

# Giving to Glorify God

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. This is the next message in our series in the book of 2 Corinthians, entitled, We Faint Not.

If you would take your Bibles, turn with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 9. 2 Corinthians chapter 9. Well, this is the conclusion to what Pastor has been preaching on for the last, what seems like, five months.

We're talking about giving. And this is the last, last sermon, I promise. Until Sunday morning when we have offering. Then we'll be talking more about giving. But this is the last sermon coming from this pulpit with pastors speaking on it, hopefully for a while.

But anyways, I want to remind you that the reason why we give, the only reason why we give, is because it's God's grace working through us.

And a good illustration shown in that is in the New Testament. Matthew and Mark and Luke, they record a story of a woman, which many of you probably remember. She came from a small town in Bethany.

[ 1 : 0 5 ] When they described her, when people looked at her, the one thing that they said was, sinner. That's what they knew her for. Her past was that of immorality against God.

She didn't love God. And she was a sinner. So obviously there had to have been something that reminded these people of what she's done. Not only that, but in her mind you have to think about, put yourself in this lady's position.

When you think about this lady, this sinner that the Bible calls, or that the people called this lady a sinner. Think about this. Think of all the weight of guilt that she carried. Think of all the baggage and the luggage that she had with her.

Think of the times that she would pass different people and remind her of different sins that would come to her mind. Well, the Bible tells about this story. That one day, this woman, she was in the town of Bethany and she came into the house of Simon the leopard.

And there, there, she saw the one that she probably had encountered before and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. And emotion came over her.

[ 2 : 1 0 ] Emotion to the point that her eyes were filled with tears. And it began to trickle down her cheeks. And as she knelt over the Lord Jesus Christ's feet, those tears began to drop on his feet.

And with her hair, she began to wipe away the dirt off of his feet. And then she did something that was unusual, that dumbfounded the disciples that made the Pharisees mock Jesus.

She took a box. A box that the Bible says cost her 300 pence. 300 pence would be the average yearly, it would be a year's average of work for the average man.

And she broke that box and in worship she gave it unto the Lord. And she poured that alabaster box and she worshipped him. Jesus said a couple things that were interesting about this woman.

One, that her sins were forgiven. Two, that she loved much because she's been forgiven of a lot. And three, that wherever the gospel went, that this lady's story would go with it.

- [ 3 : 16 ] Now the question to me, I bring up that I think is, why in the world would a woman take a year's wage and waste it? Why? Well, Jesus said because she had been forgiven much.
- Today I want to remind you all that we have been forgiven for much. God has showed his grace time and time again to us, unworthy sinners.
- God has showed his grace in time of need. God has given us exactly what we needed. And the only thing that we have, the only thing that we can repay him, is what we give. And so giving comes from a grace-filled life.
- Does that make sense? If you're here born again and you've tasted that grace, you know who Jesus Christ is, you will give. And that's what Paul's going to conclude on.
- That's what Paul's going to tell these Corinthians. Before we read, I'd like to pray. I just want the Holy Spirit to bless this time. I hope we can get this.
- [ 4 : 16 ] Grace-filled people give. Grace-filled people give. The only reason why we give is because it's God's grace showing through our lives. And that's the one point. That's it in a nutshell. We can walk out right now as long as you know that.
- God's people give because it's God's grace showing through their lives. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come to you in prayer, Lord God, I know there's many people here, Lord God, that are hurting.
- People without spouses. People without their children. People that are going through tough times. People who are going through health problems. People who are going through financial problems, Lord. But I ask that you would just ease our minds.
- Calm our spirits. Open our hearts to your truth. And help us to accept this. Help us to learn something about you, Lord God. And help us to act on it. Lord, thank you for who you are. Thank you for what you have given us, Lord God.
- Help us to be a people that give. And we'll give you all the praise. In Jesus' name. Amen. In 2 Corinthians 9, verses 12, the Bible says this. And we're going to end up. This is Paul closing up this thought, this idea on giving.
- [ 5 : 17 ] You guys remember the past two chapters, it's all been talking about giving, giving, giving, grace giving, grace giving. And Paul's going to close it up right here. And it says in verse 12, he says, For the administration or the management of this service or this sacrifice or this offering not only supplieth the want of the saints, but it is abundant also by the many thanksgivings unto God.
- Verse 13, And while it's by the experiment or the trial, the testing of this service or this offering, they glorified God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ and for your liberal distribution unto them and to all men.
- And by their prayer for you, which long after you, for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.
- The first thing that Paul points out to this church is that their giving, when we give, it meets needs. Now the thing that Paul uses, the word that Paul uses in verse 12, he says, For the administration or the management of this service.
- This service. What does that word service mean? That word service is Paul's using as like what the priests did when they used to offer animals. You guys remember that in the Old Testament? How many people here ever went through Sunday school class?
- [ 6 : 35 ] You guys remember that? And how the priests would go before the Holy Holies and they would take that offering of that dead animal, that blood, and they would offer it to God. Paul says that this service, this offering that they've given, that's the offering that they've given, is going to supply the want of the saints.

Though we no longer offer animal sacrifices, our giving becomes a spiritual sacrifice. Hebrews 13, 15 through 16, it says this. By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips and the giving of thanks to his name, but to do good and communicate and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

We offer spiritual sacrifices today. That's what the Bible tells us. In 1 Peter 2, verses 5, he says, Yea, also, as lively stones ye are built up as spiritual house and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices accepted to God by Jesus Christ.

So what's all that mean? God has created us to be people that we're going to sacrifice and give offerings back to him. And how do we do that? How do we do that? How do we give sacrifices and offerings back to God?

We're not going to go out and buy a goat and kill it, are we? No. We do it through our giving. And that's what Paul was saying. Your sacrifice, your offering that was given to me, it ministered to the needs of other people.

[ 7 : 53 ] We are reminded in Romans chapter 12, when Paul writes that we are, he beseeches us, he begs us, he begs the brethren, that we present our bodies a living sacrifice.

And why do we present our bodies a living sacrifice? Why do we give of ourselves? Why do we give, offer ourselves? Why is that? Well, verse 12, verse 1, what does he say?

By the mercies. Paul spent 10 or 11 chapters talking about the grace of God, talking about the gospel, which was the whole central theme of Romans. And Paul says, I'm begging you because what God has done for you, that you just sacrifice, that you be a living sacrifice.

Now the question is, is do you sacrifice? Do you present your body or your life as a sacrifice? You realize we only have a limited amount of time here on earth?

And most of us here have jobs. And what we do with that limited amount of times is we go to our employers and say, I will give you 40 hours a week if you give me this. And so we trade our time for money.

[ 9 : 05 ] So in essence, when we give our money in that offering plate, it's just something that's so insignificant. We write out that check. We throw a dollar in. What are we doing? We're giving a part of ourselves back to God.

That's how we offer up sacrifices back to God, to do good things. The question is, are you doing that? The emphasis here in verse 12 is on the fact that their offerings is about to meet the need of poor saints.

Right now in Jerusalem, not right now, but back then in Jerusalem, famine was going on. People were without money, no food. And Paul was taking up this offering to take it back to Jerusalem to help out the brothers in need.

And so what did the Corinthian church do? They got together and say, I think we all can do this. They purposed in their hearts. They gave how much they knew they could give. And it was all a grace of God working through them. We all know that.

But the Corinthians could have looked at this opportunity to give, and they could have given excuses like many of us do. They could have looked at the problem that Jerusalem had, and they could have said, man, they should have prepared themselves a whole lot better.

[ 10 : 16 ] Man, if they would have had their emergency fund, you know what I'm talking about? Dave Ramsey's emergency fund. If they would have had their rainy day fund, or the non-rainy day fund, if they would have just been prepared, then they could have taken care of themselves.

Why should I feel obligated to take care of them? It wasn't our fault that they had this famine, or they're poor. Others, or how about this? Others can help out better than I can.

Or how about this? Even better. This is what we rationalize when we think about giving to other people that are in need. I mean, I have to take care of my own first, right? But what was the reaction?

Through a grace-filled life, when those people saw someone in need, they said, I've got to meet that need. They're my brother in Christ. I need to meet it. Why is that? Because God did a work in their life. Some verses that we need to consider about giving.

If you're a born-again believer, I hope you realize that the only thing that you have to guide and direct your life is not what's said from the pulpit. It's not what a man says in Sunday school class, but it's in this Word of God.

[ 11 : 19 ] And so when we look at these, when we consider these verses, realize who it's coming from. Realize it's God in heaven who's saying these verses. In Romans 12, verses 13, the Bible says this.

He says, distributing to the necessities of the saints given to hospitality. Not only are we supposed to be kind when someone's in need. Not only we, you know, oh, bless your heart.

God bless you, brother. We'll be praying for you. But we're supposed to be distributing to that need. Whatever it may be. We're supposed to be helping out. Isn't that what we as a body do? How many of you would, if your son would come up to you and said, Mom, Dad, I'm in a, I'm in a, well, I don't have a son.

How many of you had a daughter or a son, okay? And they said, Mom, Dad, I need some help. How many of you would say, just go away. I'll be praying for you, brother. Take care. You know, how many of us would do that? No.

If we see a need, if our child is in danger, if our child is lacking, we make sure that need is met. And that's the same with the body of Christ. God says, distributing the necessities of the saints given to hospitality.

[ 12 : 23 ] In Proverbs 22, 9, the Bible says, He that hath the bountiful eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his bread to the poor. Grace, listen to this, grace never looks for a reason, but it only looks for an opportunity.

We, as grace-filled people, are looking for opportunities to meet needs. Can I say something? Isn't that what the Lord Jesus Christ did with us? He looked down on our helpless estate.

Us in sin, and totally depraved, and we couldn't get out of it. I mean, we couldn't do anything. There was not works of righteousness, which we could have done. It wasn't because we could muster up enough merit.

There was nothing that we could do. But yet, Christ came down, and he met our needs. And if he lives in us, shouldn't we be doing the same thing for others? If he lives in us, shouldn't we be living through others?

Galatians 6, 10 says, As we therefore, as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. Galatians 6, 10. Especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

[ 13 : 31 ] I like that. The household of faith. He just doesn't say church. He calls it a house, a home of faith. We're family. You know, and I'm reminded in 1 Timothy chapter 5, Paul tells Timothy, he says, Timothy, the way you treat people in the church, this is why I want you to view them, okay?

Timothy, I want you to view the older men like your father. I want you to view the younger men like you would if they were your brother. And I want you to treat the older women like you would your mother, and your younger women like you would your sister in all purity.

And then he goes on, and he talks about widows. And something interesting, he says, if the widows, nieces, if their nieces and nephews and sons and daughters, they won't take care of them, and they have this list of, and they follow this list of different characteristics where they have to keep, then we take care of them.

And in the midst of all that, he's talking about taking care of people in the faith that have faith. He says this, this is what Paul says in Timothy, 1 Timothy chapter 5, in verse 8. If you pop that up there real quick, guys.

But if any provide not for his own, especially, especially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.

[ 14 : 42 ] Do you get that? If you don't provide for your own, and what does it say? And especially those of your own house, your own family member, your own blood, you have denied the faith.

This is the way, God, you have denied the faith, and you are worse than an infidel. That's pretty strong words, isn't it? If you see somebody that's in the house of God, and they're in need, and they're in want, grace says, give me an opportunity, I will take care of you.

You are my own. I love you. You are one of mine. I'll take care of you. But if you don't have that attitude, what does the Bible say? He says, you are worse than an infidel. You've denied the faith.

Your actions show that you're not one of us. I'm not saying that to convict anything, but that's what the Bible says. We are to be looking for good works and things to give to.

1 Timothy 6, verse 17 says, charge them that are rich in this world, that's me, that they may not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches.

[ 15 : 51 ] A lot of us are trusting in the government and in our riches and the ability for our government to take care of our money and the banks and all that stuff.

You realize, we're not supposed to trust in that. The Bible says, don't be high-minded. Don't think you earned that. Don't think it's yours. But I want you to trust in God, the living God.

What does He do to us? He gives us richly all things. And why does He give us all things richly? Why does He give us money in the bank account? Why does He give us great things? Why is it? Why is it? What does it say in verse 17 or 18?

He says, that they do good and that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Why did God give us all this money? Why did God give us in the land of prosperity?

That we would be ready to give when we see a need. That's why God gave it. It's not so we can sit back and have a life of luxury, but God gave us great things so we could, in return, give to others.

[ 16 : 51 ] Isn't that, we realize that with salvation. We say, shame on you. When someone gets born again and they're not openly sharing their faith, don't we do that? But when God gives us, He puts us in the land of, I mean, we're in America.

And you can be whatever you want to be. You can have as much wealth as you want to, as hard as you want to work. And He put us there.

And He's given us wealth. Why has He done that? So that we would be ready to see needs and meet needs. And we're going to find out what that shows, what that demonstrates here in a second.

We're always to look for ways to do good works, make it a point as a believer to be serving others. Titus 3.8 says, This is a faithful saying, And these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which believe in God might be careful to maintain good works.

These things are good and profitable unto men. Our works are never about glorifying us. Something I want us to realize. When we meet needs, it's not about us getting the glory.

[ 18 : 05 ] In Matthew 5.16, the Bible says, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and do what? And glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Needs arise. Needs come up. And the people that we meet in the church, what is our reaction? Let's meet those needs. Why?

So someone can pat you on the back and say, Man, look at that. Alex Montero. He's a standout God. No. That they might say, Man, look at what God has done through Alex Montero. Look at the grace that God has shown. Look at the grace that Alex has shown because God has done a work in him.

It's about glorifying. Your giving glorifies God. Don't you see that? Verse 13, He says, While by the experience, the experiment of this ministration, they glorify God.

We. No individual gets the glory for our giving or our service. It all belongs to God. I wonder if that's the reason why Paul said, I want the church to take up an offering.

[ 19 : 09 ] I want that you get that? I wonder if Paul said that, I want the church to take up an offering. He didn't charge individuals. He charged the church. So when the church saw people in Jerusalem in need, the church said, Okay, we'll take up an offering.

Not individuals. Not so one person can take the glory. But we'll lose our identity and get underneath the identity of the church, which Christ is the head. Christ is representing. Christ's representation here on earth is the church.

So that when people see, Man, look at that church. They serve that Jesus over there. And they would therefore glorify God rather than glorify man. Isn't that what we, I mean, if you look on the television right now, what do we see?

We see all these different people giving millions of dollars to aid the storm of Sandy. And this such and such actor gave this. And this such and such person gave this. That's not what we're about.

We're about glorifying God. We don't want the credit. We want God to get the credit. It was their obedience to the gospel by giving that was causing God to be glorified.

[ 20 : 13 ] But not only did this obedience to the gospel, not only did they give and gave God glory, but it also, it proved something to them. It proved that their faith was real.

Verse 13, he says, while it was by the experiment of this ministration, they glorified God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ. In 1 John 2.10, the Bible says this, he that loveth his brother abideth in light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

In 1 John 3.17-19, the Bible says, whosoever hath the world's good and seeth his brother and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

My little children, let us not love in word, let us not love in tongue, but in deed and truth. Don't let your love go as far as your mouth and your words go, but show it, make it, prove it, prove it with your actions, and hereby we know that we are of truth and shall assure of our hearts before him.

In 1 John, he keeps on talking about it in 4.20, he says, if a man say, I love God and he hates his brother, he's a liar. For he that loveth his brother, whom he hath, for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

[ 21 : 38 ] And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother. You know what that offering showed?

It just proved that they were in this love of God. It proved that the love of God dwelled in them because they were showing forth love. And we know that God is love.

Not only did those receiving the offering glorify God, but others did as well. We should ask ourselves something. Are there people out there praising God for how we give?

I'm not talking about how much we give, what we give. But do people out there realize that you are serious about this thing called God and serving him and letting his grace show through you?

Do people realize that, that you are all about God? Is it evident in your checkbook in your wallet? I mean, it has to be. You guys are here on Thursday night, right? It really is.

[ 22 : 40 ] I mean, do people see it not only how we give, but our obedience, our generosity, how we treat them? One thing is sin in my life is praying without giving can always be an easy cop-out, right?

I'll pray for you, brother. I'll pray for you. Love not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth. You realize in Ephesians 2, 8, 9, the Bible says that, you know, we're saved by faith.

For by grace are you saved through faith and that out of yourselves is a gift of God. We all know that, right? That's something we've learned from Sunday school. It's something we learned in beginner's course of foundations.

But you know what Ephesians 2, 10 says? It says, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. God create us in Christ Jesus to do good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

God created you to do good works. And one of those good works that he's given us is the ability to give. And that's what Paul was talking to these people.

[ 23 : 59 ] it ought always be our goal that God be glorified. In 1 Corinthians 10, 31, you guys all know this. Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God, that should be our goal in life.

But not only does giving meet needs, not only does giving glorify God, but giving also unify this church, these two churches.

You see, one church was in Jerusalem, the other church was in Achaia, or Achaia, or anyways, it was in Corinth, they would say that. And they gave to them, and let's look at verse 14, and the Bible says this, and by their prayer for you, they were praying for them, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God into you, thanks be unto God and speakable.

You realize that these people that they're giving proved something that was very special to the believers in Jerusalem. It proved not only that they were indeed saved, but they also considered themselves one, brothers in Christ, and there was no division.

Jerusalem, Israel, Jewish people, Corinth, a Gentile nation, always that fighting and that animosity amongst each other. You know what I mean?

[ 25 : 23 ] Does anyone know? You guys remember in the Old Testament, they wouldn't even allow the Gentiles to end the room where the Jews would worship? You guys realize that? But when need came up, Christianity, the gospel, changed all of that so that when that happened, this church says, I'm going to take care of my brother.

And it unified these churches. It drew them close together. The offering would express not only their proof of salvation, but it also expressed their love.

in Romans 15, 25, this is what Paul says. He says, now I go down, now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints, for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution to the poor saints which are in Jerusalem.

Paul says, I'm going up to Jerusalem to give this offering to the poor saints in Jerusalem that was taken by these churches in Corinth and Macedonia. And it pleased them, verse 27, and it pleased them verily that they are debtors they are.

That they are debtors they are. For the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things. Their duty is also to administer unto them incarnal things.

[ 26 : 39 ] What's that mean? It means back in the time of Jesus, after Jesus arose, the church was started there in Jerusalem and somehow the gospel left Jerusalem and it went up to Antioch.

And from Antioch it spread and we know it's all over the world to right now it's here in the United States of America. And these people realized that they were indebted because Jerusalem, they gave them, they ministered unto them the things that were spiritual.

So now that they were in need, now when they were in need of carnal things, fleshly things, things to survive off of, they were going to give to that and that unified them. But not only did it unify them, but I just want to remind you something.

At the end of this, I want to remind you that though we give, though we give, though grace is shown through us through our giving, we have received a gift that no one can ever comprehend.

What's he say in verse 15? Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. It's God's gift of His Son that gives us salvation.

[ 27 : 45 ] In John 3, 16, I want you to think about this. John 3, 16, For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. God looked down and saw our helpless estate, and He gave us everything.

He gave us everything. And we as Christians, people who are Christ-like, we follow after Him. He lives in us.

So isn't that going to come out of us? Aren't we going to be givers? With Jesus, God gives us anything, any and everything. No limits came with that gift.

Do you realize that? Romans 8, 32 says, He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

[ 28 : 45 ] If God wasn't willing to withhold Jesus, what is He going to withhold from us? And can I say, that same person that gave us Jesus now dwells in us.

And so when we give, it's not because we're good people. We give because it's His grace showing through our lives. Can I remind you that? The reason why we see people in need and we want to give to that is not because we're good.

It's because God created us and now He lives within us. He made us a new being and now we want to give. It's God's gift of His Son that makes it possible for us to be redeemed, to be bought back from sin and death.

It was all a work of God. The gift of God proves His love for us, to us, before we ever loved Him. You guys know that.

1 John 4, 9 through 11, it says, And this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him here in His love. Not that we loved God, but that He loved us.

[ 29 : 54 ] And He sent His Son to be the propitiation of our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

We are to follow and imitate what God has done or Christ has done. Let Him live His life in and through us.



Ephesians 5, 1 through 2 says this, He says, Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and hath given Himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet-smelling savor.

Why do we give? Because we're just following our Savior. It's because He's living through us. And Paul's just reminding this church, he says, I want you guys to know that you're meeting a need and you're glorifying God, but that church back there, they're envying your grace, that grace of God that's working through you.

Don't we realize that? It's all a work of grace of God. It's all the grace of God. We wouldn't be saved if there wasn't for grace.

[ 31 : 14 ] We wouldn't have a desire to worship Him if it weren't for grace, if it weren't for the grace of God. Our good works and our desire to do the good works comes because of His grace working in us.

We will meet the needs of others because of His grace. Him working in and through us. That's why we love each other. Because He showed us how to love.

We will see God glorified. But not by anything we really do, but what He is and what He has done through Jesus. There will be souls saved, a church formed, the work going forward, but it will all be the work that He has done.

Praise God and worship Him for all He is and He does. One day, we will look back and we will say this as the Apostle Paul, but by the grace of God I am what I am.

And His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all. Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

[ 32 : 28 ] What does Paul say? Everything I have done is because of the grace of God and the grace that He has given me, I just want you guys to remember, I didn't shut it up. I didn't withhold it. I let it free.

I worked harder than they all. I labored more than they all. But it wasn't me. It was God working through me. It was all Him. All glory goes to Him.

So today, why do we give? It's so simple. It's because He is in us. He's working through us. He's putting desires in our hearts.

Don't hold it back. Don't hold it back. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

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[ 33 : 27 ] Thank you. Thank you.