

Meeting Practical Needs in God's Family

2 Cor. 8:7 But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also.

It would be a sin against love for the followers of Jesus to covet one another's possessions, take advantage of one another, or burden one another through their laziness or lack of discipline. Instead, they should be characterized by their open hearts, hands, and homes, liberally giving with eagerness and joy to meet the needs of others, beginning with their family in Christ. They should give alone and give together; give from much and give from little; and receive with humble gratitude. This generosity is motivated by their understanding of God's generosity and indicates God's grace at work in them. It is a visible evidence of their repentance and faith, love for Jesus and dedication to Him, and sincere love for their new family in Christ. This generosity fulfills their highest purpose by glorifying God.

It would be a sin against love for the followers of Jesus to covet one another's possessions,

Acts 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes.

Exodus 20:17 You shall not covet ... anything that belongs to your neighbor.

take advantage of one another,

Leviticus 25:35-37 'Now in case a countryman of yours becomes poor and his means with regard to you falter, then you are to sustain him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. ³⁶ 'Do not take usurious interest from him, but revere your God, that your countryman

may live with you. ³⁷ You shall not give him your silver at interest, nor your food for gain.

2 Corinthians 7:2 We wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one.

or burden one another through their laziness or lack of discipline.

Working hard in this manner ... I kept myself from being a burden to you (Acts 20:34; 1 Cor. 9:12, 15; 2 Cor. 11:9, 12:14).

1 Thes. 4:9-12 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰ for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, ¹¹ and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, ¹² so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

2 Thes. 3:6-12 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you; ⁹ not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. ¹¹ For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. ¹² Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.

1 Timothy 5:3-8

**Instead, they should be characterized by their open hearts,
hands, and homes,**

Deut. 15:7-10 If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, ... you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him.... You shall generously give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him.

Is. 58:6-7 Is this not the fast which I choose ... to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him; and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

1 John 3:16-18 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Acts 2:46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

Rom. 12:13 practicing hospitality

liberally giving

2 Cor. 8:2, 3 the wealth of their liberality ... beyond their ability they gave

Psalm 112:9 [the righteous] has given freely

with eagerness and joy

2 Corinthians 9:2, 7 *I know your readiness [“exceptional interest in being of service”] ... your zeal [“intense positive interest”] ... God loves a cheerful giver.*

to meet the needs of others,

Acts 2:45 *they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.*

Acts 4:34 *there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds*

Acts 11:29 *each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren*

Romans 12:13 *contributing to the needs of the saints*

2 Corinthians 8:14 *your abundance being a supply for their need*

beginning with their family in Christ.

Lev. 25:35 *in case a countryman of yours becomes poor*

Deut. 15:7 *if there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers*

Matt. 25:40 *to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.*

1 Corinthians 16:1 *the collection for the saints*

2 Corinthians 8:4 *the support of the saints*

Galatians 6:10 *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

They should give alone and give together;

Matthew 6:2-4 *When you give to the poor ... do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret.*

1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Acts 11:29-30

give from much and give from little;

1 Timothy 6:17-18 *Instruct those who are rich ... to be generous.*

2 Cor. 8:2 *their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.*

2 Corinthians 8:12 *it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.*

Acts 11:29 *in the proportion that any of the disciples had means (NIV each according to his ability) (2 Cor. 8:2-3)*

and receive with humble gratitude.

2 Corinthians 8:14 *at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need,*

Gal. 6:2 *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

This generosity is motivated by their understanding of God's generosity

2 Corinthians 9:15 *Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*

Matthew 10:8 *These twelve Jesus sent out ... "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give."*

and indicates God's grace at work in them.

Acts 4:33-35 *And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds ... and they would be distributed to each as any had need.*

2 Corinthians 8:1, 9:14 *Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia ... the surpassing grace of God in you.*

It is a visible evidence of their repentance

Luke 3:8, 10-11 *[Jesus said] "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance." ... And the crowds were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?" And he would answer and say to them, "The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do likewise."*

and faith,

James 2:14-17 *What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.*

Deut. 15:10 *You shall generously give to him ... because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you.*

Prov. 19:17 *One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.*

Prov. 22:9 *He who is generous will be blessed*

Matt. 6:4 *your Father who sees [your giving] done in secret will reward you.*

Acts 20:35 *remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

love for Jesus

2 Corinthians 8:9 *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 through His poverty might become rich.*

and dedication to Him,

2 Corinthians 8:3, 5 *they gave ... but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.*

and sincere love for their new family in Christ.

2 Cor. 8:8, 24 *proving ... the sincerity of your love ... the proof of your love.*

2 Cor. 8:4 *begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints*

This generosity fulfills their highest purpose by glorifying God.

Matt. 6:4 *your Father ... sees what is done in secret*

Hebrews 13:16 *And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

2 Corinthians 9:12-13 (NIV) *This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.*