



# Triple “A” Giving

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2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Our stewardship theme for this year is “Putting God First.” This is where stewardship begins—Putting God first in everything you do.

Corinth was one of the wealthiest commercial seaports in the Roman Empire. No doubt, many of the members of this church were wealthy.

In 2 Corinthians 8 Paul writes to the Corinthians about their giving. Here he uses the example of the Macedonians to help motivate them in their giving their offering.

**READ:** 2 Corinthians 8:1-9—Giving is called a “*GRACE*” (vs. 1, 7). It is the **disposition to give**.

➡ **TRIPLE “A” GIVERS** (v. 2). Triple “A” giving is...

## 1. Giving during **AFFLICTION** in life.

- They gave while suffering a great trial. Did not use their poverty or hard circumstances as an excuse.
- They gave in spite of their **DEEP POVERTY** (v. 2). Christian giving does not depend on material circumstances. The wealthy are not always the best givers.
- They did not give out of a financial surplus. They gave beyond their ability (v. 3), i.e. by faith. When you give beyond your own ability, you give trusting an ability greater than your own—You are trusting God’s ability to supply. They were putting themselves in the place where God had to provide. One of the greatest steps in spiritual growth is when you step out of your ability into the ability of God.
- The foundation of Biblical giving begins with giving when you cannot afford to give. God cannot trust you with more if He cannot trust you with less.

## 2. Giving with **ABUNDANCE** of joy.

- In spite of their difficulties and poverty, they were overflowing with joy! They had much to be joyful about! They realized that

they were recipients of God's grace—everything they owned had come from Him.

- When will we ever learn that happiness in life is not in the abundance of the things we possess (Luke 12:15).
- Has the “joy of the Lord” reached your pocketbook?

### 3. Giving with **ABOUNDING** liberality.

- The word “*liberality*” means with an open and willing heart (cf. vs. 3, 12). No special appeal had to be made; no pressure had to be executed.
- They did not give out of commandment (v. 8). **You don’t *have to give***—but, if you don’t give several things will happen:
  - (1) First, you’ll miss the blessing of seeing God provide for you.
  - (2) Second, you’ll miss the opportunity of encouraging others to give (v. 8).
  - (3) Third, you’ll fail to prove the sincerity of your love (vs. 8, 24).  
THE MANNER OF YOUR GIVING IS THE MEASURE OF YOUR LOVE.  
(1 Chron. 29:3—...*because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.*) **Christian giving flows from the heart.**
- Apparently, they were giving so much that Paul felt it was just beyond their means. Many pastors would faint dead away if a church member had to beg him to accept an offering greater than the preacher thought they could afford to give.

May each of us be MACEDONIAN KIND OF GIVERS!

**What was the secret of the Macedonians’ giving?** The answer is in verse 5. This is the **FIRST ESSENTIAL** in Christian stewardship—The giving of oneself to the Lord.

➡ **What does it mean to give yourself to the Lord?**

- I. To give your soul to the PERSON of Christ for salvation.** “... *gave their own selves to the Lord...*”

- When you give Jesus your soul, you have given Him the most valuable thing in this world (Mark 8:36-37).
- A. We should give ourselves to the Lord **because He gave Himself for us** (John 3:16).
1. *"He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"* (Rom. 8:32).
  2. Eph. 5:25—Christ *"loved the church, and GAVE himself for it."*
  3. Gal. 2:20—*"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who LOVED me, and GAVE himself for me."*
- B. We should give ourselves to the Lord **because of what the Lord has done for us** (vs. 1, 7, 9).
1. Do you realize how hopelessly lost you were, but Jesus came to your rescue.
  2. Do you comprehend the horrors of hell you have been saved from?
  3. Do you grasp the magnitude of how RICH you are in Christ (v. 9)? When we consider these things, giving is no problem!

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ILLUS. "We Love Jesus More Than 10%" — Dr. Paul White was known as the "Jungle Doctor." One time he came upon two African lepers, with hands so eaten away that they were just bandaged stumps. These two lepers wanted to help the missionaries, so they worked in the sawing logs into boards for a new part of the mission station. When the job was done, each leper was paid 30 shillings. Dr. White noticed them dividing the little pile of coins into two equal parts. He asked them why they were doing that. They told him that half was for the Lord and half was for them. "But that is too much. A tithe for the Lord is only 10%—Three shillings, not fifteen." "But Bwana, we love Jesus far more than 10%!"

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- C. We should give ourselves to the Lord **because of the PRICE Jesus paid to purchase you** (1 Cor. 6:19-20—*What? Know ye not*

*that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom ye have of God, and ye are not your own for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.)* How can I withhold from God what belongs to Him anyway???

## **II. To give yourself to the PREACHER of Christ for service** —“... and unto US...”

- They gave themselves to Paul. They placed themselves unreservedly under Paul's leadership to serve as he saw fit. They said, "Preacher, what would you like us to do?"
- A. Stewardship recognizes it is God's will for every Christian to serve Him under the authority of a pastor (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17).
  - Personally, I considered it a pleasure to carry out the wishes of the pastor's I served under.
- B. God gave the church *“evangelists, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry...”* (Eph. 4:11-12).
- C. There is something wrong in a Christian's life when they refuse to submit to pastoral leadership. They are really rebelling against God.

## **III. To give yourself to the PLAN of Christ in submission** —“...by the will of God.”

- Stewardship is submitting yourself to the will of God—God' will is His plan for your life.

### ➡Four kinds of God's Will:

- A. The **SOVEREIGN** will of God. God's foreordained plan determined from eternity that nothing in the universe overturn. Psalm 115:3—*God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.* God's plan to redeem man from sin.

- B. The **STATED** will of God. Anything God has commanded in His Word is God's will (Marriage, baptism; witnessing; prayer; church attendance).
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3— *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.* It is God's will for you to be PURE. You don't have to pray about it.
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18— *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*
- C. The **SPECIFIC** will of God. The particular will of God for an individual person—CAREER choices, MARRIAGE partner choices, RESIDENTIAL choices, and other life directing CHOICES. The specific will of God will never go contrary to the stated will of God in Scripture.
- D. The **SECONDARY** will of God. Things which are not the direct will of God, but He chooses to permit to happen. Sometimes called the permissive will of God. Ps. 106:15—God *"gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."*

**SUMMATION:** Are you a "Triple A Giver"?

- Do you give in AFFLICTION?
- Do you give with ABUNDANT joy?
- Do you give with ABOUNDING liberality?
- Have you given yourself to the Lord for salvation?
- Have you given yourself to the preacher for direction in service?
- Have you given yourself to God's plan for your life?