

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMAND TO GROW IN THE GRACE OF CHRIST
2 PETER 3:18
UNDERSTANDING THE GRACE OF CHRIST INVOLVES COMPREHENDING
THE MINISTRY OF GIVING TO THE LORD
2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-9:15

INTRO: Over the past few weeks, we have been studying our 2025 church theme which is **“GROW IN CHRIST – GO FOR CHRIST.”** The main texts for our series are 1 Peter 3:18, that teaches to **GROW IN THE GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** and Mark 16:15 that compels us to **GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL**. This means that it is God’s desire that all Christians focus on developing a greater understanding of the **BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF GRACE AND THE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST** and then through missions and evangelism, **PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST TO THE WHOLE WORLD**. Regarding the **GRACE OF GOD, GRACE** is so great that according to Ephesians 2:7 we will be learning more about it throughout all of eternity. For sure, we like talk about God’s Grace, and we love to sing about God’s Grace, but it is possible that we often fail to understand the **FULL SCOPE OF GOD’S GRACE** as it is taught in the scriptures. And yet, our key text commands us to **GROW IN THE GRACE OF JESUS CHRIST (GOD)**. Likewise, we are to **GROW IN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST**, which will also take all of eternity. So far, we have learned that **GROWING IN THE GRACE OF CHRIST (GOD)** involves:

- Comprehending the ministry of Christ – **BY GRACE**
- Comprehending the ability for Christian Service – **BY GRACE**
- Comprehending the necessary strength for daily trials – **BY GRACE**
- Comprehending the enablement for Christian growth – **BY GRACE**

Today we are going to study that **GROWING IN THE GRACE OF CHRIST** enables us to **COMPREHEND THE MINISTRY OF GIVING TO THE WORK OF THE LORD**. Our study today will take us to 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 where we find the most complete teaching of giving to the Lord in all of the scripture.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT
2 CORINTHIANS 8 AND 9

- 1) These chapters outline the principles of New Testament giving.
- 2) The background of the chapters is that the church of Jerusalem had suffered persecution and other issues and thus had great financial needs.
- 3) A year before Paul wrote to the Corinthians in these chapters, Titus had encouraged them to give to the need of the believers in Jerusalem. The Corinthians had agreed to send an offering to the impoverished believers at Jerusalem but had not yet done so after a whole year.
- 4) Paul used the example of the churches of Macedonia, who were impoverished, to encourage the Corinthians, who were financially well off, to follow through with their promise to give.
- 5) **GIVING TO THE WORK OF THE LORD IS AN ACT OF GOD’S GRACE UPON BELIEVERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE FINANCIALLY LACKING.**

PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT GIVING BY THE GRACE OF GOD
AS PRESENTED IN 2 CORINTHIANS 8 AND 9.

(THESE ARE PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL GIVING BY GOD’S GRACE)

NOTE: THE WORD “GRACE” IS MENTIONED 7 TIMES IN 2 CORINTHIANS 8,9.

1. Financial giving is the effect of **GOD’S GRACE** on our lives and is supplied from what **HE HAS FIRST GIVEN TO US** – 8:1 (1 Chronicles 29:10-14)
2. Financial giving results in **GREAT JOY** – 8:2
3. Financial giving stems from one **FIRST** giving himself to the Lord – 8:5
4. Financial giving is the fruit of **SPIRITUAL GROWTH** – 8:7

5. Financial giving is the proof of our **LOVE FOR GOD** – 8:8
6. Financial giving is based upon **READINESS TO GIVE** – 8:11
7. Financial giving that pleases God is not based on what we have no matter the size of our bank account, but rather upon **OUR GENUINE WILLINGNESS TO GIVE** – 8:12
8. Financial giving to others **IS RECIPROCAL** – 8:13,14
9. Financial giving that is sparing results in receiving sparingly, but giving bountifully results in **RECEIVING BOUNTIFULLY** – 9:6
10. Financial giving that honors God is done purposefully and cheerfully out of our **TRUE LOVE FOR GOD** – 9:7
11. Financial giving always results in **OUR NEEDS BEING MET** – 9:8-11
12. Financial giving to others (missions or otherwise those in need) not only meets the needs of others, but is a personal act of **THANKSGIVING TO GOD** for what He has done for us – 9:12
13. Financial giving to others that is “liberal” (bountiful and sincerely without self-seeking) **GLORIFIES GOD** and generates their prayer for us – 9:13,14
14. Financial giving is **A GIFT OF GOD’S GRACE TO ALL BELIEVERS** – 9:15

OTHER BIBLICAL TEXTS TO CONSIDER

1. Luke 6:38 – The act of **GIVING** results in the blessing of **RECEIVING**.
2. Acts 20:35 – The act of **GIVING** brings greater **BLESSING** than **RECEIVING**.
3. 1 Corinthians 16:1,2 – The act of giving is to be **ORDERLY**:
 - Done Regularly – “**On the first day of the week.**”
 - Done Individually – “**Every one of you**”
 - Done Systematically – “**Lay by him in store.**”
 - Done Proportionally – “**As God hath prospered.**”
 - Done Liberally – “**No gatherings when I come.**”

LESSON/APPLICATION

1. The more we **APPLY** God’s Grace to our lives (live by His grace and power) the more we will **GIVE** to the work of the Lord.
2. The more we Grow in our understanding of God’s Grace, the less we will **FRUSTRATE** God’s Grace in our lives (Cp Galatians 2:21)
3. The way to **EXPERIENCE** God’s Grace in our lives is to **ADMIT** to self and God that we cannot do **ANYTHING** on our own.