

Series: 2 Corinthians
Title: The Purpose of Giving
Text: 2 Corinthians 8: 11-15
Date: October 29, 2017
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2 Corinthians 8: 13: For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 14: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be a *supply* for your want: that there may be equality: 15: As it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.

Proposition: The purpose of giving is that there be equality—that is, that each believer shall help his brother during his time of need—and by this Christ proves to us that he is our Provider.

Subject: The Purpose of Giving

We have seen *the source of giving*: the grace of God; *the spirit God gives*: willing, joyful, generous; *the order*: first to God, then to brethren; *the character*: a new heart to honor God, to prove the sincerity of our love, to prove all the graces God gives us to be the genuine gift of God; *the encouragement*: not law but grace; *the motive*: Christ's love for his people—he who was rich became poor that through his poverty we might be made rich; *the acceptance*: “if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”

THE PURPOSE OF GIVING

2 Corinthians 8: 13: For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 14: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be a *supply* for your want: that there may be equality:

The purpose of giving is not to ease poorer brethren from their responsibilities by putting the burden on wealthier brethren—“*For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened...*” Helping a needy brother is not to be ongoing forever. That would ease the poor brother of his responsibility to get a job and support his family. Also, it would burden wealthier.

2 Thessalonians 3:10: [The Spirit of God said]...if any would not work, neither should he eat.

The purpose is that there may be equality between all brethren and all churches to help at different times of need—“*But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that [at another time] their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality...*” At this time, Macedonia was prospered so they could help the needy saints at Jerusalem. At another time, Jerusalem would be prospered to help Macedonia in their need. This is what he means by equality.

So the purpose is not to take advantage not to burden but to equally share in helping needy saints in their time of need.

NOT SOCIALISM/COMMUNISM

2 Corinthians 8: 13: For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 14: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be a *supply* for your want: that there may be equality:

Understand that this is not socialism or communism. Socialism/communism is a man-made government enforced upon natural men by force of law at all times.

The natural heart will make a poor man take advantage of the wealthy man's support. The poor will neglect his responsibilities and live in the ease of being supported by the welfare of the wealthy. Unregenerate poor sinners will justify neglecting their responsibilities and justify taking advantage of the wealthier because the wealthier has to give and they need it. This is the way of the natural heart. It is why some get on welfare and take their ease all their lives, neglecting all responsibility to provide for their family.

At the same time, the wealthier unregenerate sinner is burdened to continually support the poor. So the natural heart makes him grudgingly pay the tax and/or cheat to keep from doing it. A sinful heart will make him exalt himself before men and lord over the poor because he calls himself his benefactor.

Luke 22:25: [Christ] said unto [his disciples], The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

In man's government there is no scriptural equality so as to share in supporting the needy because the burden falls on the same people all the time. So there is a constant selfish, self-justifying ease on one side and a constant grudging burdened spirit on the other.

This is also the case in all man-made religious circles where men force men to do what they do by law.

GOD BY HIS GRACE

2 Corinthians 8: 15: As it is written, He that *had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.*

This reference declares this is the work of God, not man. It is the work of grace, not law. This refers to the wilderness, in the day God rained down manna. No matter how much or little they gathered they had enough. This was a miracle the LORD worked for Israel. Every morning they gathered and every morning the Lord provided enough. On the sabbath—to show Christ our Rest—the day before, the Lord provided twice as much manna so they could rest on the sabbath. When each man meted his gathering with an omer, *he that gathered much, had nothing over, and, he that gathered little, had no lack*, Exo_16:18. Brethren, this was impossible naturally. The Lord supernaturally worked it. What do we learn from this?

One, Christ is our Bread. As Head over his church he providentially works all things together to provide for his people. The Lord Jesus provides for all his creation.

Psalm 145: 16: Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

But Christ especially provides for his people. That is why David said,

Psalm 37: 25: I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Christ provides his people with acceptance with God, peace with God, no condemnation before God, no separation from the love of God in Christ. And Christ provides all things we need to live and worship him in this life.

Two, it declares the equality of Christ's provision. Each morning manna was provided for Israel—each day, God's people are provided with Christ our Bread and with all things we need in this earth.

Lamentations 3: 22: *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23: They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

When measured with omer, he that gathered more had no extra, he that gathered less had no lack—Christ measures out grace, according to our need so that we have exact sufficiency at all times.

2 Corinthians 3:5: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

2 Corinthians 12:9: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee:

Deuteronomy 33:25: Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

We always have exactly what we need because our heavenly Father provides grace for today. This is why Christ said,

Matthew 6: 33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

God commanded them not to lay up the bread but to trust that God would provide bread each morning. So when some disobeyed, it bread worms and stank. Truly, it is unbelief for a man to gather more than he needs. That does not mean that we cannot save for our children.

2 Corinthians 12: 14...the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

But when a man's needs are met and he lays up so much for his children that they will want for nothing, he is like the rich fool who had more than he knew what to do with. Such a man is not rich towards God. He manifests his treasure is not Christ but his money. Christ said,

Matthew 6: 19: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

It breeds sorrow, disappointment, vexation, and trouble. Solomon said,

Ecclesiastes 5: 13: There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. 14: But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand. 15: As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. 16: And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? 17: All his days also he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

But where God works grace in the heart bringing us to believe on Christ and trust him for all provision the wealthy brother will give to his needy brother willingly, cheerfully, and generously. And the poor brother

who is helped will not take advantage of the wealthy but will quickly find a job or get his house in order and fulfill his responsibility. Then when the tables are turned, there will be equality—the one helped at this time will be ready to help the other next time.

Man cannot legislate natural hearted sinners to create such a government. Only Christ works this government. It is the government of his church.

Isaiah 9: 7: Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Christ works it, not in the sinful heart of Adam, but in the new heart God has created. He works it, not by law, but by grace and love. He works it by showing his people what he did for us.

1 John 3: 16: Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. 17: But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18: My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

Amen!