances

1. Identify your income and make a plan for your weekly giving.
2. Use a tithe as a baseline for your giving (it may take some time to get there) but don't let it stop you from giving more.
3. Remember you giving is decided upon by you, not others. It is to be done cheerfully, and according to what you have NOT what you do not have.
4. Remember, you can never out-give God, and He will replenish your giving when it is done according to a wise plan, in accordance with your ability, and when done cheerfully.

² Phillip E Hughes; 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians p 338