

Monday

September 7

Motivation

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1, 5 and 2 Corinthians 9:7, 9, 13, 15. What is the central message of these passages?

2 COR 8:1 – GRACE OF GOD

"We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,"

2 COR 8:5– SURRENDER OF SELF TO GOD

"and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us."

2 COR 9:7— HOW WE GIVE IS AN INDICATOR OF A
BALANCED OR IMBALANCED CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

"Each one must give as he has decided in his
heart, not reluctantly (CHEAP GRACE) or under
compulsion, (LEGALISM) for God loves a cheerful
giver.

2 COR 9:9— RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH IS
FOUNDATIONAL TO GIVING

As it is written,
"He has distributed freely, he has given to the
poor; His righteousness endures forever."

2 COR 9:13—GIVING IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO
OBEYING THE GOSPEL

"Whiles by the experiment of this ministration
they glorify God for your professed subjection
(#5293-OBEDIENCE) unto the gospel of Christ, and
for your liberal distribution unto them, and
unto all men;,"

2 COR 9:15—GIVING IS A THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR
THE GOSPEL.

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Language of giving pervades 2 Corinthians 8
and 9: "The grace of God . . . has been given"
(2 Cor. 8:1, ESV); "They gave themselves" (2
Cor. 8:5, ESV); "Each of you should give what
you have decided in your heart . . ., for God
loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7, NIV); "He
has given to the poor" (2 Cor. 9:9, ESV); "They
will glorify God because of . . . the generosity
of your contribution" (2 Cor. 9:13, ESV);
"Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!"
(2 Cor. 9:15, ESV). Second Corinthians 8 and 9
begins and ends with language of giving (2 Cor.
8:1 and 2 Cor. 9:15). We must read these two
chapters with the idea of giving in mind. They

present at least four major reasons for giving our offerings.

Gratitude for God's grace (2 Cor. 8:1; 2 Cor. 9:14, 15). Second Corinthians 8-9 begins with a reference to "the grace of God" (2 Cor. 8:1). A little further, Paul says, "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 8:9, *ESV*). The grace of God and Christ is presented here as one's primary reason for the practice of offering. God did so much for us by giving us Christ. By offering our gifts in return, we recognize the grace of God in our lives.

As with the concept of giving, the term "grace" (in Greek, *charis*) also occurs repeatedly in 2 Corinthians 8-9. Likewise, the word *charis* occurs at the beginning and the end of this passage (2 Cor. 8:1; 2 Cor. 9:14, 15). Paul applies this term with different meanings in the passage to emphasize that the grace of

Christ in our lives results in grace for others and for thanksgiving.

Desire to follow the example of Jesus (2 Cor. 8:9). Jesus was rich and became poor (remember that these are symbols for His eternal pre-existence and then coming into humanity, respectively). There is only one way for that to have happened: He gave all. As for us, by sharing our offerings, we provide means for others to know Christ.

Desire to share God's blessings (2 Cor. 9:10, 11). We give to others only because we first received from God. He enriches us so that we can be generous.

Sincere love (2 Cor. 8:8, 24). Giving is the test of sincere and genuine love. It is the most substantial evidence that love dwells in one's heart. To use an English expression, it is to "put your money where your mouth is."

How generous are you? In light of the
Cross, how much do you give in contrast to what
you could give?

