

<p>Bible Text English Standard Version</p>	<p>Observations What does the text say?</p>	<p>Interpretations & Questions What does it mean to all Christians?</p>	<p>Applications What does it mean to me?</p>
<p>2 Corinthians 8:1-15</p> <p>Encouragement to Give Generously</p> <p>1 We want you to know, brothers,[a] about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For 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[b] of taking part in the relief of the saints— 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. 6 Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. 7 But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you[c]—see that you excel in this act of grace also.</p> <p>8 I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. 10 And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. 11 So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. 12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. 13 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you</p>			

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Lesson 20

2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15

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burdened, but that as a matter of fairness 14 your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. 15 As it is written, "Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack."			
Footnotes: a: 2 Corinthians 8:1 <i>Or brothers and sisters</i> b: 2 Corinthians 8:4 The Greek word <i>charis</i> can mean <i>favor</i> or <i>grace</i> or <i>thanks</i> , depending on the context c: 2 Corinthians 8:7 Some manuscripts <i>in your love for us</i>			
Summary: 			
2 Corinthians 8:16-24 Commendation of Titus 16 But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you. 17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going[d] to you of his own accord. 18 With him we are sending[e] the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel. 19 And not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will. 20 We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, 21 for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man. 22 And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found earnest in many matters, but who is now more earnest than ever because			

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2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15

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of his great confidence in you. 23 As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers[f] of the churches, the glory of Christ. 24 So give proof before the churches of your love and of our boasting about you to these men.			
Footnotes: d: 2 Corinthians 8:17 Or <i>he went</i> e: 2 Corinthians 8:18 Or <i>we sent</i> ; also verse 22 f: 2 Corinthians 8:23 Greek <i>apostles</i>			
Summary:			
2 Corinthians 9:1-15 The Collection of Christians in Jerusalem 1 Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, 2 for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3 But I am sending[a] the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. 4 Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift[b] you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.[c]			

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<p>The Cheerful Giver</p> <p>6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[d] will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[e] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.”</p> <p>10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 13 By their approval of this service, they[f] will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!</p>			
<p>Footnotes:</p> <p>a: 2 Corinthians 9:3 Or <i>I have sent</i></p> <p>b: 2 Corinthians 9:5 Greek <i>blessing</i>; twice in this verse</p> <p>c: 2 Corinthians 9:5 Or <i>a gift expecting something in return</i>; Greek <i>greed</i></p> <p>d: 2 Corinthians 9:6 Greek <i>with blessings</i>; twice in this verse</p> <p>e: 2 Corinthians 9:8 Or <i>all contentment</i></p> <p>f: 2 Corinthians 9:13 Or <i>you</i></p>			

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Summary:			

As believers, God's grace is often revealed to us when we are feeling weak and vulnerable. In our weakness, He is strong. When we experience God's grace, He wants us to extend that grace to others. Reflect on these verses and consider what God's grace looks like in your life.

2 Corinthians 12:9

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Ephesians 1:7

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

Hebrews 4:16

16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Space for Grace

Consider one of the following prompts to further reflect upon this lesson, or follow where the Spirit leads.

- Share a story about how someone extended God's grace to you or how you've extended His grace to another.
- What does it mean to be a cheerful giver of God's grace?

Prayer Requests
