

2 Corinthians 9:8-11

2 Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

It appears from these verses that if a person really desires to be generous, God will see that they are given that opportunity. In some ways, the word “**grace**” in this verse seems to be a synonym for the resources that a believer would need in order to give. In fact, Paul says that God is able to ensure that the individual actually has “**an abundance for every good work**”. The word “**sufficiency**” implies that God is able to provide all that the believer needs and then helps them to be content with what they have. The word “**sufficiency**” is the Greek word “*autarkeia*” and it means to be content and satisfied. The word is only used twice in the Scriptures and here it is translated as “sufficiency” and then [1 Timothy 6:6](#) as “**contentment**”.

1Ti 6:6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

The word carries the idea of being content and satisfied with the necessities of life as opposed to being dissatisfied because we may feel that we do not have enough. In order to have this contentment, the individual has to be at peace with God and with their circumstances. Based on this verse it is clear that what makes a person content is “**godliness**”. The more godly that a believer is, the more content they will be with what they have. The opposite is true as well. The less godly that a believer is, the less content they will be with what they have. Godliness is what gives a person the sense that he lacks nothing. He understands that God is sovereign over all things, and so he is satisfied and content. Paul and the author of Hebrews had this to say about contentment ([Philippians 4:11](#), [1 Timothy 6:8](#), [Hebrews 13:5](#)).

Php 4:11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

1Ti 6:8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

Heb 13:5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

Most individuals lack genuine contentment. Every time they go into a store they want to buy things that they do not need with money that they do not have. I was at the Dollar General store the other day checking out, and there was a lady in front of me. They must have had over 100 different items that a person could buy. This lady had completely finished shopping, but picked up four additional items before she got to the checkout clerk. This word for “**sufficiency**” describes the individual who has trained himself not to amass possessions, but rather to eliminate needs. It describes the individual who has learned to be content with less. Too often we want so much for ourselves that there is nothing left to give to others. This man that Paul is describing is content with less.

My understanding of this verse is actually very simple. The godly individual who desires to be a blessing to others will not lack opportunities to do so simply because God will make those opportunities possible for them. Whenever the temporal concerns of life take precedent, it generally means that the Lord is being left out of our lives. [Matthew 6:33](#) says that when the kingdom of God is placed first in a person's life that God guarantees that their temporal needs will be supplied.

Mt 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

When a person is generous, the Lord generously provides so that the individual can continue to be generous. Obviously, there are many reasons why believers should be willing to make sacrifices for those who have desperate needs. Christians simply will be called upon to give sacrificially at various times. However, for many this probably seems risky and unwise, but it is the clear teaching of Scripture. What v8 clearly communicates is that the grace of God will abound to the individual who has this kind of perspective on how God wants to oftentimes use them. Notice again the words that Paul uses in v8. He uses the words “**all**” and “**always**”. He actually uses the word “**all**” three times.

2 Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

In Scripture, the word “**grace**” refers to God giving an individual two distinct attributes. The first is the desire to do His will and the second is the power to do His will. That is what “**grace**” gives - both desire and power to accomplish God’s will in the individual’s life. In v8 the subject is primarily referring to material blessings that allow the individual to be generous, even though we know that spiritual blessings are certainly included in the phrases “**all grace**” and “**all things**”. In return for a believer’s generosity God will provide three distinct blessings: “**all grace**”, “**all sufficiency**”, and “**all things**”. That is what God has determined that He will give to the individual wants to be a blessing to others with their gifts.

The latter part of v8 indicates that God also gives the believer “**an abundance for every good work**”. Unfortunately, the charismatics often equate all of these phrases in terms of God giving them a lot of money. However, please notice that the word “**money**” is not even mentioned in this entire passage. The issue is never about money, and when someone makes it an issue you can rest assured that they are doctrinally off base. V8 has to be understood contextually in relation to v9 which says,

2Co 9:9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

God gives more so that a believer can give more. That is the point of v9. God gives to the believer so that (1) the believer can “**disperse**” or “**scatter**” God’s blessings all around, (2) the believer can give to the poor, and (3) the believer’s righteousness may endure forever. Think of it this way - whatever we give sacrificially endures forever, and what we keep selfishly for ourselves only lasts for a short time and then it is gone. [2 Corinthians 9:10-11](#) says,

2Co 9:10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have *sown* and increase the fruits of your righteousness, ¹¹ while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

This is not actually a prayer simply because most of the best Greek texts make this an actual declaration of fact that God ministers certain “**seed**” to the one who desires to be generous. Notice what God gives.

- (1) God will give bread to the sacrificial giver (v10).
- (2) God will multiply the gift given by the sacrificial giver (v10).
- (3) God will increase the fruits of the believer’s righteous deeds (v10).

(4) God will continue to enrich the believer in everything so that they can be generous (v11).

God is not working in our lives so that we can hoard His blessings in our life. God does not give us His great blessings so that we can simply consume it on ourselves. The reality of what Paul is presenting in these verses is that the believer is simply a channel through which God sends His blessings into the world. I know this may sound a little over the top, but keeping back more than what one needs may eventually become a kind of stealing from God.

If someone develops the attribute of wanting to be a channel through which their sacrificial giving is able to help meet the desperate needs of others, then it all depends on one thing. It depends on the individual truly believing that God will take care of them and provide all of the necessities that they need in their life. It would be wrong to assume that God will provide all that somebody may want. In [Philippians 4:12-13](#), Paul said these words,

Php 4:12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

That is the clear testimony of a man who knew what it meant to trust God. He understood that there would be times of plenty and times when there was not so much. There would be times when he would abound and times when he would suffer need. For him, however, all of that was okay because he understood that Christ would strengthen him at all times. [1 Peter 5:6-7](#) provides the following encouragement when it says,

1Pe 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Without making anyone feel guilty, it would be foolish on our part to think that God will overlook selfishness, extravagance, indulgence, and hoarding by a believer. In reality, every one of those are irresponsible and unbiblical behavior within the Christian life. Jesus made one of the most radical statements that could ever be made in [Matthew 19:21](#) when he was talking to the rich young ruler,

Mt 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Listen to what Jesus told his disciples in [Luke 12:32-34](#),

Lk 12:32 Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Jesus just had a way of putting a different perspective on everything - literally everything. Paul himself said this in [1 Corinthians 4:11](#),

1Co 4:11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.

I personally have no idea where the Word of Faith movement and the Health and Wealth Gospel movement comes up with their outrageous teachings on materialism in the name of Christianity. What

they have done is to view wealth as a sign of God's blessings, so they consider financial success to be an essential qualification for those who lead the church. They are no different than the self-styled financial gurus who churn out a bewildering plethora of books, websites, newsletters, and magazines to promote their dubious get-rich quick schemes. They all claim to have the roadmap for financial success. Sadly, however, the church has fallen prey to the world's relentless pursuit of materialism. The Word of Faith teachers actually proclaim that God's will is for all believers to be rich. They teach that if you speak positively about all of this that your personal verbal confession will actually create wealth for you. In a very subtle way they teach that God is obligated to deliver what the believer requests. They have made God their utilitarian Genie who grants all of their desires. They create their own reality for their own indulgence, and it is incredibly self-centered, prideful, and a grave distortion of Scripture. I wonder what they do with a verse like [Luke 9:58](#) which says,

Lk 9:58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Where do they put a verse like that in their doctrinal bag of tricks?

It is important to appreciate what Jesus said in the Parable of the Sower in [Mark 4:18-19](#),

Mk 4:18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word,¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

That is probably a great testimony of the modern day church and its perspective on wealth. Greed is what ultimately characterizes unbelievers, not believers. Greed is a very specific attribute of false teachers. [2 Peter 2:3](#) says,

^{2Pe 2:3} By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

[2 Peter 2:14](#) says that they "have a heart trained in covetous practices".

It should be evident that God has a different plan for financial soundness and it is much different than some kind of pseudo-Christian materialism. Instead of trying to speak wealth into existence, God's plan for financial integrity involves hard work, wise investments, careful saving, and sacrificial giving.

In our last session next week I am going to define financial freedom and then provide some basic steps to achieve financial freedom. It will be a very practical teaching that may be a great benefit for those who seem to struggle in this area.