



Today's Message

Date: June 2, 2019
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Gracious Giving: The Supreme Example*

Text: 2 Corinthians 8:7–15 (ESV)

⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. ¹⁰ And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. ¹¹ So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. ¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³ For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness ¹⁴ your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. ¹⁵ As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.”

Introduction: In 2 Corinthians 8:1-6, we saw Paul gently call the church in Corinth to give sacrificially to a collection he planned to deliver to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Paul chiefly desired to see the collection strengthen the unity of the church (Jews with Gentiles) for the sake of the advance of the Gospel. In today's text, Paul explained that sacrificial giving proves the genuineness of the Christian's love.

I. God displays his *lavish* grace through our gracious giving. 7

- A. God *lavishes* on us the grace of personal growth.
- B. God *lavishes* on us the grace of corporate devotion.
- C. Therefore, we must *overflow* with gracious giving.

II. God wants us to give generously for the right reason. 8-9

- A. Generous giving proves we have genuine love. 8
- B. Genuine love flows from knowing gospel grace. 9
 - 1. The preincarnate Christ was rich (glory).
 - 2. Through the incarnation, Christ became poor (glory laid aside).
 - 3. Because of Christ's spiritual poverty (humility) we have become rich (glory bestowed).

III. God gives practical guidance for generous giving. 10-15

For our own benefit, God wants us to give . . .

- A. Willingly. 10
- B. Faithfully. 11
- C. Proportionally. 12
- D. Fairly. 13-15

Today's take-home truth: If we truly love Christ and his people, we will give generously for the sake of the Gospel.