

**Community Group Supplement**  
**Week of 09.05.10**  
**CORE: GIVING**  
**II Corinthians 8:1-15**

- I. **GODLY GIVING—ILLUSTRATIONS (8:1–5, 9):** Paul offers two examples of sacrificial giving.
- A. **The Macedonian believers (8:1–5)**
    - 1. *First they surrendered their will to the Savior (8:5).*
    - 2. *Then they sacrificially shared their wealth with the saints (8:1–4).*
  - B. **The Lord Jesus Christ (8:9)**
    - 1. *What he was (8:9a):* Very rich.
    - 2. *What he became (8:9b):* Very poor.
    - 3. *Why he did it (8:9c):* So he could make spiritually poor people rich.
- II. **GODLY GIVING—INSTRUCTIONS (8:6–8, 10–15)**
- A. **Give knowingly (8:6–8):** Paul says financial giving is related to the other spiritual gifts.
  - B. **Give willingly (8:10–11).**
  - C. **Give realistically (8:12).**
  - D. **Give confidently (8:13–15).<sup>1</sup>**

How people view money is an effective barometer of their spirituality. Money is neither good nor bad in itself; corrupt people can put it to evil uses, while good people can put it to righteous uses. Though it is morally neutral, what people do with their money reflects their internal morality. In the words of Jesus, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Luke 12:34).

The Bible does not forbid the possession of money; in fact, it teaches that “God [gives the] power to make wealth” (Deut. 8:18) and “richly supplies us with all things to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17). Because of His blessing, many godly men in Scripture, such as Job (Job 1:3), Abraham (Gen. 13:2), Isaac (Gen. 26:12–13), Jacob (Gen. 30:43), Boaz (Ruth 2:1), and Solomon (1 Kings 10:23), were extremely wealthy. God promised His people that their obedience to Him would result in material as well as spiritual blessings (Deut. 15:4–6; 26:15; 28:11).

But while the Bible does not forbid possessing money, it does forbid loving it, warning that “the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (1 Tim. 6:10). Later in that chapter, Paul exhorted Timothy to “instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches” (v. 17). To love money is to have an unhealthy affection for it and be driven to pursue it. Such a

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<sup>1</sup>H. L. Willmington, *The Outline Bible* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 2 Co 8:13-15.

pursuit is the height of folly. “Do not weary yourself to gain wealth,” the book of Proverbs counsels. “Cease from your consideration of it. When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens” (Prov. 23:4–5). Though he was one of the wealthiest men who ever lived, Solomon was wise enough to know that “he who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income” (Eccl. 5:10).

Achan’s love of money brought disaster to himself, his family, and his nation (Josh. 7:1–25). Balaam’s love of money caused him to foolishly attempt to curse God’s chosen people (Num. 22–24), which resulted in his death (Num. 31:8). Delilah’s love of money led her to betray Samson (Judg. 16:4–6), which ultimately led to the death of thousands (Judg. 16:27–30). Judas’s love of money caused him to betray the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:14–16) and damn himself to eternal torment in hell (Matt. 26:24; Acts 1:25). Ananias’s and Sapphira’s love of money led them to hypocritically lie about their giving (Acts 5:1–2), resulting in God’s execution of them (Acts 5:5, 10).

Loving money makes people forget God (Deut. 8:11–14; Prov. 30:9), trust in their riches rather than Him (Job 31:24–28; Ps. 52:7; Prov. 11:28), be deceived (Mark 4:19), compromise convictions, be proud (Deut. 8:14), steal from God (Mal. 3:8), and ignore the needs of others (1 John 3:17; cf. Prov. 3:27). Love of money causes people to pursue it illegitimately by stealing (whether directly [Ex. 20:15; Eph. 4:28] or by fraud [Ps. 37:21; Hos. 12:7; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:11]), usury (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:36–37; Neh. 5:7, 10; Ps. 15:5; Prov. 28:8), and gambling, which foolishly trusts in chance rather than in the providence of God.

The Bible lists several acceptable ways to acquire money, including gifts (Acts 20:35; Phil. 4:16), investments (Matt. 25:27), saving (Prov. 21:20; 30:25), wise planning (Prov. 27:23–24), and, primarily, work (Ex. 20:9; Prov. 6:6–8; 14:23; 24:30–34; 28:19; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8).

Those who violate biblical principles in regard to money may find that they do not have enough of it. People in that situation need to consider whether they actually need more money, or merely want more. They should also recognize that their limited resources may be God’s way of revealing that their priorities are wrong. Misuse of the resources God has given in the past—especially the abuse of credit (cf. Prov. 6:1–5; 11:15; 17:18; 20:16; 22:7)—may lead to a lack of resources in the present. People may also lack money because of stinginess (Luke 6:38; Prov. 11:24), impulsiveness or hastiness (Prov. 21:5), lack of discipline (Prov. 10:4; 13:18), laziness (Prov. 14:23; 19:15; 20:13; 24:30–34), indulgence (Prov. 21:17; 23:21), and craftiness (Prov. 28:19).

The Bible also gives guidelines on how to spend money. It is to be used to provide for the needs of one’s household (1 Tim. 5:8), pay debts (Rom. 13:8), and save for the future (Prov. 21:20; 30:25). Having met those basic obligations, believers are ready to give

money to further the kingdom.

Though many view giving as merely another obligation, it is in reality a priceless privilege, because it is the pipeline which brings God's promised blessings to His people. In [Luke 6:38](#) Jesus promised, "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." Paul added, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" ([2 Cor. 9:6](#)). Significantly, the only direct quote from Jesus' earthly ministry recorded outside of the Gospels addresses the issue of giving: "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' " ([Acts 20:35](#)).

Generous giving to God results in greater giving from God; it is impossible to outgive Him. The promises associated with giving should stimulate believers to be sacrificially generous givers. Sadly, the powerful lure of the world's advertising, slick appeals from purportedly Christian ministries, self-indulgence, and lack of faith all hinder believers from experiencing the full blessing of giving.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>John MacArthur, *2 Corinthians* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2003), 271.