

Faith Promise “Grace” Giving 2 Cor 8,9

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Oct 27th

Last week we discussed the Rapture and closed with the importance of being “ready” (Rev. 19:7) for his inevitable return by *“abiding in him”*. (1 Jn 2:28-3:3) This was on Jesus’ heart as he walked toward Gethsemane! To the degree that we *“abide in him”* we would become fruitful, and fulfil the purpose for our lives. (Jn 15:1-16) Rev 22:12 reminds us that our “fruitfulness” will be evaluated and rewarded. *“I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”* (See also Mt 6:20-22; 1 Cor 3:9-15; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1-8) Mt 6:20-22 reveals that what we do with our treasures (giving) reveals our heart (priorities). In fact, the Bible mentions giving more than any other topic. It mentions love 522x, prayer 544x, heaven 582x, and giving 1547x! I believe it emphasizes our giving because it’s a spiritual barometer. That’s why almost half of Jesus’ parables involved money!

In fact, 2 Cor. 8:8 tells that our giving is an opportunity to *“prove the sincerity of our love.”* 2 Cor. 8,9 is about a special offering for a special need that presented a special opportunity. (See Acts 11:27-30; Ro. 15:25-28) The Corinthian Church initially promised to help meet this need, but failed to follow through. (8:10,11) Paul used the example of the Macedonian Churches to inspire them to partner with God and invest in God’s Plan. Grace is related to giving. In fact “grace” is used 7 x in these two chapters. Grace (charis) literally means *“The divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude!”*

It (charis) comes from chai’rō meaning Cheerful, Joyful, Blessed!

Grace involves recognizing & responding to God’s promptings such that His will is accomplished in & through us, resulting in His pleasure and our Joy. (Phil. 2:13) *“It is God which worketh in you both to will, and to do of His good pleasure”*.

Understanding Faith Promise Giving:

1. Faith begins with God’s Grace and involves our:

A. Recognizing (Determining) God’s Will (purposes)

- 1) What does God want to accomplish? John 5:17; 1 Cor. 3:9
 - a) Satan seeks to blind us to this. (2 Cor. 4:4) Ro. 12:2 *“be not conformed to this world”*
 - b) The world does this as well. (Mark 4:19; Ro. 12:1,2)
 - c) Our own selfishness blinds/binds us. (Jer. 17:9; Is. 55:7,8; Ph 3:17-20)
- 2) How do we know this? (Ro. 12:1,2) *“that ye may prove...that will of God”*
 - a) Relinquish control *“a living sacrifice”* (2 Cor 8:5) *“first gave themselves to the Lord”*
 - b) Resist rationalization. *“be not conformed to this world”*
 - c) Renew your mind. *“be transformed by the renewing of your mind”*

B. Responding in obedience to God. (Deciding to Obey)

- 1) God works around us, and within us, so that He can work through us! (Ph. 2:12-14)
- 2) Faith, Grace, and peace involves a partnership. (Mt. 11:29; 1 Cor 3:9; 2 Cor 8:1-4)
Compare Heb. 11:6 and Rev. 4:11

2. Promise (Commitment):

A. This involves the process (partnership) of faith

1. With God. 5 *“first gave their own selves to the Lord,”*

2. With God's people. *Vs. 5,6 "and unto us by the will of God. Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also."*

3. Giving (*obedient action*) *"faith without works is dead"* Jms 2:20

A. This demonstrates the "Proof" (evidence) of our faith. 2 Cor. 8:8
"to prove the sincerity of your love."

1) You can give without loving, but you can't really love, without giving!

B. Notice how God Proved His love: Jn 3:16 *"God so loved... that he gave"* (Ro 5:8)

2 Cor 8:9 *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."*

1) This should motivate us to Give ourselves to him. (2 Cor 5:14,15; Gal. 2:20; Jn. 14:15; 21; 1 Jn 5:3) 2 Cor. 8:11,24

Vs. 11 *"Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have."* Vs 24 *Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love...."* Aka: Just do it! (James 1:22-24)

Conclusion: Before there can be a harvest, someone has to prepare the soil and plant the seeds. (Gal. 6:7,8) Our gratitude is demonstrated by our giving (sharing). That's why we call it "Thanks-Giving"! God uses this same "planting" principle to describe our "faith promise giving." Notice how 2 Cor 9 ends: vs 6-15 *"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work; He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. 10 Now he that ministers furnishes/supplies) seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; 11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causes through us thanksgiving to God."*

Application: Faith Promise Giving involves:

1) **Faith: Recognizing/Responding to God's Prompting**

Will you prayerfully seek what God wants to do through you to fulfil the Great Commission?

2) **Promise: Purposing to pursue the process of Partnership.**

Will you promise God that you will partner with Him and others (Missionaries) to this end?

3) **Giving: Demonstrating the Proof of our Love.**

If He is faithful to provide, will you be faithful to honor your promise to Him?

John 20:21 *"Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."*

**William Carey (1761-1834): "I'm not afraid of failure;
I'm afraid of Succeeding at things that don't matter!"**