

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS INTRODUCTION

THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL INTEGRITY, [2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15](#)

The Biblical View of Money

It's our privilege and joy this evening to embark upon a study that is going to take us through the [eighth](#) and [ninth chapters of 2 Corinthians](#). This wonderful section of the epistle deals with the issue of Christian giving, how we are to give, how we are to invest our financial resources for eternal benefit. And we're going to be looking at a biblical model for Christian giving all the way through [chapter 8](#) and [chapter 9](#) as Paul instructs the Corinthian church in the matter of their own giving.

So, we're about to launch into this wonderful adventure into the land of giving, and one that's going to have profound effects on all of us as we learn from the Apostle Paul's inspired record how the church is to give. Now I know that having said that, some of you are already wishing you had gone to visit your family, or that you had volunteered for the nursery long ago, rather than have to sit and listen to the preacher talk about giving.

Most of us, and I think it's fair to say that, most of us feel some guilt about our giving, or lack thereof. And certainly most of us feel some guilt about our spending. So the last thing we want to do is purposely go and listen to someone make us feel worse. And I'm not going to do that. I don't want to make you feel worse; I want to make you feel better. But the path to feeling better is going to be laid out right here in the Word of God. I want to begin this evening with just an introductory message on the subject before we launch into these [two chapters](#).

I thought about purchasing books on giving. In fact, I've been thinking about it for a long time, but I've convinced myself no one would buy it because everybody already feels bad about what they don't give and bad about what they do spend, and they're not going to buy a book that's going to make them feel worse, nor are they going to buy a book that's going to show them how to give away more of their money from which they are so reluctant to be separated.

And then I thought, "Well, no, it's just a question of titles." I could write the book and title it, *God's Guaranteed Plan to Make You Really Rich*. And that would guarantee some significant sales, at least through the first printing. And that wouldn't be untrue, because giving is God's guaranteed plan to make you really rich. Jesus said, "It is better to give than to receive."

[Acts 20:35 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁵ "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.'"

Better in every way. And, actually, giving as God has commanded us is liberating, rewarding, joyous, and profoundly enriching. In fact, just a brief glance at [chapters 8](#) and [9](#) will show us something about that.

At the beginning of [chapter 8](#), Paul commends the churches of Macedonia. And he commends them because in [verse 2](#): in a great ordeal of affliction they demonstrated an abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

2 Corinthians 8:2 (NASB)

²“That in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.”

All of that to say they were afflicted and they were profoundly poor, but they were generous in their giving. In fact, [verse 3](#) says,

2 Corinthians 8:3 (NASB)

³“For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord.”

They gave freely of their own choice, beyond their ability. Out of their deep poverty they overflowed with liberality, and in the midst of their real affliction their abundant giving brought them great joy. [Verse 4](#), an interesting thing:

2 Corinthians 8:4 (NASB)

⁴“Begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints.”

In other words, they were pleading for an opportunity to give. They had found that giving was so rewarding, so blessed, so joyous, so enriching, so beneficial that they were begging for an opportunity to give. Now we would like to get all of you to that place where you will be pleading for somewhere to give your resources because you understand what benefit in time and eternity there is in such generosity.

Over in ([2 Corinthians 9:6](#)), I would just draw your attention to another statement...and we'll be looking at these in the future. [Verse 6](#), Paul lays down a principle:

2 Corinthians 9:6 (NASB)

⁶“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

A simple principle there. You're not going to get a crop on anything more than the seed you sow. So whatever you sow determines your crop. That's all. If you sow a few seeds, you'll get a little crop. If you sow many seeds, you'll get a larger crop. That's the principle.

So [verse 7](#) says, “You need to make a decision, purpose in your heart without being grudging or under coercion. You just decide in your heart what you're going to do based upon what kind of dividend you want to receive.”

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)

⁷“Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

And remember this. Regarding whatever you sow, [verse 8](#):

2 Corinthians 9:8 (NASB)

⁸“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.”

Now there's the harvest on your sowing. [Verse 7](#), you purpose what you're going to sow and you do it.

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NASB)

⁷“Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

[Verse 8](#), God can make all grace abound so that you will always have all sufficiency for all things. In other words, God's going to give you an unlimited return. His capacity knows no limits. God who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You know what happens when you sow seed? You get a crop. And out of that crop comes multiplied seed which you take and sow again and it keeps expanding. That's the principle.

[Verse 11](#): **“You will be enriched in everything.”**

2 Corinthians 9:11 (NASB)

¹¹“You will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.”

The principle of giving then is simply this. You sow and you reap, and whatever you sow God multiplies and gives you back. The question is, how much do you want. How much do you want to sow with God? How much blessing do you want? How much do you want to invest in the greatest investment there is, and that is to invest with the living God who always gets a full return on every investment?

That's the heart of this study, to get to the place where you line up pleading for an opportunity to give, because you understand that this is going to bring in a harvest in time and eternity which will make you spiritually and even materially wealthy.

2 Corinthians 8:4 (NASB)

⁴“Begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints.”

You say, “Even materially?” Sure. God is going to make bread for your food as well as spiritual fruit of righteousness. God is going to pour out blessing on you. Now, I don't want to cheat you out of those riches. I don't want to cheat you out of those blessings. And so to discharge my responsibility to God and to make sure I don't rob you, I am going to take you through this series.

Now most of us are aware, as we start this series, that there's sort of a difficulty today in our giving. And it really comes from two fronts. The world, first of all, sucks up so much of our money that we don't have the amount to give we should. It's the first time we've ever had advertising. And advertising is a scheme to separate you from your money. Do you think television is for programs? Television isn't, it's for commercials.

Programs are simply to get you there to watch the commercial. The commercials aren't there to get you to watch the program. You certainly can figure that out. The programs are there which are forgettable so you'll watch the commercials which are not forgettable, like, the AT&T "Yeah love!" I'm not going any further with that than that. But you understand that the world...the world is coming after you. And it comes after you to separate you from your money; it comes after you to get you to indulge yourself in every conceivable kind of thing. And that puts people in a very difficult position.

The world not only adds to advertising the tremendous power of media to capture you, but then they provide credit so you can buy things when you don't even have money and put yourself in a deeper and deeper hole, sinking more and more into debt and which puts you in a position that limits your giving as well. In fact, it becomes so difficult for people in the world to even make their normal sort of budget because of the way they have overspent, that somebody said, "You can easily figure the cost of your cost of living by just taking all your income and adding twenty percent." That's how most people live.