

# DOCTRINE OF GRACE GIVING

November 16, 1982

## I. Introduction.

- A. The term "grace giving" is taken from the use of *χαρίς* (charis, grace) in these references to the Jerusalem offerings: 1Cor.16:3 "to carry your grace gift (charis) to Jerusalem"; 2Cor.8:1,4,5,7,19; 9:14.
- B. Some other terms used to describe that which is given (primarily taken from those passages dealing with the Jerusalem offering, since the pattern of NT giving follows the lines of the Jerusalem collection).
  - 1. Κοινωνιά, koinonia (2Cor.8:4; 9:1,13). The idea here is that of sharing your living grace with another.
  - 2. Διακονία, diakonia (Rom.15:26; 2Cor.8:4; 9:1,13), the idea being that grace giving is a ministry of each believer and each local church.
  - 3. Ἀδροτής, adrotes (hapax, 2Cor.8:20), the idea that the noblest giving is generous.
  - 4. Ἐυλογία, eulogia (2Cor.9:5). This word emphasizes the blessedness of generous giving to all concerned.
  - 5. Λειτουργία, leitourgia (2Cor.9:12), that grace giving is a service which is expected due to one's station, but remains voluntary.
  - 6. Λογεία, logeia (1Cor.16:1,2). This word is translated "collection", and is found in the papyri only and is used for levies, the idea being that from time to time believers should give to support what the word authorizes.
  - 7. Σαρκικός, sarkikos (Rom.15:27). This word is translated "material things".
  - 8. Καρπός, karpos (Rom.15:28). This word indicates that giving is a part of Christian production.

## II. The axiom of grace giving is Acts.20:35 "*Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'*".

- A. Giving and receiving are parts of the Christian experience (Phil.4:15).
- B. Giving is "more blessed" because of what the giver reaps.

## III. The ultimate example of grace giving is the Lord Jesus Christ.

- A. 2Cor.8:9 is found within the context of giving and must be understood in light of the Doctrine of Kenosis "*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich (a reference to His pre-incarnate deity only), yet for your sake He became poor (a reference to His humanity during His humiliation only). By electing not to exercise the independent use of His divine attributes to aid His humanity, He gave to the maximum, never drawing on His wealth, even to the point of death), that you through His poverty might become rich* (SG<sub>3</sub>; cp. Phil.2:5-8).
- B. The Lord reaps what He has sown as per the law of sowing and reaping (Phil.2:9-11).
- C. His giving of Himself began with the right mental attitude (Phil.2:5,6).
- D. So this gift is the pattern and standard for all grace giving (2Cor.9:15).

- IV. The mental attitude of grace giving (2Cor.9:7 "*Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver*"; cp. Phil.2:3-5).
- A. A "cheerful" mental attitude is the result of Bible doctrine in the brain/soul, isolation of the STA, and zeal.
  - B. Doctrine motivates us to give, knowing the promises and blessings associated with grace giving (see point VIII).
  - C. Isolation of the STA prevents "discoloration" and the grudging and stingy mental attitude.
  - D. Zeal is the stirring up of the mental attitude to give with doctrine (cp. 2Cor.8:11,12).
  - E. And the example of others (2Cor.9:2).
- V. The enemy of grace giving is the indwelling STA (2Cor.9:5 "not influenced by covetousness").
- A. It leads to stingy giving (2Cor.9:6a).
  - B. It leads to promises to give that are not kept (example: Ananias and Sapphira of Acts.5:1-11 were under approbation lust).
  - C. It leads to giving with strings (expressed by such comments as "After all I've done for you"; "Who pays the preacher?"; "I've given enough money to have some say").
  - D. It leads to improper motivation for Pastor-Teachers (1Pet.5:2).
- VI. The law governing grace giving (2Cor.9:6 "*Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully*").
- A. The law of sowing and reaping governs all human activity (cp. Gal.6:6-10 "*And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith*").
  - B. This law says that the more you sow (give), the more blessing you reap.
  - C. This law explains why some prosper and others do not.
  - D. This law is taught in the OT (cp. Prov.11:24,25).
  - E. Many modern preachers teach (distort) this law since they violate the principle that says grace giving is not to be under compulsion (cp. 2Cor.9:7).
- VII. The promises of grace giving (2Cor.9:8-11).
- A. God has promised to supply every believer with seed (physical resources) to sow (2Cor.9:10).
  - B. God has promised to multiply that seed (increase ones resources over the years) to those who sow (2Cor.9:10).
  - C. God has promised to increase the faithful sower's harvest of blessings. (This is what God will do; you just apply!)

- VIII. The rewards and blessings associated with grace giving.
- A. The "harvest of one's righteousness" includes surpassing grace rewards (2Cor.9:9; Lk.12:32-34).
  - B. It includes blessing in time (cp. Prov.11:24-25; Lk.6:38).
- IX. The objects of grace giving.
- A. Support of the Pastor-Teacher (1Cor.9:7-11 "*If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you?*"; cp. Gal.6:6 "*And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches*"; Phil.4:14-18).
  - B. Living grace needs of other believers (Rom.15:26; cp. 2Cor.8:14; 9:12; Jn.2:14ff).
  - C. Unbelievers (Lk.6:30-36; cp. Gal.6:10).
- X. The check list for grace giving.
- A. The right object(s) (identified via GAP).
  - B. The right mental attitude (based on Gap and the filling of the Holy Spirit).
  - C. The right amount (which is governed by the need of the object; cp. Ex.25:2 or Mt.10:42; the prospering of God, 1Cor.16:2 "as He may prosper").
  - D. Systematically (1Cor.16:2).
  - E. Generously (2Cor.8:1-5; 9:6,13).
- XI. Tithing is a violation of grace giving.
- A. Tithing was the system of taxation under the Mosaic Law (Mal.3:8-10).
  - B. Since grace giving is voluntary and grace giving is never associated in the NT with a percentage, tithing is not authorized (2Cor.8:3 "*Gave of their own accord*" or "*voluntarily*"; 2Cor.8:8 "*I am not speaking this as a command*").
  - C. Abraham's tithing to Melchizedek was a tax and the ten percent was not even his money!
  - D. Jacob tried to bribe God with a tenth in Gen.28:18-22 (Jacob never built a house at Bethel for God discrediting, the vow to give a tenth).
  - E. Grace giving (not tithing) existed under the Law (Ex.25:2).
- XII. The principle of liberality and grace giving.
- A. The word encourages a generous mental attitude (Mt.10:8 "*freely you received, freely give*").
  - B. Generosity is not expected or commanded, especially when people are poor (2Cor.8:1-3; the Macedonians, who were poor, actually begged Paul to let them take up a collection for the poor saints of Jerusalem).
- XIII. The policy of grace giving and the local church.
- A. It is legitimate to let the "needs" be made known. The example is Paul announcing the need for a Jerusalem relief fund to Gentile churches. We at Maranatha Church announce special offerings for individuals who have living grace needs; we publish a monthly financial statement itemizing our commitments and you can ask if you have any questions. This means the Pastor does not have

- to take up unnecessary time announcing the needs or placing anyone under pressure.
- B. The church should avoid all forms of coercion like gimmicks, legalism, emotionalism, embarrassment, competition, or approbation.
  - C. What is given must be properly administered (cp. 2Cor.8:19-21).
  - D. Believers must trust the judgment and leadership of those whose responsibility it is to administer the gifts (2Cor.8:5).
  - E. Everyone's privacy should be maintained.
- XIV. Concluding observations.
- A. Grace giving is one of the spiritual sacrifices of the royal priesthood (Heb.13:15-17).
  - B. Grace giving leads to the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise (2Cor.9:12-15).
  - C. Grace giving is also a spiritual gift in the body of Christ and should be characterized by liberality (Rom.12:4,5,8).
  - D. Grace giving on the part of the Pastor-Teacher is sowing spiritual things, while the congregation is to sow material things (Phil.4:14-19).
  - E. Grace and generous giving is not preempted due to minimal resources (2Cor.8:1-3).
  - F. Grace giving is a test of love (2Cor.8:24; 1Jn.3:17 "But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?").
  - G. Grace and generous giving is stimulated by the example of others (2Cor.8:1-6; 9:1-4).
  - H. Grace giving includes a principle of equality of balance, in that today's givers may be tomorrow's receivers (2Cor.8:12-15. Study the tapes that cover 2Cor.8-9 for further details).

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