



Grace-Driven Generosity

2 Corinthians 8:1-8
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The Big Idea: Guilt, legislation, and pressure are among the many poor reasons to be generous. The Bible gives us a whole different model for those: **Grace** that comes down – **joy** that rises up – **generosity** that flows out.

2 Corinthians 8:1-12 (ESV)

8 We want you to know, brothers, about **the grace of God** that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ²for in a severe **test of affliction**, their **abundance of joy** and their **extreme poverty** have overflowed in **a wealth of generosity on their part**. ³For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴**begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints**—⁵and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and **then** by the will of God to us.

⁶Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—**see that you excel in this act of grace also**.

⁸I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that **your love also is genuine**.

The Spiritual Cycle of God's Work in Grace-Driven Christians

1. God's Grace is poured into the believer **by God**, through Christ.
2. The Christian **discovers** and **lives** in the true Joy of God's goodness to them.
3. Generosity (fed and motivated by Grace) **flows out**. God's grace is poured and spills over into the lives of others ... they experience joy ... they become generous...

What We Learn From Poverty-Stricken Believers About Generosity:

1. The **Originator** and **Source** of generosity is God and His work of Grace in our lives. Grace drives generosity!
2. Times of severe hardship (**affliction**) and even **poverty** cannot keep Grace-driven generosity from being expressed.
3. Those who are Grace-driven in their giving will sometimes do with **basic** needs in order to help someone with **greater** needs. ("beyond their means")
4. Grace-driven givers don't give because they were pressured into it – it is **their choice** to do so. ("of their own accord")
5. Grace-driven givers see giving as a **privilege** that shouldn't be easily passed up. ("begging us earnestly for the favor of ...")
6. Grace-driven givers do things in a beautiful and appropriate order – give themselves fully and first to the **Lord**, then they seek the Lord's will in giving to help minister to **others**. (v. 5)
7. Giving, as an act of worship, service, and expression of your Christian walk with the Lord, is something you and I can begin to do, but we can **grow** in it to the point we are excellent in our giving. ("excel in this act of grace also.")
8. People who are Grace-driven givers don't give because it was legislated ("not as a command"), but because of **love** ... God's for us ... ours for God ... ours for others.

Grace comes down – joy rises up – generosity flows out.
Before it is how we live, it was how Jesus lived.
It'll only be true for me if Jesus lives in me.
