

**BELIEVERS CHEERFULLY
FULFILL THEIR PLEDGES
TO GIVE**

2 CORINTHIANS 9

INTRODUCTION

- Paul communicates the next steps for the Corinthian church to give to the needy believers in Jerusalem.
- He also gives the Corinthians instructions regarding their attitude toward giving, based on the Old Testament and New Testament realities.
- Paul explores the source behind generous giving, as well as its individual and church-wide effects.

**BELIEVERS SHOULD ACT
UPON THEIR READINESS
TO GIVE**

2 CORINTHIANS 9:1-5

READINESS TO GIVE

- It is important to remember that when Paul sent the three brothers to collect the Corinthian offering for the needy believers in Jerusalem, his purpose was not persuasion, but rather assistance.
- At this point, the Corinthians had already declared that they were ready to give, Paul just wanted to help them get the job done.

READINESS TO GIVE

- Since the Corinthians were already prepared to give, Paul starts in verse 1 saying that it would be redundant and unnecessary to write to them about reasons to give.
- In fact, he had already been boasting to the Macedonians that the Corinthians had been ready to give for a year (Corinth is the capital of Achaia).

ACTUAL GIVING

- Being ready to give and actually giving are different.
- Paul expects them to act. If the Corinthians failed to give, two things would happen.
- First, Paul's boasting of them would be "empty." Paul ties generosity to authentic faith, and adversely, ties ungenerous behavior to inauthentic faith.
- The authenticity of the Corinthian's salvation is about to be revealed.

ACTUAL GIVING

- The second outcome would be humiliation.
- The impoverished Macedonians had heard of the great readiness to give in Corinth, which motivated them to give as well, though they had next to nothing.
- If these impoverished Macedonians came to collect the offering of the wealthy Corinthians, only to find them unprepared and stingy, they and Paul would be disgraced.

ACTUAL GIVING

- Paul desires to avoid both of these outcomes for the Corinthians' sake, so he sends ahead the brothers to collect the offering as soon as possible.
- He ends this section stating that he desires their gift to be given generously, willingly and freely, not one given obligatorily or grudgingly.
- To approach this gift grudgingly was to communicate a grudging attitude toward the church at Jerusalem.

APPLICATION

- There is a difference between talk about giving and actually giving. Let us not only talk about relieving needs, but actually do so.
- Further, believers must keep their promises. When we keep our word, we rightly reflect the God who keeps His. To do otherwise would tarnish the reputation of our God, of ourselves, and also those who vouch for us.

**GOD GENEROUSLY
SUPPLIES THE CHEERFUL
GIVER**

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

SOWING

- Paul continues in verse 6 with an easily understood parable for his hearers who are familiar with agrarian culture.
- Those who sow only a few seeds will get a pitiful harvest.
- But those who reach into their abundance and generously sow seeds far and wide in planting season will yield abundant fruit at harvest time.

SOWING

- Farmers always sow generously in anticipation of obtaining a great harvest, and this model has spiritual realities attached to it.
- When one freely scatters his blessings in this generous manner, he can anticipate spiritual blessings to sprout in his own life.
- For Paul, generosity brings blessing.

SOWING

- Verse 7 includes Paul's call for givers to be cheerful.
- This challenge is found in Deuteronomy 15:10–11, which tells those under the Old Covenant to give freely, without a grudging attitude.
- God's command of a cheerful attitude relates especially to the "sabbatical year of remission" in which Israel was instructed to forgive all debts every seven years.

SOWING

- The New Testament believer should display a cheerful giving mentality every day.
- Since we see our own sin-debt as graciously and freely paid by Jesus Christ, we can't help but graciously and freely give to others any chance we get.

BLESSINGS

- In verses 8–11, Instead of feeling the pressure to gather up funds in his own strength, Paul is convinced that God enables the giver to give with both spiritual and material blessings.
- Paul repeatedly cites God as the source of our giving within just three verses: “God is able to make all grace abound to you,” “He has distributed freely,” and “He who supplies seed to the sower ... will supply and multiply.”

BLESSINGS

- God supplies our ability to give. And since giving depends on God, and not the giver's situation, the Corinthians haven't any excuse not to give.
- Why does God do this? So the believer can be "generous in every way." God enriches people so they can enrich others, not so they can merely accumulate wealth or hoard blessings for themselves. As we are depleted by generous giving, we are also replenished to keep giving by divine grace.

BLESSINGS

- The Macedonians themselves proved this to be true, as they reached into their poverty and ended up giving an unbelievable abundance.
- Paul expects the same thing for the Corinthians, should they likewise choose to trust God to take care of them as they sacrificially give to Jerusalem.

THANKSGIVING

- Giving also benefits the church in three ways:
- Thanksgiving to God (verses 11–12).
- Once the collection is finally in the hands of the needy Jewish Christians, all of the invested churches will join together in a unified thankfulness to the Lord for inspiring the collective effort to help His struggling children in Jerusalem.

GLORY TO GOD

- Glory to God (verse 13).
- Through this contribution, the Jewish believers would finally see the Corinthian believers as legitimate partners in the Gospel and true brothers and sisters in Christ.
- The Jewish Christians would give great glory to God for uniting them with their Gentile brethren.

AFFECTION

- A bond of affection for the Corinthian church (14).
- This contribution would cause the Jewish believers to long for the Corinthians, pray for them intentionally, to marvel at God's grace greatly working in these Gentile believers
- Paul ends with his thankfulness (15).
- "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!"



THE BIBLE AND MONEY

Bible and Money

- Proverbs 13:22 - “A good man leaves an inheritance to his childrens' children.”
- God wants us to provide for our family and leave a legacy.



Bible and Money

- Proverbs 21:20 - “In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.”
- God wants us to save and thus provide for our future (save for a rainy day).



Bible and Money

- Proverbs 22:7 - “The rich rule over the poor,
And the borrower is servant to the lender.”
- God wants us to get out of debt and not be
enslaved by debt.



Bible and Money

- Matthew 6:24 - “You cannot serve both God and money.”
- God wants us to have the right priorities concerning money.





THE BIBLE AND GIVING

Old Testament Tithe

- The word tithe means “a tenth part.”
- Most people who say they tithe do not really tithe (that is, give ten percent).
- One study found that only 3 percent of households tithe their income to their church.

Old Testament Tithe

“A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.”

Leviticus 27:30

Old Testament Tithe

1. The tithe was applied to “everything from the land” and did not just apply to some income.
2. The tithe “belongs to the Lord” and not to the people.
3. The tithe is holy. It is set apart and should be given to the Lord.

Old Testament Tithe

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

Malachi 3:9-10

Three Tithes

1. For priests and Levites (Leviticus 27:30).
2. Provided funds for the Jewish festival (Deuteronomy 12:17-18).
3. Provided support for the widow, orphans, and poor (Deuteronomy 14:26-28).
4. Total amount approximately 23% each year.

First Fruits

- The tithe was to be given from the first fruits.
- Proverbs 3:9 - “Honor the Lord from your wealth, And from the first of all you produce.”
- The tithe was to be the first and the best of the crop not an afterthought.

New Testament Giving

- Nowhere in the New Testament is there an explicit command to tithe.
- Primary reason is that the tithe was for the Levites and the priests in the Temple.
- Christians don't need the temple and don't need priests as intercessors.

New Testament Giving

- New Testament believers are never commanded to tithe.
- They are instructed to pay their taxes (Romans 13:1-7). This is the only required giving in the church age.

New Testament Giving

- Christians are instructed to give to those who minister (1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 2:10).
- We are to give to those who trust God to supply their needs (Philippians 4:19).
- We are to give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7).

New Testament Giving

- Though the tithe was no longer required, it appears early believers used the tithe as a base line for giving.
- Majority of first century believers were Jewish, gave not only the tithe but above and beyond the requisite ten percent.

Gross Income or Net Income?

- Do you want God to bless your gross income or your net income?
- Old Testament tithe applied to everything.
- You can give one-tenth of your income back to the Lord or you can use it as a baseline.

Age and Giving

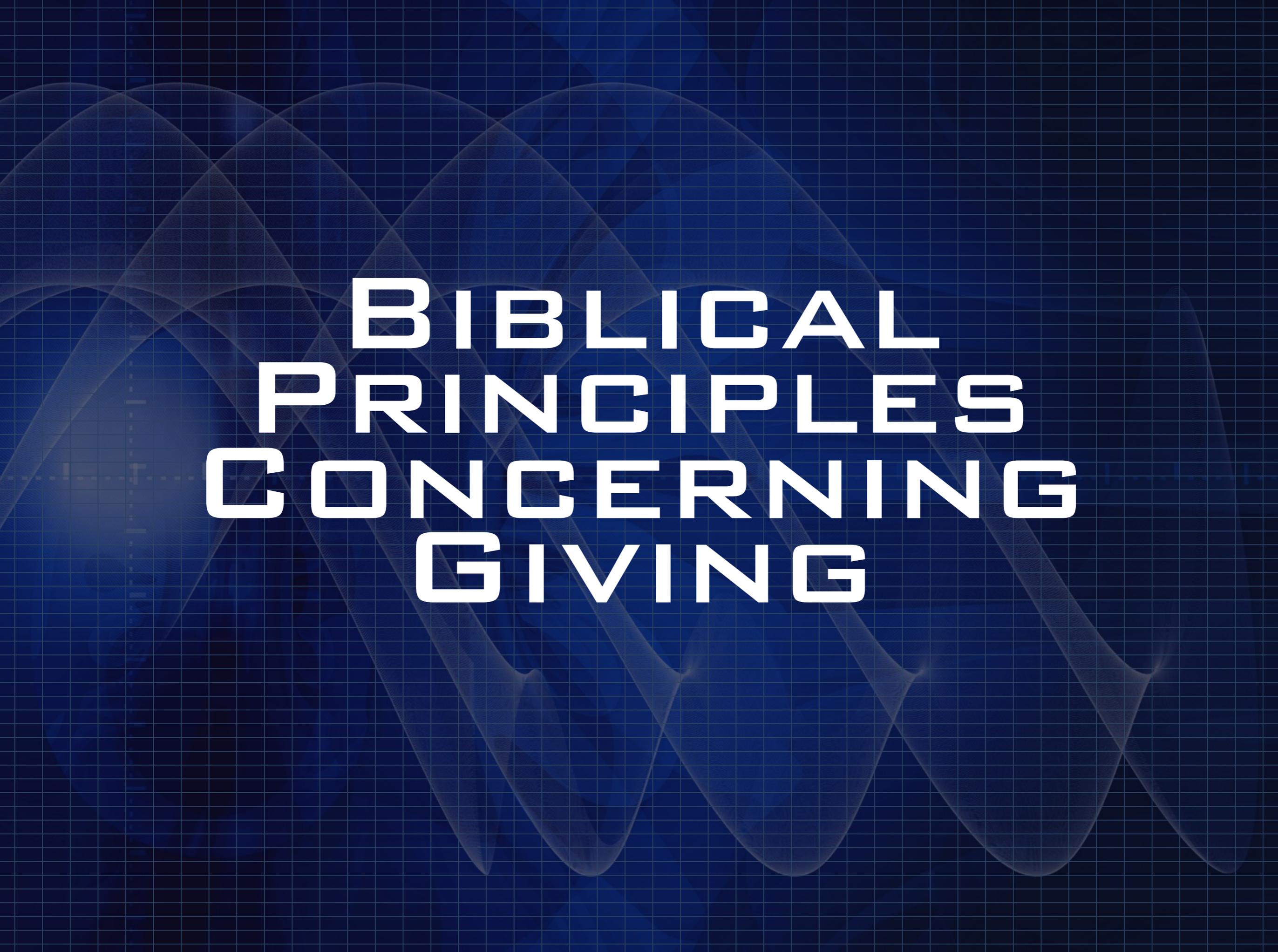
Younger you are, the less likely you are to give.

- Builder generation (highest percentage)
- Boomer generation (lower percentage)
- Buster generation (lowest percentage)

Income and Giving

The more you make, the less likely you are to tithe.

- Under \$20,000 - 8 percent
- \$20,000-\$40,000 - 5 percent
- Over \$75,000 - 1 percent



**BIBLICAL
PRINCIPLES
CONCERNING
GIVING**

First Principle: Sowing

- When you sow generously, you will reap generously.
- 2 Corinthians 9:6 - “Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”



Second Principle: Purpose

- We are to give according to what we have purposed in our hearts.
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 - “Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”



Third Principle: Voluntarily

- We are to give voluntarily.
- We are told in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that we are not to give under guilt or compulsion.
- A one-time special offering beyond the regular needs of the church in Corinth.



Fourth Principle: Generously

- 2 Corinthians 9:7 says that “God loves a cheerful giver.”
- God values not the size of the gift (Acts 11:29; 1 Corinthians 16:2) but the heart of the giver (not reluctantly or grudgingly) and the willingness of the giver (a cheerful giver).

