**The Grace Way of Giving, No. 4 – BD34-02**

We are studying the principles of giving under grace. This is the fourth in the series. We have, we hope, made clear to you now that grace giving is first of all a mental attitude of orientation to grace. Consequently, the amount of money you give is not the primary thing. It is the orientation of your soul to the grace concept of this age which is the critical feature. Once your soul is oriented to grace, you will be able to move in the direction of grace giving. It doesn’t matter how much money you give, how frequently and how regularly you give; if you are not oriented to the grace of God, you are not giving under grace, and your giving is not meriting reward for you at the Judgment Seat of Christ. But when you are oriented to grace, you will be able to give even in your poverty, and you will do it with happiness.

The second principle we have learned is that grace giving must be an expression of freewill apart from any human coercion. It must be entirely voluntary. You and I are not used to being able to exercise our freewill with our material things even in the ordinary realms of life. We are surrounded by a society and an advertising system that places great pressures upon us from merchants.

So we have these days that are converted into practical religious holidays. Mother’s Day, so you can give mother a gift. Father’s Day so you can give father a gift, and thereby give a gift to the merchant. We have Christmas so that you can give everybody a gift. We have birthdays and anniversaries, all of which are carefully calculated by our society to put the screws on you to draw your money out for some gift purposes. You’re used to having pressures put upon you to draw your money out of you. These are attacks on your personal freedom and they are motivated by Satan and they create a great deal of conflict between people. It is very difficult for people who are legalistically oriented to the pressures of special days to be able to be associated with a person who is very relaxed and disassociated from the merchants’ pressures.

The true giving of which we are capable will function anytime and anyplace apart from human reasons. As Christian priests, our giving must be private and it must be free of any pressures or gimmicks which include emotional appeals. Grace giving is eager giving because it is viewed as an honor.

Principle number three is that grace giving requires soul giving to the Lord first. How do you give your soul to the Lord? You can never give by grace until you have first given your soul and all the facets of that soul. How do you do that? You do that by your positive response to Bible doctrine which brings the facets of your soul in tune with diving viewpoint. When your soul is in tune with God, you have given your soul to God. Until your soul is in tune with God, you will never be able to give yourself to Him. Until you have taken in Bible doctrine with a positive response, your soul will never get in tune with God. It is the Word of truth that phases our emotions and our wills and our minds into God’s, all the way down the line.

So the Christian gives to commemorate this grace of God to him. He gives with no strings attached because he has given his soul and he gives therefore unto the Lord. What the Lord does with it is the Lord’s business. He doesn’t put any strings upon it. He gives and God goes from there. He knows that if he gives his money to the Lord’s work on the proper principles that God will not allow His money to be squandered. He knows that God will take to task anybody who misuses the Lord’s money which has been given in the right way.

The financial backing of the local church by God’s people is a key feature of the angelic warfare which surrounds you and me. God’s method for financing His work on earth is to bring the church to completion and to maturity. When this happens, project footstool will be executed upon Satan. Remember what God told Satan, by telling Jesus Christ to sit at His right hand until His enemies (the unbelievers) have been made His footstool. When that happens, Jesus Christ returns to this earth to rule in His millennial kingdom. When He comes back to rule, Satan and his demons are locked up and removed from the sphere of open operation which they now enjoy. Satan is doing everything he can to avoid that.

Do you realize that your giving is the means by which God is going to bring this about? Can you see why Satan is taking churches that are playing cute games of religion, and he’s pouring people into them and Satan is getting behind these people and saying, “Give like crazy, man. Give like crazy.” And these churches are wallowing in money because Satan wants to promote their religious programs.

Money is a key feature in the destiny of Satan and project footstool, and you as believers are the key. So Satan is attacking this in order to delay it. He promotes false motivations. He promotes false appeals. He promotes false objects for your giving. He suppresses all the teaching and learning of Bible that he can because this will prepare your soul for grace giving. He substitutes all kinds of false methods of giving in order to restrict, really, the amount of gifts.

One of the fantastic and smartest moves that Satan ever made was to get Christian churches to promote tithing as God’s method of giving. Tithing automatically ensures a low level of giving—enough to sustain the operation, but it holds a low level of giving because it never touches the expanding incomes of people as over the years their incomes get larger. There’s a certain point, and some of you are asking the question: How far do I go in putting up a bigger room on my house? How far do I go in buying a second property? How far do I go in updating my furniture when my income expands? Because you are God’s own priest, the answer to that question is within your own soul. You must make the decision as to how big of a house you need to live in, what kind of quality of furniture you need, and at what point you have come to the level of maximum effective execution of your ambassadorship with the money that God places at your disposal.

If your product is puny and weak and negligible in your ambassadorship, but your offices and base of operation are luxurious and expensive and everything you could ask for, I would suspect that something is wrong. The product ought to far outdistance and be far in abundance from the base in which you operate. The base should be sufficient for you to function from.

However, there is a time to improve what you’re living in. There is a time to update what you possess. There is a time to make provision for the things that you may possess that will enhance your life for the cause of your ambassadorship. That includes what will enhance it for your relaxation, for your entertainment, and everything else that’s involved in your social activities.

**2 Corinthians 8:6-7**

In 2 Corinthians 8 we pick up the story at verse 6. This verse is a transitional verse. Paul is now going to switch from talking about what the Macedonian churches did, and the example that they were of the principles of grace giving, and he is now zeroing in on the Corinthian church to whom he is writing, and to deal with the problem of giving as it related to the Corinthian church which was a wealthy church. So we have in verse 6 the appeal. Paul says, “Insomuch that we besought Titus, that as he had begun so he would also finish in you the same grace also.” “Insomuch” means “with the result that.” What he has been talking about relative to the Macedonian giving has now led him to say something to the Corinthians about their giving. They have responded among the Macedonian churches in a sacrificial way. Paul now is encouraged by the performance of the Macedonians to urge the same upon the Corinthians relative particularly to the Jerusalem relief fund that they were collecting for the saints of Jerusalem who were under severe suffering and hardship.

So this phrase reminds the Corinthians that they have a responsibility in giving just as the Macedonians did. “For as much as they did this, now you should do this.” This little phrase is also a reminder to us that all of us have a part in giving. There is nobody who is excluded from the practice of giving. It’s a spiritual characteristic, and it has to be done on a spiritual basis. It is the extension of our spiritual life. If you are a born again person, you have a spiritual life, and therefore you are included in the grace of giving.

If you’re sitting here this morning and you’re thinking up excuses and reasons why your poverty status and your payment status and your obligation status should exclude you from giving, you’re wrong. Now you’re your own priest. Nobody is going to push a plate under your nose so we can see what you do or don’t do. You’re still going to be able to walk out the Lord and ignore the offering box if you choose to do it. This is between you and your God. But make no mistake about it that if you are a believer, if you are born again, you have a spiritual life and part of the expression of that spiritual life is giving, and if you do not give, you are failing in a duty that God has placed upon each of us. That is behind this little expression.

“Insomuch as…” “… with the result that…” “What the Macedonians did, you Corinthians should be aware that you too have a duty to do. Verse 6 says, “…besought Titus…” The word “besought” in the Greek is “parakaleo.” This is a word that means “to appeal to” or it actually means “to exhort.” You exhort by rebuking. So it has the connotation on the one hand of comfort. It really means to call a person alongside of you to comfort him. But it connotes the idea of exhortation which therefore means “to appeal to” and maybe even strongly in a way to rebuke. Here it means primarily “to appeal to.” It’s an exhortation to Titus but it is an exhortation in the form of a request. This is not a command. He’s asking Titus to do something.

In the Greek tense it is what we call the aorist tense which indicates one point of action and the suggestion here is that the point at which he asked Titus to do this, Titus said, “Yes.” We know from the Word of God that Titus was sent to Corinth relative to the Jewish relief fund, and he does it here on a voluntary basis. Titus has been in Corinth previously. He was there the year before. He was there as Paul’s troubleshooter. The Corinthian church had given Paul a lot of trouble. They had given him much abuse. They took this man of God and as you read through 2 Corinthians, you see how they abused this servant of the Lord.

For example, in 2 Corinthians 10:2 you will read how they told Paul that his trouble was that he was carnal. He was just a big fat carnal cat in their view. In 2 Corinthians 10:10 they called him a coward. They said, “You’re a big man, Paul, when it comes to writing a letter, but when you’re on the scene to speak, you’re very puny.” They said that he was undignified as a minister because he supplied his own finances by employment rather than to take their gifts (2 Corinthians 11:7). They were of the attitude that if you’re a real minister with dignity, you don’t get your hands dirty. Instead, when nobody else would do the maintenance around the properties, the apostle Paul found himself with that chore because some things can’t wait to be done. So he didn’t wait for the believers who were carrying the load and not getting moving because they were too busy.

His authority as an apostle was challenged because they said, “He’s not one of the original twelve” (2 Corinthians 11:5, 2 Corinthians 12:11-12). They said he had no credentials of letters or of commendation to show. They said, “When you come to us, you don’t bring us any letters of recommendation from anybody in authority.” The false teachers were coming into Corinth and they were unrolling their big fat papyri filled with recommendations from Dr. so-and-so and Rabbi so-and-so and evangelist so-and-so. “Paul, who do you think you are? You don’t come around with any letters of credentials (2 Corinthians 3:1).

They accused him of being a braggart and boastful (2 Corinthians 10:8-15). The reason they did this is because when he talked he didn’t hold his hands behind his back and look down on the floor and shuffle his feet around as he talked to the congregation and the power structures in the church. They accused him of being deceitful (2 Corinthians 12:16)—of being a liar. They insinuated that he embezzled funds which had been entrusted to him in 2 Corinthians 8:20-23.

This will give you just a little bit of the feel of their church at Corinth. When we say that this was a carnal bunch of people, I mean it was a bunch of characters such as you could find no place else in the New Testament world. The treatment of Paul is a reoccurring pattern throughout history. It’s the reaction that you may expect from the old sin nature against agents of doctrine. It is inevitable, sooner or later. Anybody who’s going into the ministry has missed something if in a pastoral theology course they don’t spell this out to you because sooner or later you will become the football of contending elements within the congregation who want to use you as a status symbol. Gradually you discover that and you learn how to neutralize and you learn how to cool off and you learn how to put some protective barriers around yourself, but always expect it from some other direction. Paul knew it well. It is the reoccurring pattern of the old sin nature to resist and to strike down truth. That’s what they’re striking. Of all things, they’re striking truth. Sure they have a case. They’re very confident because they’ve talked to somebody who has talked to somebody and they’ve seen something and they know something. So the fools are able to rally and to carry on.

Well, Timothy was sent to Corinth with 1 Corinthians to straighten out this carnal church. But Paul seems to have some misgivings about sending Timothy. There seems to be something about Timothy’s temperament that Paul had some reservations because in 1 Corinthians 16:10-11 he asks the Corinthians not to frighten Timothy or to despise him. That’s a terrible thing to have to say about your troubleshooter that’s coming in to straighten out a church that’s riding high in carnality, and say, “Now look folks, here’s my man. He carries my authority. Please don’t be mean to him or despise him or mistreat him.” Paul had asked Apollos to handle this job, 1 Corinthians 16:10 tells us, but Apollos said, “No thank you. I don’t want anything to do with that church at all,” which was a pretty smart thing for Apollos to say relative to a bunch of carnal. That’s the best thing in the world to say, “No thank you. I don’t want anything to do at all when it comes to straightening them out, to teaching them anything.”

However, somebody has to do it. It’s the job of spiritual responsibility. So the apostle Paul had a duty to perform relative to the church at Corinth in spite of the way they had bloodied his character in his dealings with them.

So Timothy’s mission seems to have been a failure because when he returned to report to Paul, things were really bad. The other reports that came to Paul indicated that things were really bad in Corinth. They were riding high in abuse of the tongues practice. They were riding high in their carnality right down the line, rampant in toleration of sin.

So into this tense situation, Paul sends a man, apparently, that he thinks can handle the job, and that’s Titus. This tells us something about Titus. Titus was obviously not the type that Paul had to say, “Please don’t frighten him.” Titus was not the type who was going to walk in and stand up and take a look at a bunch of spiritually disoriented characters, while they stand up there and abuse him out of their malcontent attitudes, that he’s going to succumb and be crushed by their human viewpoint evaluations. Titus was not the sweetness and light boy. Titus had the language, he had the personality, he had the know-how, and he had the understanding to be able to see through the characters that were functioning with such high and mighty power within the church at Corinth.

Titus no doubt laid doctrine on the line, and he was not intimidated by the money people in the church even though he came to deal with the money matter, as among other things. Titus does not seem to be the professional preacher type at all. When Titus got through, there were undoubtedly fewer members in the church at Corinth, but the result was a revival. The result was that people were put downwind of themselves in such a way by this man that they could no longer scoot off someplace else and play a pretense of spirituality that was not really true. The result was that all through that congregation confession of sin began to be made. Carnality began to decrease in the Corinthian church, and spirituality became the order of the day.

Titus was successful in this mission. He reported to Paul in Macedonia, and Paul was so overjoyed by the reports that Titus brought him that he sat down and he wrote 2 Corinthians. We have this in 2 Corinthians 7:13-16. Titus carried this book of 2 Corinthians back to the church at Corinth in order to complete the Jerusalem relief fund which had been begun by them a year before. The spiritual change that came over the Corinthian church was such that now they were eager to share even with Jewish believers, of all things, who were just the opposite of what they were as Corinthian gentiles.

Now those Jewish believers were very legalistic. They were very cut and dried. When you walked into the Jewish assembly, there was no makeup on the ladies, and the skirts were all very long and appropriate length, but when you went into Corinth, things were really jumping, and things were really stylish. They were just the opposite kind of temperaments of congregations. But something had happened as a result of Titus’s on-the-line ministry of the Word, and these people realized they needed to either get straightened up with the Word or get dealt with by God, one or the other. And they straightened up with the Word, and spirituality moved into that church, and they were eager to have a part with these Jewish believers to whom they felt indebted for their very faith in the Lord.

So Paul’s appeal has not been one of emotional pictures that he drew for these people of starving children in the streets of Jerusalem, and old ladies lying dead grasping for the last morsel of bread that they could have while a dog came up and snatched it out of her hand, and all the things that you could have imagined in order to bestir those people to rush to that offering box and say, “I’ve got to help those people.” Instead, he sent Titus, and he said, “Titus, teach the grace principles of giving. Get them straightened out on their spiritual lives. Take to task those who are false voices, and I commit you to God’s care. Timothy hasn’t been able to pull it off. Apollos won’t touch it. You’re all I have left.”

And Paul was terribly worried about this church. As a matter of fact, Titus was delayed. The Bible tells us that Paul became greatly concerned and agitated over the fact that Titus had not returned. He thought, “Oh man, this indicates that things are worse than I thought they would be.” But when Titus finally did come back and meet him in Macedonia, Titus said, “It has changed. God has done His work, and people have responded.” And it was on the basis of doctrinal principles. So the outward action of these Corinthians was reflecting the condition of their souls because they were giving expression to what they really were.

The Corinthians were not poor. They lived in the great commercial of the Roman Empire. It was a place of luxurious living. However, Paul was not interested in getting their money. He was interested in teaching them doctrine so as to get their souls right so they could give in a way that was useful to the Lord. Paul is not catering to the rich people in this church. He is not standing there, and Titus did not stand, with a grinning mouthful of teeth smile on his face as the people walked out the door with his hand extended as he (brushed elbows with) … the rich people and the power structure in order to get the money. He was not begging. He didn’t use Madison Avenue techniques in order to finance the Lord’s work. Instead, the spirit of Paul was such that if God would not supply it through people who will respond to doctrine, then shut the doors and nail them up. But don’t continue on a false basis of self-deception that we are doing God’s work because we can fill the pews and pay the bills.

The Corinthians were invited thus to test their own grace orientation with this Jerusalem relief fund. God gives us all we own. Giving is not a test of our financial status. Giving is always a test of our grace orientation.

So “Insomuch… with the result that… we besought in a grace way,” and Titus responded willingly to take this job, “that as he had begun.” Literally, “even as he had begun,” indicating an incomplete purpose. This introduces what Paul urged Titus immediately to do—to return to complete that offering. “As he had begun” is a triple compound word. In the Greek it looks like this: “proenarchomai.” This consists of “pro” and “en” and “archomai.” “Pro” means “before.” “En” means “in.” “Archomai” means to “begin.” Thus it is “to begin before.” This is something that they had gotten into before. This is a reference to Titus’s ministry in teaching doctrine which resulted in revival and resulted in their readiness to give to this offering for the saints.

“So he would also finish,” that he would continue and complete, he would bring to an end. The word “finish” in the Greek is “epiteleo.” This means “to finish.” There is something we should notice about this. This is in what the Greek calls the subjunctive mood. This means it’s potential. It’s a possibility. He is going back to these people and they have begun this offering before. “Proenarchomai” is indicative. That means it’s a fact. This “epiteleo” is the subjunctive and that means it’s potential. That is, it’s a possibility. They had begun to collect this offering, then something happened a year ago and things sluffed off.

Now the spiritual condition has been revived. Now it is possible for them to go on. But the question is: will they go on? This is left in the open. There is a question of spiritual progress or spiritual backsliding since Titus’s absence. What will happen when he returns? What will he find? To be consistent in your giving, you must be consistent in your spiritual life. The indicative shows that the Corinthians were stable when he left. The subjunctive shows he doesn’t know what the caliber may be when he gets back. The stability of your spiritual life will be reflected by what you respond to. If you react to somebody that gives you an emotional pitch, it probably reflects a spiritual quality in you. If you react against somebody’s putting a gimmick on you to give, it shows you’ve got some spiritual know-how. If you react against some pressure device or some appeal for human good, it shows you’ve got some spiritual insight. That’s what was true of these people and Titus left them. What may be true is a question.

So he says, “With the result that we besought Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you (that is, in reference to you) this offering project, the same grace also.” This word grace is the Greek word “charis,” and here it refers to the grace of giving this gift for the relief of the saints in Jerusalem. It is the same grace that Paul has been commending relative to the Macedonian church as they responded to the needs of the Christians. Responding to grace is an expression of thanksgiving.

Sometimes we say we are going to “say grace” when we sit down to a meal. “Grace” is an expression of thanksgiving. It’s called “the grace.” So we may say here, Paul says in verse 6: “With the result that we appeal to Titus, even as he had begun on a previous occasion, so also he could complete with reference to you this favor also.

Now in verse 7 we have a commission to the Corinthians. Verse 6 is the transition. Verses 7 through 15 now take up the picture as it deals in the Corinthian church. First of all, he notices their abundance. Therefore, or it would be better “moreover” because it’s just a continuation—not a new break into a new subject: “Moreover, as ye abound.” We have that word that we have met before, “perisseuo.” This means to super-abound, not just to abound. It’s present tense which means continually their state their state in spiritual material things. “As ye super-abound in everything” means that in all spheres of their lives the Corinthian Christians were really well off. When it came to spiritual things, they were well off. When it came to material things, they were well off. They were well off in their soul life. They were well off in their spiritual life. The fact was that God had blessed the Corinthians as he had few of the New Testament believers.

“Moreover, just as in everything you super-abound.” Now the point of this verse is that this super-abundance is stated as a cause for their liberal and willing giving. Paul outlines for us the major things in which they super-abounded. These things enabled them to give liberally under grace. Here are the elements:

He says, “As you have super-abounded in the sphere of faith.” In the Greek that is “pistis.” This is more than the faith in Christ unto salvation. That’s not what’s in view here. This is faith which is a factor in making that system that we talked about this morning in your life that God has provided: making that system operate, that grace system by which you perceive spiritual things.

Here’s how it works: Here is your mind with two sides to it. You have one side of the mind which is the perceptive side where you learn things. You have another side which is the directive side that gives directions and from which you make decisions. Now what faith does is to take doctrine which a pastor-teacher gives to you under instruction, and when you are filled with the spirit, you have the filling of the Holy Spirit, you are able to learn doctrine. That doctrine which you learn then comes under the examination of your faith.

There is also in your being, along with your emotions and your will—all part of your soul, your human spirit. Now when you take what you have learned of the Word of God, and you have understood it as a believer, you’re learning these principles of giving, you learn them and you understand them, then you react to them with your will. If you act in a positive response, that means an act of faith. That’s what this is. That faith takes and teaches your human spirit. So God has taught your spirit a principle of truth. Now you know a vital bit of information. What you have up here in your mind we call “knowledge.” It’s information. It’s understanding. The one part of your mentality is called the “mind.” The other part is generally called the “heart.” It directs to actions of various kinds. When you take this knowledge and you believe God, it comes down here into your heart and it becomes full knowledge. That’s something very different. What you have up here in your mind is not usable. That’s just information. You and I have things that we understand about the things of God that never affect our lives. It’s information that is not usable. But it is here (in the heart) that we are ready to respond to God. What we have gone through in faith and positive response becomes useful, and that’s what directs our heart. That’s why our hearts are guided into actions that are pleasing to God. The only way we can please God is in response to His word.

So he says we have faith here which converts knowledge to a usable form of full knowledge, and in the Corinthian church, they were exhaling their knowledge toward God in prayer and in their faith rest, and they were exhaling toward man in a relaxed mental attitude, that “agape” love. These people had faith in abundance. They could just believe God. Now Paul says that’s really great. That is a great thing about you people that when you hear the truth now with the revival that has taken place, I can say that there is an abundance of the quality of believing God among you.

Now he also says that they were also not only abundant in faith, but they were secondly abundant in the Word. Now the Word here is the Greek word “logos.” This is a reference to the Word as doctrine. This stresses the substance, the content of the Word of God. These Corinthian Christians prospered because they had effective expositors of the Word who were delivering abundance of sound doctrine in that church. This is what their abundance of faith responded to. They were responding to this Word. Here it is right here right under the word “doctrine.” That’s the Word. They were responding to the Word in an abundant way with their faith, and their faith was filling their human spirits so that their minds, their hearts had some guidance. Doctrine to the heart is usable in your living. When you have doctrine up here in the mind, you get God’s divine viewpoint. You get a frame of reference here for learning deeper doctrine, and you have a conscience here which is filled with God’s values and God’s standards.

Now there was a third thing they had. That was that they had an abundance of knowledge. The word “knowledge” here is the Greek word “gnosis.” This word means this thing that they had up here in their minds. That’s the knowledge up in the perceptive mind. “Gnosis” is what they heard in church from the pastor-teacher. They learned. They listened to it under the filling of the spirit and they learned it. Now they have knowledge, but “gnosis,” though they had it in abundance because they were being taught, will not guide your life. It has to become something that is full knowledge, or the Greek word is “epignosis.” Up here in your mind you have “gnosis.” In your human spirit you have full knowledge or “epignosis.”

Now because the Corinthians had ample doctrinal instruction, they were able to have an abundance of divine viewpoint through their full knowledge. Thus you have this picture: “Logos” or doctrine in the Bible is transferred to the perceptive mind as knowledge or “gnosis.” It is converted by faith (“pistis”) into full knowledge (“epignosis”) in the human spirit, and now this Christian is in the position to give under grace. Until this happens in your life, you will not be in a position to give under grace. Until you have a human spirit that God has taught with the fullness of His Word, you won’t know how to act and how to respond. This directs all of your emotions and all of your will. Your mind is telling your emotions what to do. Your mind is telling your will what to do, not the other way around where your emotions are dominating your soul.

And they do this, he says, “in all diligence.” This is the Greek word “spoude.” This connotes an eagerness or a vigor. It describes the way the Corinthians applied themselves to the Word and the things of the Lord. Now that they were spiritually straightened out, the tongues problem had been brought under control. Their spiritual abuses had been corrected. They were eager in their response which reflected that they were building up full knowledge in their spirits. They were catching on to what God thought.

Because they were diligent, they were applying themselves to learning the Word, so they understood it. So they had this full knowledge. The next phrase, “In your love to us,” they abounded in their love toward the apostle. This is “agape” love, mental attitude love, which was producing a relaxed mental attitude in their souls. This love was the result again of doctrine down here in their human spirits. That’s how they learned to love God, to love one another, and to love their husbands and wives.

The Corinthians had been bitter at Paul previously. They had impugned his character and his motives. Now they were overflowing in an abundance of love. Why? Because when they were impugning him, they were shriveled up here in the content of their spirits. When they got with the Word, it straightened them out and suddenly their eyes took on God’s focus. They began seeing things about Paul the way God looks at them. They began feeling toward him the way God feels toward him. They began making the decisions toward him that God makes, and it was a whole different picture.

So we read, “Moreover, just as in everything you super-about in the sphere of faith, in the sphere of doctrine, in the sphere of knowledge, in the sphere of application, in the sphere of love, from you to us.” Now here is the application: “… that ye abound in this grace also.” Again it introduces this word, “perisseuo,” that you super-abound, and this time it’s present, active, subjunctive. Now here is something interesting. This time it’s subjunctive. Here is what Paul actually says: He means to super-abound in giving. It’s present tense so it’s to be their constant pattern of super-abounding. It’s active voice so they are to do it. But it’s subjunctive so it means maybe they will and maybe they won’t. Maybe they will be liberal and faithful in their giving, or maybe they won’t. When Paul begins verse 7, he says, “As ye super-abound in everything,” he uses the indicative mood which means it is real, it is true, you do super-abound in all these things that he lists here. But when he gets to the end of verse 7, he uses the same word “super-abound,” but this time he puts it in the possible potential mood of the subjunctive which means that now it’s a question of whether they’re going to respond with their wills to super-abound in giving.

Paul says, “You do super-abound in the elements of full knowledge within your human spirits. Now it is a question of whether you will apply yourself to super-abound in giving—“in this grace also.” This is emphatic, position, “this grace,” this important thing of giving. He also makes this comparison in verse 6 where it says that “as Titus had begun this offering,” that’s indicative. “So he would complete” is questionable subjunctive. It depends on them. So here’s an interesting contrast of the mood that says this is for real and the mood that says this is possible of what you may do now. The Corinthians have begun to give in a grace way, and they have an abundance of spiritual blessings. That’s true. Now the question is: do they have the potential to finish this grace giving, and will they do it in a super-abundant way, the way God has treated them? God’s way is to call for a stable consistency in our giving.

So we translate, “Moreover, just as in everything you super-abounded in the sphere of faith, in the sphere of doctrine, in the sphere of knowledge, in the sphere of application, in the sphere of love from you to us, in this grace of giving also be super-abounding.” Here is the grace giving principle which is taught in these two verses: Christian giving stems from the believer who is functioning daily under this system of learning doctrine. Now this is a grace system of perception. This system has nothing to do with your IQ. It has your willingness to receive the Word.

So Christian giving stems from a believer’s functioning under a daily contact with learning the Word of God. Without spiritual stability through this grace system of perceiving spiritual things, there can be no grace giving. A Christian’s giving thus will reflect his level of functioning under the grace system of perception. If you are a person who will not give liberally, then the problem with you is not to berate yourself or to make new resolves, but to say, “What in the world is wrong with me and my functioning in the grace system of perception? Something is wrong. I’m not functioning under the system that God has given for developing a spiritual life within my soul, and that’s why I’m falling down.” That’s exactly why.

Now Christians in this day of apostasy are going to have to get into the Word under this grace system of learning things lest we should fail in our giving, and thus hinder the Lord’s testimony, and aid Satan in his attempt to delay project footstool. Yours is the greatest opportunity of all believers in history, in a nation which is madly bent on an emotional binge. Our nation and its leaders are caught up in emotional direction of most of what they do, and we are on a doomed course as you are increasingly going to become aware. Now the time is for you and me to get up front when it comes to giving just as we are up front when it comes to God’s blessings.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971