All Grace Abounding

The Generosity That Grows from God's Unspeakable Gift

By Pastor Jason K. Boothe | Redeemer Church of Piketon, Ohio
Based on 2 Corinthians 9:6–15

Have you ever wanted to help someone and then quietly wondered, "Will I still have enough?"

That question can arise even when we sincerely care. We know our responsibilities. We have bills to pay, a household to provide for, and uncertainties we cannot see beyond. The desire to give may be accompanied by a very real fear of needing help ourselves.

Paul brings the grace of God into that very place.

In 2 Corinthians 9:6–15, he is encouraging the Corinthians to complete their participation in a collection for needy believers. The circumstances are ordinary and pressing. People need food and the necessities of life. Other Christians have resources to share. Through this ministry, Paul shows us how God's grace supplies His people, opens their hearts, and produces a harvest of thanksgiving.

Our giving belongs within the much greater story of His giving.

A heart made willing by grace

Paul begins with the picture of a farmer sowing seed. Seed held in a sack cannot produce a harvest in the field. Sowing involves releasing something valuable in expectation of fruit.

A gift works in a similar way. We can calculate what leaves our account or cupboard. Its usefulness, however, may extend far beyond what we can measure. Food reaches a table. A burden becomes lighter. A weary believer receives encouragement to face another day.

The gift leaves our hand. Its usefulness continues.

We must understand this harvest according to the passage itself. Paul speaks of righteous conduct, renewed generosity, thanksgiving, and fellowship. He offers no formula by which a contribution guarantees a financial return. The Macedonian believers, whose generosity he commends in the preceding chapter, gave amid affliction and deep poverty. Their circumstances remind us that abundant grace can be present in a household with very limited means.

Paul also directs our attention to the giver's heart. Giving should be thoughtful, purposeful, and willing. We may pray over a need, consider our responsibilities, and plan how to help. God delights in the gladness with which His children participate in another person's relief.

For those who fear that their resources are too small to matter, Paul offers this reassurance:

> ***"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."***
> ***2 Corinthians 8:12***

The Lord knows what you have. He knows the responsibilities you carry and the sacrifices others cannot see. Another person's gift does not determine what faithfulness requires from you.

We can bring even our reluctance honestly before Him: "Father, You have been gracious to me. Teach me to delight in showing mercy."

God is able to supply His people

The invitation to give leads naturally to the question of provision. What happens when we need help? What if circumstances change?

Paul directs our confidence toward God's ability to make grace abound. In verse 8, the repeated language of fullness draws attention to the breadth of His care: all grace, all sufficiency, all things, every good work. The purpose of that provision is fruitful service.

This assurance must be read alongside the genuine needs that prompted the collection. Believers do experience hardship. Faithful Christians sometimes lack necessities. God's care often reaches them through other members of His church. One household has enough to help today; in another season, that same household may receive assistance.

In both circumstances, the Father remains faithful.

Paul's language of seed and bread helps us understand His provision. Bread sustains us now. Seed provides for a coming harvest. The Lord knows both needs, and even the resources with which we begin come from Him. Our strength, opportunities, skills, and possessions all belong within His providential care.

The Lord who supplied yesterday's bread remains able to sustain tomorrow's obedience.

We must also preserve the relationship between grace and good works. Paul writes elsewhere:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

“Not of works, lest any man should boast.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
Ephesians 2:8–10

Salvation is God’s gift. Good works belong to the life He creates in Christ. Our generosity cannot remove guilt or furnish the righteousness by which we stand accepted before God. Christ alone is our righteousness. From that secure standing, we are free to love and serve.

When Paul speaks of the fruits of righteousness in this passage, he describes the righteous conduct that grace produces. The believer’s care for the poor expresses the life God has given.

When practical help becomes praise

Paul sees a beautiful consequence of generosity: thanksgiving rises to God.

The collection would supply what the saints lacked. Their bodily needs mattered. Hunger, an empty cupboard, and the strain of daily survival deserved the church’s attention. Christian compassion seeks useful ways to help actual people in their actual circumstances.

Imagine a family praying over a need they cannot meet. Another believer learns of their situation and quietly provides assistance. The family receives practical relief and a fresh occasion to thank their heavenly Father.

A bag of groceries can become an occasion for worship. A meal delivered during illness can remind someone that the church remembers them. Help with an urgent bill can lift a burden that has weighed on a household for weeks.

We may never hear the prayers that follow. We may never know how deeply someone was encouraged. God sees the fruit.

This also searches our motives. Appreciation is pleasant, but Paul desires that the Lord receive glory. Every opportunity to help, every resource shared, and every willing movement of the heart bears witness to His grace.

If our name is forgotten while His faithfulness is remembered, the gift has served a beautiful purpose.

Grace deepens our fellowship

The Corinthians' generosity would also give visible expression to their confession of the Gospel. They belonged to Christ, and their care for His people would demonstrate that shared life.

Paul anticipates affection and prayer flowing back toward those who gave. Material help travels in one direction; gratitude, love, and intercession return. The fellowship of the church grows warmer as believers learn one another's burdens.

There is dignity on both sides of this relationship.

A Christian who needs assistance remains a beloved member of Christ's body. Poverty does not diminish our standing in Him. Those who possess little materially may bless the church through fervent prayer, steady faith, and sincere love.

Some seasons call us to give. Others require us to receive. Both require humility. Giving reminds us that everything we possess has been entrusted to us by God. Receiving teaches us to acknowledge our dependence and welcome His care through others.

Grace brings us low enough to serve and low enough to be served.

A small church can have a generous heart. Modest resources can become meaningful help. The Lord can use ordinary believers to encourage people whose burdens would otherwise remain unnoticed.

Every grateful heart turns toward Christ

Paul concludes with worship:

> ***"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."***
> ***2 Corinthians 9:15***

"Unspeakable" describes a gift whose greatness exceeds our ability to express it adequately. We can speak truly about it, rejoice in it, and spend our lives discovering its riches. Our words will never exhaust its wonder.

Paul does not explicitly name the gift in this verse. His earlier appeal to the grace of Christ helps us understand this thanksgiving as finding its fullest expression in Jesus Christ and the salvation God gives through Him:

> ***"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."***
> ***2 Corinthians 8:9***

The eternal Son took our nature and came among us in humility. He fulfilled righteousness, bore the judgment due to His people, and rose in victory. Through Him, guilty sinners receive pardon, reconciliation with God, adoption into His family, and an everlasting inheritance.

Here is the source of Christian generosity. We have received mercy beyond measure.

Our giving can never repay Christ. A lifetime of service could never place God in our debt. We remain recipients of grace from beginning to end. Yet gratitude begins to loosen our anxious grip on what we possess. We desire that others might experience the comfort of God's care through us.

Beloved, if you are looking to your goodness for acceptance with God, rest your hope in Christ. His righteousness is sufficient. His sacrifice is sufficient. Come to Him with your sin and need, trusting the Saviour who gives freely to the undeserving.

The empty hand of faith receives what human effort could never purchase.

Consider, then, what God has placed in your hands. Notice a need. Pray over it. Give thoughtfully and according to your means. Receive help humbly when your own season of need arrives.

Above all, keep Christ before you. His grace nourishes gratitude, quiets fear, and teaches His people to care for one another.

We may never see the full harvest of a faithful act of mercy. Still, God is able to make all grace abound.

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