

DOCTRINE OF GRACE GIVING

- I. Introduction.
 - A. This doctrine has been distorted and greatly abused by those that are not committed to the principles of sound doctrine.
 - B. Nevertheless, violations in this area by those that do not pursue the straight and narrow of Bible doctrine should not deter the adjusted pastor-teacher from correctly articulating the truths related to grace giving.
 - C. Since this doctrine is clearly taught in the Word of God, and is one of the Royal Imperatives, the pastor-teacher that does not teach and exhort in this area is not effectively ministering to his congregation.
 - D. Since it is one of the Royal Imperatives, neglecting this aspect of Divine good production will adversely impact the potential SG₃ that is available to those that apply this doctrine.
- II. Vocabulary.
 - A. Hebrew vocabulary.
 1. נתן (nathan), verb, 2052X, the most common Hebrew term for giving, to giving something to someone. Deut. 15:10
 2. חנן (chanan), verb, 89X, to show favor, to be gracious. Prov. 14:31
 3. A few Hebrew terms are also used with the nuance of giving to someone or financially helping him. Lev. 25:35; Prov. 3:27
 - B. Greek vocabulary.
 1. δίδωμι (didomi), verb, 415X, to give something to someone; this can be a gift, a present, or something that has been requested.
 - a. ἐπιδίδωμι (epididomi), verb, 11X, to give something with the hand, to hand over. Lk. 11:11
 - b. μεταδίδωμι (metadidomi), verb, 5X, to impart something one owns or possesses, to give or share something. Lk. 3:11
 - c. δόμα (doma), n.noun, 4X, a gift. Lk. 11:13
 - d. δόσις (dosis), f.noun, 2X, the act of giving or the gift.
 2. δωρέω (doreo), verb, 3X, to present something as a gift, to confer something. IPet. 1:4
 - a. δωρεά (dorea), f.noun, 11X, that which is given by one person freely to another, a gift.
 - b. δωρεάν (dorean), the accusative form of δωρεά, used adverbially to denote that which is freely given, that which is gratis. Matt. 10:8
 3. Certain terms that are not strictly part of the vocabulary of giving are used in the context of grace giving.
 - a. κοινωνία (koinonia), a close association, sharing in common. IICor. 8:4, 9:13
 - b. διακονία (diakonia), ministry, a help or service. Acts 11:29
 - c. ἀδροτής (adrotēs), an abundance, a generous gift. IICor. 8:20
 - d. εὐλογία (eulogia), a blessing. IICor. 9:5
 - e. λειτουργία (leitourgia), service, particularly religious service. IICor. 9:12
 - f. λογεία (logeia), a collection, a monetary contribution. ICor. 16:1
 - g. σαρκικός (sarkikos), that which is material or physical. Rom. 15:27; ICor. 9:11
 - h. καρπός (karpos), fruit, Divine good production. Rom. 15:28

III. Definition and description.

- A. The words **grace giving** are derived from the use of the of the Greek noun *χαρίς* (charis), as it is used in reference to the monetary offerings that were made for those believers that were suffering under persecution in Jerusalem. II Cor. 8:4,6,7,19
- B. Grace giving is defined as willingly taking that which is one's own (money, material possessions, abilities), and bestowing it on another person; this must be done freely, with no expectation of return.
- C. Grace giving is strictly a voluntary action, which is to come as a response to Bible doctrine in the soul; as such, it cannot come from external coercion, or contain any mental attitude reservations.
- D. The fact that it is referred to as **grace giving** indicates that the one giving must do so based on the principle of grace orientation.
- E. All giving should proceed from the principle of grace; therefore, the types and amounts involved in grace giving are not mandatory in any way.
- F. The amount or extent of a believer's grace giving should be based on his understanding of this principle as well as the degree to which God has prospered him.
- G. Grace giving must be provided only to those that have legitimate need; Paul indicated that there were believers that were not qualified as recipients of grace giving. II Thess. 3:7-10
- H. Although grace giving must be a voluntary activity, it should be noted that giving was clearly commanded by Jesus Christ. Matt. 5:42
- I. One of the permanent spiritual gifts in the Church age is giving; this indicates that certain believers have been gifted by God to excel in this area of application and Divine good production. Rom. 12:8

IV. God sets the perfect standard and example of grace giving.

- A. The example of the Father.
 1. God the Father is the source of all beneficial and worthwhile gifts. James 1:17
 2. He demonstrates His desire and willingness to give to the human race by virtue of His creation, which is freely provided to mankind.
 - a. Air. 1:7
 - b. Light. Gen. 1:17
 - c. Food. Gen. 1:29, 9:3
 - d. A helper for man. Gen. 2:18,22
 3. He provides sexual prosperity; children are a gift from God. Gen. 1:28; Ps. 127:3-5
 4. He not only provides our temporal needs, He gives luxuries according to His own will. Gen. 27:28; Eccles. 5:19
 5. Apart from the physical, temporal gifts God provides, He also provides what man needs in the spiritual realm.
 - a. He provided salvation for man at the fall. Gen. 3:15,21
 - b. He freely offered His most valuable Son for all mankind. Jn. 3:16
 - c. He gave the indwelling Holy Spirit as the earnest of our inheritance. II Cor. 1:22, 5:5
 - d. He has provided His Word for our spiritual nourishment. I Tim. 4:6
 - e. He bestowed communicators on the Church for the edification of the body. Eph. 4:8,11ff
 - f. He as provided all we need for life and godliness. II Pet. 1:3
- B. The example of the Son
 1. The second person of the Godhead, the eternal Son of God is the most notable example of giving, which is seen in His willingness to subject Himself to the will of the Father.

2. God the Son demonstrated the proper mental attitude of willingness to give of Himself, which believers are encouraged to emulate. Phil. 2:5
3. Paul cites the Incarnation as the prime example of giving, as he seeks to encourage the Corinthians in the matter of grace giving. IICor. 8:9
 - a. **Though He was rich** refers to the wealth of the attributes of deity, and the fact that, as God, He owned all things. Jn. 17:5; Ps. 50:12
 - b. **He became poor** refers to the period of the incarnation, when the deity of God the Son was united with the sinless humanity of Jesus the man.
 - c. The doctrine of kenosis teaches that Jesus Christ voluntarily restricted the independent use of His divine attributes in compliance with the Father's plan for the First Advent.
 - d. This means that Jesus Christ did not use the attributes of His divine nature to benefit Himself, to provide for Himself, to glorify Himself, or to act independently of the will of His Father.
 - e. His humiliation (as it is referred to theologically) demonstrates His willingness to give of Himself, never drawing on the wealth of the Divine attributes to benefit Himself during His life on earth. Phil. 2:5-8
 - f. **You through His poverty might become rich** is a reference to the wealth of Divine glory that the believer can share via Divine good production and SG₃. IPet. 5:1,4
4. The ultimate act of giving came when He offered His spiritual life on behalf of mankind; thus, He provided the potential for salvation to every member of the human race. Jn. 6:51, 10:18; ITim. 2:5-6
5. By virtue of His work on the cross, Jesus Christ is now qualified and authorized to give life to all that will believe on Him. Jn. 10:38-30

V. Grace giving and Old Testament tithing.

- A. There has been a good deal of confusion in Christendom with regard to the matter of grace giving and tithing in the Age of Israel and in the Church age.
- B. Tithing was essentially a system of taxation for the nation of Israel, under which all Jews were required to contribute one-tenth of their income, produce, livestock, etc. Lev. 27:30; Deut. 12:17, 14:22
- C. Tithing, as with all systems of taxation, was compulsory; any attempt at tax evasion carried with it the possibility of Divine discipline for the nation. Mal. 3:8-11
- D. The tithe was used for the physical support of the tribe of Levi, which would have included the priests. Ex. 4:14; Num. 18:20-24
- E. Since Israel was a theocracy and not a nation, the tithe served in a manner similar to our national income tax, with the priests and Levites functioning as God's ministers.
- F. Grace giving (beyond the tenth that was required) is observed in a number of places and was certainly practiced in the Old Testament. Ex. 25:2, 36:3; Lev. 23:38 Deut. 12:17
- G. Since tithing was part of the Mosaic Law, and is not mentioned in any of the New Testament epistles, it is not authorized or required in the Church age.

VI. The Jerusalem offering forms the pattern for New Testament grace giving. IICor. 8,9

- A. This offering was instituted in order to aid the believers in Jerusalem, who were being persecuted by the Jewish establishment. Heb. 10:34
- B. The leadership of the Church encouraged and exhorted believers to excel in this area of application. IICor 8:7

- C. Paul used the example of other believers that were applying in this area to stimulate the Corinthians, just as he used the example of the Corinthians to stimulate others. IICor. 8:1-5, 9:2
- D. Although Paul encouraged and exhorted with respect to this offering, the entire process remained a free will application. IICor. 8:8, 9:7
- E. Paul outlined the method by which he expected believers to operate. ICor. 16:1-3
 - 1. The time, **the first day of the week.**
 - 2. The systematic regularity, **every week.**
 - 3. The participants, **each one of you.**
 - 4. The amount, **as he may prosper.**
- F. The leadership was entrusted with the administration of these funds, to disburse as they deemed necessary. IICor. 8:18-21; Heb. 13:17

VII. The objects of grace giving.

- A. The Word of God determines our priorities as it sets forth the legitimate objects of giving; therefore, we should have clear direction about what God desires us to support.
- B. The first priority for every adjusted believer in any local church should be the fiscal support of the pastor-teacher.
 - 1. The pastor-teacher has the very unglamorous job, which is likened to the work that the ox did as he threshed the grain. ICor. 9:9
 - 2. Just as the farmer was dependant on the ox for his well being and prosperity, the believer is dependent upon the pastor-teacher for sound doctrine, which contributes to spiritual well being. ITim. 5:17-18
 - 3. As with any employee, the pastor-teacher that faithfully and consistently does his job of teaching the truth is worthy of his pay. ITim. 5:18
 - 4. The reason for making it the first priority to support the pastor-teacher (financially and otherwise) is so he can devote maximum time and energy to the study-teach routine. Acts 6:1ff
- C. Our second priority for giving is toward other believers in the local congregation that come under tests of their living grace. Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:10; James 2:16
 - 1. The principle is that we are to take care of those in our own local household of God, meeting any legitimate living grace need, before we apply toward those outside.
 - 2. We are not to provide living grace assistance to those who do not meet the proper qualifications. IIThess. 3:7-10
- D. The third priority would expand our living grace applications to other positive believers that are pursuing Bible doctrine in other geographic locales. Acts 11:29-30; Rom. 15:26
- E. When these priorities have been fulfilled, it would be appropriate to apply toward the legitimate poor on certain occasions, as God leads. Prov. 3:27-28, 14:31, 19:17

VIII. The mechanics involved in grace giving.

- A. The first principle that must be kept in mind about grace giving is that it is an exercise in the free will of the believer. IICor. 9:7
 - 1. Each believer should do what he believes to be correct based on the Bible doctrine in his soul.
 - 2. Therefore, there is no place for any mental attitude judging of other believers with respect to their applications in this area.
 - 3. Grace giving is to be in accord with the privacy of the priesthood.
- B. As with any application of Bible doctrine, the believer is to apply as the Holy Spirit leads him; hence, it is imperative that one is in fellowship. IJn. 2:27

- C. The believer should not only be ready to apply in this area, he should be zealous to support what God supports. IICor. 8:11, 9:2
- D. Grace giving should be accompanied by a happy and gracious disposition. IICor. 9:7
 - 1. These are general characteristics of those that exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, recognizing the principle that one is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35
 - 2. Certain happiness comes from the application of this doctrine; however, one should also remember the blessings and promises related to grace giving. IICor. 9:8,10-11
 - 3. The gracious aspect indicates that grace giving is done without attaching any conditions to the gift; one cannot give with any strings attached.
- E. The correct mental attitude is characterized by liberality.
 - 1. This was practiced and taught by Jesus Christ. Matt. 10:8
 - 2. The Macedonians demonstrated a liberal and generous spirit, in spite of the fact that they were not personally prosperous. IICor. 8:1-4
 - 3. Liberality is not simply to be directed toward a need; there are times when liberality may be manifested by providing a luxury. Matt. 26:6-13
 - a. Mary demonstrated her mastery of the details of life and her generous and liberal spirit by giving a gift that cost approximately what the average worker would earn in a year.
 - b. Note the STA activity of the disciples, led by Judas, who complained that this was a waste of money. Mk. 14:3-9; Jn. 12:1-5
 - c. Those that do not have the proper attitude, being motivated by money and the details of life, will often cover their sin with a façade of indignant piety. Jn. 12:6
- F. The nature and amount of giving is determined by:
 - 1. The nature and magnitude of the need. Ex. 25:2-9; Matt. 10:42
 - 2. The leading of the Holy Spirit and resident doctrine. Neh. 9:20; Jn. 16:13
 - 3. The level of prosperity. ICor. 16:2
- G. As observed in the pattern of the Jerusalem offering, giving is to be systematic. ICor. 16:2
- H. On the negative side, believers that do not isolate the sin nature may give with the wrong attitude or for the wrong reasons. IICor. 9:7
 - 1. If one is going to give, he should not apply with any reluctance.
 - 2. He should not be compelled to give by attempts to pressure him into applying.
 - 3. He should not give out of guilt.

- IX. The results and rewards that come from grace giving.
 - A. The first motivation for applying any doctrine should be for the purpose of glorifying God; when believers apply this doctrine, God is glorified and pleased. IICor. 9:11-12; Phil. 4:18
 - B. The practical result for those that receive is that their needs are met. IICor. 9:12
 - C. Proper application in this area of the Christian way of life stimulates other believers to excel in the matter of grace giving. IICor. 8:1-6, 9:2
 - D. In order to understand the results and blessings of grace giving, one must recognize that the law of sowing and reaping governs it. IICor. 9:6
 - 1. The law of sowing and reaping governs all human activity. Gal. 6:7-9
 - 2. This law indicates that the more one sows (gives in certain contexts), the more one will reap.
 - 3. This law explains, at least in part, why some believers prosper and some do not.
 - 4. Solomon taught this principle. Prov. 11:24-25
 - 5. Jesus taught this principle using slightly different language. Lk. 6:38

6. God has promised to supply each believer with the financial resources to apply in this area. II Cor. 9:10
7. The logical outcome of this provision of more seed to sow is that it results in a greater harvest. II Cor. 9:8,10-11
8. The harvest encompasses both the Ph₂ blessings and the promise of eternal rewards. Lk. 6:38, 12:32-34

X. The enemies of grace giving.

- A. The primary enemy of all doctrine is the indwelling sin nature, which is always in conflict with the Holy Spirit and resident doctrine. Gal. 5:17; IPet. 2:11
- B. When the STA is placed in the position of rulership, the lusts that proceed from the old man may cause believers to maladjust in any area. Rom. 6:19, 7:5
- C. Specific areas of the lust grid that may adversely impact application under grace giving.
 1. Selfishness, self-gratification, or a lack of proper concern. James 4:3; IJn. 3:17-18
 2. Fear. Matt. 6:25ff
 3. Approbation lust. Matt. 6:1-4; Acts 5:1ff
 4. Love of money. Matt. 6:24
 5. Avarice or stinginess. II Cor. 9:5-7
 6. Unbelief with respect to the promises associated with grace giving may cause the believer to fail. Rom. 4:20
- D. While not specifically sinful, other types of activities and rationales may undermine the proper function in this area of the Christian way of life.
 1. Procrastination. Prov. 3:28
 2. Soul fainting, a loss of confidence in Bible doctrine. Gal. 6:9
 3. Excessive debt, which manifests financial irresponsibility; such is merely the manifestation of distorted priorities and selfishness. Ps. 37:21; Prov. 22:7
- E. Rationalizations that may hinder application of grace giving.
 1. This is not my spiritual gift.
 2. The pastor-teacher is only teaching this for his financial blessing.
 3. Teaching this doctrine is the pastor-teacher's method for trying to pressure me into giving.
 4. Others have more money, they should do the giving since I do not have as much.
 5. If I give to the local church, I won't have enough to get _____.
 6. Giving with strings attached as manifested by such comments as, "who pays the pastor-teacher?"; "I give a lot, look at what I have done for this church."
 7. Attempting to place pressure on the leadership of the local church by withdrawing financial support.
- F. The pastor-teacher must maintain the proper mental attitude in this matter and not fall into the spiritual trap of being motivated by money. IPet. 5:2 cf. Phil. 4:17

XI. Grace giving and the adjusted local church.

- A. We will adhere to the pattern we have observed in the New Testament for grace giving; we will not resort to human viewpoint tactics such as guilt, emotional appeals, gimmicks to raise money, or appealing to approbation lust.
- B. With respect to giving for living grace, the leadership will evaluate all requests, determine the validity of the need, announce the need, and allow each believer to apply as unto the Lord.

- C. As much as is possible, the leadership will strive to maintain the privacy of every believer in the matter of giving.
- D. The leadership of this local church will properly administer your applications in the area of giving; we will not spend money in a frivolous or foolish manner. IICor. 8:19-21
- E. We will publish the financial report monthly, which will be made available to every member of this local church that desires it.
- F. Therefore, each believer must trust the judgment and integrity of the leadership, whose job it is to properly administer this area of application. IICor. 8:5
- G. We will not seek, or knowingly accept, gifts that are given with conditions attached, or gifts from those that are not believers.

XII. Concluding observations.

- A. Grace giving is one of the spiritual sacrifices of the Royal Priesthood. Heb. 13:16
- B. Since it is an area for Divine good production, each believer should seek to excel in this area of SG₃ as he should in every area of application. Phil. 4:17
- C. Anyone with the spiritual gift of giving is to apply under his gift with an attitude of liberality. Rom. 12:8
- D. However, all believers are commanded to practice grace giving, without regard to the amount of resources. Lk. 6:38, 21:1-4; IICor. 8:1-3
- E. Each believer give:
 1. With the right mental attitude.
 2. To the proper object(s).
 3. From the source of right priorities.
 4. From prayerful consideration of God's will with respect to the amount.
 5. Consistently.
- F. Grace giving with respect to the specific application of living grace includes the principle of equity; today's giver may be tomorrow's receiver and vice versa. IICor. 8:13-14
- G. For the pastor-teacher, grace giving consists in his continual sowing of spiritual things, while the congregation applies by sowing material things. ICor. 9:11; Gal. 6:6
- H. In the last days, many believers are preoccupied with money and the details of life, accumulating wealth at the expense of Divine good production. IITim. 3:2; Rev. 3:17
- I. God prospers some believers so they will be in a position to give generously; each believer that is prospered must avoid the spiritual pitfalls associated with material wealth. ITim. 6:17-19
- J. Grace giving is a proof of the fact that God's love is operative within us. IICor. 8:24; IJn. 3:17