

***“FAITH
PROMISE GIVING”***

and

**GENERAL MESSAGES
ON MISSIONS**

©2001, 2002

**Dr. Edward Watke Jr.
3306 Woodhaven Ct.
Augusta, GA 30909**

**rithejw@earthlink.net
www.watke.org**

- Preface -

One of the greatest joys I have had in life is traveling in a foreign land in order to minister the Word of God. In the eighteen times that I have had the privilege of working with missionaries abroad my heart was always challenged and my life blessed.

I feel the greatest joy a pastor can have is to see his people become greatly burdened for missions both in giving and in the dedication of young lives in their willingness to go.

Are we burdened for what burdens the heart of God? Do we understand that our Heavenly Father's greatest desire is the evangelization of the world. What will we do to obey the Great Commission? Are we motivated by our love to Him and His command to us? Surely we ought to be.

With that in mind I share the following messages on "*Faith Promise Giving*," which is the very best method for a Church (and individual) to be involved in the support of the missionary effort. May God use these to excite your heart, to give direction, and to implement the effort of many churches.

-- Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

- Table of Contents -

The Example of Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 3
The Encouragement Toward Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 7
The Expediency of Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 10
The Execution of Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 14
Paul's Message to the Church At Corinth --	pg. 18
The Heart of Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 20
Our Attitude In Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 24
Exposition of II Corinthians, Chapter Nine --	pg. 27
What Is Faith Promise Missionary Giving? --	pg. 29
Exposition of II Corinthians, Chapter Eight --	pg. 31
Understanding Faith Promise Giving --	pg. 33
Practical Facts From II Corinthians, Chapter 8, 9 --	pg. 35

The Example of Faith Promise Giving

II Cor. 8:1-5

Introduction: *(The setting of the message.)*

Tithing is not found in II Corinthians chapters 8 and 9, but what we find there is Grace Giving better known as Faith Promise Giving.

In II Corinthians 8:1-5, the example of Faith Promise is given. One year prior to the writing of this Epistle the Church at Corinth promised Paul that they would give an offering for the Saints in Jerusalem. One year later they had not kept their promise. *“An herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.”* (II Cor. 8:10)

Paul challenges the Corinthians about their unfilled promise by giving them an example of the Macedonians. It is interesting to note that the Macedonians were challenged to give because they had heard what the Corinthians would do. *“For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many.”* (II Cor. 9:2) The Macedonians kept their promise.

God bestowed the grace of giving on the Macedonians. *“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia.”* (II Cor. 8:1) Their giving was an expression of the grace God bestowed. Grace will always have expression. It is not bestowed to be stowed away.

There are four things to notice about the Macedonian's example of Faith Promise, or Grace Giving. 1) the **preciousness** of their example, 2) the **pattern** of their example, 3) and the **purpose** of their example and 4) the **power** of their example.

I. THE PRECIOUSNESS OF THEIR EXAMPLE

The preciousness of the Macedonian's example is evidenced by their giving in spite of the twin problems of suffering and poverty. (8:2) Either of these two problems stop many Christians from giving. They knew the trials of affliction.

A. They were in great affliction. *“...received the word in much affliction.”*

1. The Macedonians (Philippi, Thessalonica) were very familiar with suffering.
2. They received Christ in spite of suffering. (I Thess. 1:6)
3. Their suffering is also recorded in I Thess. 2:14-15, 3:3-4, and II Thess. 1:5-6.
4. Often the greatest blessings and spiritual growth takes place during the times of great suffering. They gave in the midst of a *“great trial of affliction.”*
5. The affliction of these dear people did not affect their giving -- except that it might have made them even more liberal.
6. Many today stop giving for very trivial reasons. Minimum suffering or difficulty results in discouragement and defeat for many.

B. They experienced deep poverty.

1. Their deep poverty was extreme. Economically they were at the bottom of the scale but they still kept their commitment.

They were experiencing “*rock bottom destitution.*” You can picture a beggar who has literally nothing, their poverty was similar.

2. It would be easy for people with their plight to become obsessed with problems and not give any thought to others.
3. Their faithfulness in spite of poverty is precisely what made their example so precious. Their heart was toward God and others.
4. What do we do in times of economic distress? What is the first thing we cut from the budget when there is not enough money for everything?
 - a. The first thing removed from the budget is the thing of least importance, or the thing for which there is little love or interest.
 - b. The person that stops tithing or giving to missions during economic distress proves that God means less than everything else in the budget.
 - c. Their giving record reveals their spiritual relationship with Christ.
5. Grace giving makes all the difference.

II. THE PATTERN OF THEIR EXAMPLE

The pattern of the Macedonians’ giving was two-fold: “*For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves.*” (II Cor. 8:3)

Think about the word power or the word ability. Every time a Faith Promise commitment is taken, there are three ways that people give... they give **below** their ability, **according** to their ability, to **beyond** their ability.

A. The Macedonians sacrificed:

1. Giving to their power indicates that, though their means were limited, they sacrificed according to their ability.
2. Their burden for others led them to share with others.
3. Faith is not required to give from available resources! All that is needed is to reach for the billfold, write the check or withdraw money from the bank.
4. Most... what a sad commentary, but it is true... most American Christians give **far below their power** or their ability to give.
 - a. Listen to these figures: Some give an equivalent to a cup of coffee a week, others possibly spend much more for dog or cat food or for their cokes.
 - b. What does the average church do? What does your church do? How many members do you have? What is the total for missions in a year? How much is given per person for week? You can figure that, and what would you find?
5. There are those who give **according to their power**. Paul said, “*for to their power.*” In order words, they gave according to their ability.

This means I look at my budget and my income and I come to the conclusion that I can give X number of dollars a week for missions above my regular tithe and offerings. I am able to do this my own self. This is giving according to my power or ability to give. Many Christians stop here.

6. However in verse 3, Paul says that **they gave beyond their power**. How do we **give beyond our power**?

- a. We do this by faith. We preach faith.. but do we live faith? We have our definitions of faith, we talk much about faith, but do we walk by faith?
 - b. The thing that most of us do, **is -- we do not practice faith.** (Heb. 11:6)
 - c. Many stop short of sacrificing. They give until they feel the pinch, or have to give up something.
 - d. There is no sacrifice involved if the giver does not give up something they might otherwise need or possibly desire.
 - e. I have known those who lived in older homes and drove older cars all their lives so they could give. They were thrilled that thus they could give.
7. Some Christians have difficulty understanding “*faith giving or faith promise.*” To these Christians I suggest that they cease trying to understand faith giving and begin by sacrificing. Commit to an amount and give it each week. Let God take care of the results. Give and watch God make giving possible for YOU.

B. The Macedonians gave by faith: (For they opened their hearts and hands.)

1. They gave to the extent of their ability, but *this did not alleviate* their burden.
2. After sacrificing, they still wanted to do more. *They prayed for God to enable them to give **beyond** their ability or **beyond** their human limitations.*
3. God answered their prayer and they gave beyond their power. Anything beyond one’s power cannot be done without assistance from some other source. *You can carry a chair alone, but you can’t carry a piano alone. So faith giving necessitates God’s hand and power in our lives.* (I Chron. 29:10-14)
4. A Christian who will not sacrifice will never give by faith. The easiest way to give is to give by faith.. because it costs the giver nothing! *Degrees in faith are awarded at Sacrificial University.* God will answer and provide through one who gives by faith. *Grace frees us from our sins and from our selfishness.*

Consider the widow who cared for Elijah. (I Kings 17) (Look at Luke 6:38.)

III. THE PURPOSE OF THEIR EXAMPLE

It is obvious that the offering in the text is **benevolent**. “*Praying us with much entreaty that we should receive the gift, and take upon us the **fellowship** of the ministering to the saint.*” (II Cor. 8:4) They beg their offering be accepted!

A. The major focus in their giving was for missions.

1. It becomes clear that their giving was to another ministry... just as “*faith promise*” is toward another ministry or church that is going to be planted or has recently been planted, or for a missionary who is sent.
2. They were in deep poverty, and if they were to give it had to be sacrificially or by faith. The first church that Paul had established in Macedonia was at Philippi. (Acts 16) “*But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last your care of me hath flourished again: wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.*” (Phil. 4:10)
 - a. Paul wrote from prison thanking them for the offering they had sent by the hand of Epaphroditus.
 - b. Paul was an apostle, but he was also a missionary... it was a **missionary** gift.

- c. Paul traveled from country to country, town to town, street to street, and house to house. He won people to Christ, disciplined believers, trained preachers, and established churches. This is the work of a missionary and their gift was to missions.
- d. When a church sends an offering to a missionary -- it is a missionary offering. Where did the church at Philippi get the offering? They would have to sacrifice to give by faith. (Phil. 4:10-19) All of this proves that the offering sent to Paul was a missions offering.

B. Consider what these early churches were like.

- 1. Note what Paul wrote about them... in I Thess. 1:6 *“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.”*
 - a. Although they were in great affliction and deep poverty, they had impacted the entire country of Greece with their example. (vs. 7)
 - b. This is extraordinary! It gets better in the next verse. *“For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything.”* (vs. 8)
 - c. A handful of people... an infant congregation with no printing press, no bus ministry, no telephone, no radio or television -- yet they had evangelized their entire area. Praise the Lord! And what about us?
- 2. The offerings they had given were for **others**... It was not used for local projects. Some churches are known to use these Scriptures to raise money for pet local projects, stewardship building projects, etc. But to use money for local use is wrong when it is given for missions or evangelism elsewhere.

IV. THE POWER OF THEIR EXAMPLE:

A. What motivated them to give as they did? (vs. 5)

- 1. What drove them to give? What kindled the fire in their soul for others? Whatever it was, I would like to see every Christian in every Bible believing church get it. If we gave ourselves then giving our substance would be easy.
- 2. Some will say that it was the bestowal of grace recorded in verse 1. Why did God bestow such grace? It was the grace of giving that was behind their sacrificial giving, but there is also the human element.

B. They first gave themselves? (vs. 5) Here is the answer. The issue is not money! Some act as though they think God is bankrupt. Ridiculous! God owns all the wealth of the world, most of which has never been discovered.

- 1. There are many who would attempt to bribe God with their money instead of giving self. It does not impress God when uncommitted believer give large sums. (What is the message of II Corinthians 5:14-15?)
- 2. There is no blessing or reward for those who give money, but not their own life in yieldedness. (Rom. 14:9)
- 3. After giving themselves, then the Macedonians sacrificed and gave by faith.
- 4. Consider Barnabas! (Acts chapter 4) Or consider the widow of Zarephath. The issue is much more than money!

The Encouragement Toward Faith Promise Giving

II Cor. 8:6-9

I. THEY WERE ENCOURAGED TO DO AS ... PROMISED : 8:6

Now do what you planned to do.

*“Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.” **Their Giving Was Neglected!***

A. Titus was to put forth effort to see the grace of giving fulfilled in the Corinthians.

1. According to verse 10 they had promised a full year earlier that they would make their gift ready... but they did not. Maybe it was because of problems in the church such as: their party spirit, bickering, strife and divisions, or the moral problems, or taking one another to court or a host of other things.
2. Maybe it was just neglect, indifference, or an attitude of ... *just let someone else do it.*

B. Paul had challenged the Corinthians by giving them the wonderful example of the Macedonian churches, and how they had responded to their appeal. (8:1-5)

1. It is interesting to note that the Macedonians had responded because of the expected example of the Corinthians, about whom Paul had written earlier.

“For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, for Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.” (II Cor. 9:2)

2. There was a need, not only to begin a good work for God, but to see it through to the end.

II. THEY WERE ENCOURAGED TO ABOUND IN THIS GRACE ALSO: 8:7

Now abound in this grace also.

*“Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and in utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye **abound** in this grace also.”*

A. They had abounded in many things, many gifts given of God. (Many who have spiritual gifts of singing, teaching, etc., allow those gifts to substitute for their giving.)

1. So, Paul admonished them to **excel in the grace** of giving.
2. The church that experiences the blessings and the Grace of God should be like a **river flowing, an overflow---** an abundance of young people going, and people giving to support these who go. (Rom. 10:14-18)

B. **Without this the church becomes dead, stale, and stagnant..** so we must abound in this grace also.

C. **How wonderful God’s grace... we are saved by grace,** kept by grace, walk by grace, work or serve by grace and we will receive dying grace. BUT do we have giving grace? We are enriched by grace, not giving is a disgrace!!

III. THEY WERE ENCOURAGED TO PROVE THEIR LOVE 8:8

“It is time to prove your love...”

“I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.”

A. By their response they could prove their love:

1. Many believers do not know how love is expressed. It is usually seen as a feeling or an emotion. (John 14:21-23; John 15:9, 10)
2. Some describe love as goose bumps or chills down the spine, but love is neither a feeling nor an emotion, though feelings or emotions may be involved.

B. Love is commanded regardless of human emotions. the word “love” is a verb, and not a noun. It is something you do, not something you feel. (I Jh. 3:15-18)

Christ commands us to love our enemies. If love is a good feeling about one’s enemies, most would have difficulty loving them. It would be difficult to generate love feelings about a person trying to harm you. That is not what is commanded by Jesus. Feelings are not responsive to commands. Following the command that Jesus gave is an explanation of how to obey the command. (Matt. 5:44b) *“... bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you and persecute you.”* True love ministers to others in need.

1. Paul was **not commanding** them... nor putting them under law, but merely uses the illustration of other churches. He asked the Church at Corinth to **prove their love by participating in what God wanted done.**
2. The Bible says that **covetousness** is idolatry, and many times the very thing that comes between the Christian and God is money or things, things, things. *“Keep yourselves from idols.”* We should **prove our love by our liberality.** By our giving by faith. (Luke 12:15; Eph. 5:3, 5; I Tim. 6:10)
3. What was the problem of the **soil....** of the hearers... who allowed the *“cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, etc.”* to enter into their responses? It was the love of things entering in that choked the Word and they were unfruitful.

IV. THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY CHRIST’S EXAMPLE: 8:9

Now follow Christ’s example...

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

A. Here is one greatest illustrations of giving. Jesus became poor that we might become rich. What a **great act of love, what a great sacrifice.**

1. Jesus proved the sincerity of His love. *“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”* (II Cor. 8:9)
2. Christ, yes, and the Heavenly Father exhibit their grace and love:
(Consider: John 3:16; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:25; I John 4:9-10; Rom. 5:8)

B. Christ’s giving of Himself was sacrificial, spontaneous, and spiritual.

1. It was sacrificial: (Phil. 2:5-11)
 - a. He was **rich in power**, but humbly submitted to human weakness;

- b. Rich in **glory**, yet willingly laid aside the manifestation of His glory and was made in the likeness of men. He came as a servant. (Matt. 20:28)
- c. Rich in **wisdom**, yet mysteriously surrendered any independent use of His mind in order to be subject to His Father's will (judgment).
- d. He was rich in **resources**, yet had no home of His own, no grave for His death, and performed no miracles for His own ends or needs.

2. It was spontaneous: (John 10; Heb. 10; I Tim 1:15; I Tim. 2:5-6)

- a. He freely laid down His life.. became poor.. took the initiative in coming to earth to be a **ransom** for you and me.
- b. God's gift -- the Son on the cross provides positive proof that He loves us.
- c. Our voluntary giving... proves that we love Him. We can live without loving, but we can't love without giving.
- d. Some might say that there ought to be an easier way to prove that we love Him. **Did He seek an easy way?** (He was rejected, hated, endured lies, beatings, mocking, thorns, scourging, and Calvary itself. Could He have found an easier way?)

3. It was spiritual: (II Cor. 9:8; Rom. 6:23; John 3)

- a. It was ... *"that through his poverty we might be rich."*
- b. He desires to give us all things that are His -- (Rom. 8:32; Rom. 8:15-17)

Everything we do is to be measured by the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ made the resources of heaven available to us by faith and when we receive Christ, we are rich, we are a child of the King... and by faith we are to serve.

- c. God would lay upon our hearts what we are to do and especially of how He wants to supply through His resources. We have **access** to the resources and the riches of the grace of God. (II Cor. 9:8)

SUCH GIVING WILL BE A BLESSING TO MANY

A. It is a Blessing to the Church.

- 1. The church collectively can **increase** giving.
- 2. The church can make **firm commitments** to support others.
- 3. It is a Biblical and **business-like** approach to reaching the world for Christ.
- 4. It **increases** the missionary vision and prayer support to send our best for Christ.
- 5. It is a local **church-centered** plan!

B. It makes possible the fulfillment of the Divine Plan!

- 1. What does God desire? World Evangelization is what God wills. (Mark 16:15)
How can it come to fruition?
- 2. How can we reach the World? (Rom. 10:14-18)
- 3. What did Christ state? (Luke 24:44-48)
- 4. It is exemplified in the early church -- Acts 2/ Acts 4/ Acts 13
- 5. It make possible an ongoing evangelization as God prospers -- (Luke 6:38)

Note: *The principle is that if we desire to give, God will enable us to give **more**.*

The Expediency of Faith Promise!

II Cor. 8:10-11

Introduction:

“And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.” (II Cor. 8:10)

We have noted in the first message the Example of the Macedonians’ giving... we saw its preciousness, the pattern, the purpose and its power. Then in the second message we were encouraged: to do, to love, to abound and to follow Christ’s example.

Now Paul had two admonitions...

1. First, faith promise must be done with an attitude of willingness. The offering is not commanded. It must be done voluntarily.
2. Second, it must be done as an action of worship for the one who is involved in faith promise does it out of love... and it proves the sincerity of His love for Christ and for others.
3. If love for Christ is absent in the giving, any spiritual benefit to the giver is invalidated.

After exhorting the Corinthians.. *“see that ye abound in this grace also (vs. 7) Paul offers them advice... “And herein I give my advice; for this is expedient for you... (vs. 10)*

1. Paul strongly advises them to *“take part.”*
2. He states that they will be the ones to benefit from the giving.
3. Do we think the missionary benefits the most from our giving? Or the mission board? God is telling us that it is for our benefit. *“Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may **abound** to your account.” (Phil. 4:17)*

There are two ways that Faith Promise giving is expedient...

1. It is expedient for the Church
2. and it is expedient for the Christian.

I. IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR THE CHURCH

When a local church becomes passionate about world evangelism, and gives to that end, the church will benefit in many ways.

A. Faith Promise for missions provides the Church with a way to DO what it is commanded to do.

1. The church, to whom the Great Commission was given, is commanded to evangelize the world. (Lk 24:44-49; Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8)
2. If we finance the Church mission program entirely from the regular offerings it will very difficult for the missions giving to grow.
 - some churches that give 10% of their budget.
 - Some churches give only when the missionary comes.
 - What a contrast when missions is on the platform and it becomes consuming. A church should be driven by: command and commission.
3. More than 50% of the monies used for missions today comes through faith promise giving. Great things could take place if every church used the faith promise method of raising funds.
4. Can we reach the world in our generation? Are we suppose to? Is this what

the command means? Where would we get the personnel? Why should God give the people to go when churches don't demonstrate their willingness to send them? ***Faith Promise provides the way... are we willing?***

B. Faith Promise giving will develop an unselfish people.

Basically, we have a problem of covetousness -- (Luke 12:15;

1. Jesus said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35b)
2. Churches that are excited about missions, about giving, about evangelizing the world are different. They are exciting and delightfully different.
3. Such people manifest a generous spirit... giving gifts, needed items for missionaries... clothes, tools, equipment, computers, tires, auto repairs, even vehicles.. are giving unselfishly in a joyful manner. Illustration; Nebraska farmer... a story of sacrificial giving. There are churches that do the unusual.
4. **God bestows grace upon such churches...** and such people become compassionate, burdened, willing, and joyful in giving.

C. Faith Promise giving will help motivate and purify the church:

1. Consider the command given to the church at Jerusalem -- Acts 1:8
2. Consider where they were two years later: They were still parked in the city limits of Jerusalem. Probably their prejudice, carelessness, apathy, and indifference had stopped them.
3. Murmuring developed in the church. They had many inner problems as they had their eyes on one another and not on fulfilling the great commission.
4. God intervened by sending persecution to the church in order to uproot them from Jerusalem. *"And at that time there was a great persecution against the church that was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."* (Acts 8:1b)
 - a. The apostles did not leave, but maybe God wanted them to?
 - b. At least many did depart... and they began to obey the Great Commission; *"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching (proclaiming) the word."* (Acts 8:4)
 - c. Philip went to Samaria and discovered the fields were *white unto harvest*. Others went to Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch and now the Gentiles were joyfully hearing the Word.
5. It seems to be that the Jerusalem church was the source of the problem of the Judaizers. (Mixing law and grace). Acts 15: 4,5
 - a. Here we learn that the heresy of mixing law and grace had its roots in the Jerusalem church,
 - b. Maybe they were a stagnant pool... open to impurities because they were neglecting the purpose of their existence and were not driven *"by their love and commission"* to reach their world.
 - c. When churches are ingrown (living for self) 95% of what they do they do for ourselves in money expenditures, etc. Then it is easy for the church to be effected by their selfishness, murmuring, doctrinal perversion, indifference and by hypocrites within their number.

D. Faith Promise Giving will bring blessing to the church... and its needs will be supplied. (Phil. 4:19) Message to the church -- read Phil. 4:14-17.)

1. When Paul left the church they were the only ones who supported him.
2. They had a burden for missions and consistently supported Paul when he continued his ministry at Thessalonica. (Phil. 4:16; 4:13-19, 20)
3. *He desired them to have fruit.. that abounded to their account.* Remember they were the people that gave in the midst of great affliction and deep poverty. ***Their gift was sacred in Paul's mind.***
4. Paul describes their offerings for missions *"But I have all, and abound: I am full having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."* (Phil. 4:17-18)
 - a. Would God describe an offering in such terms -- if it were given from uncommitted lives... unwillingly, without love, grudging and without joy? NEVER!
 - b. But when an offering is given for missions from a committed life, willingly, out of an expression of love for Christ, without grudging and joyfully... God says that offering smells good.
5. Now consider the promise. (Phil. 4:19)
 - a. This promise was given to a local church for a good reason.
 - b. God made this promise to the church at Philippi. Will God do the same or any obedient church today? I would say yes!
 - c. As they gave in the midst of suffering, poverty; as they gave sacrificially, and by faith without concern for their needs -- God said, I will provide for them. It was as if God said, *"If you have a need.. bring the bill to me!"* God does great things for churches when missions is put where it ought to be!

II. FAITH PROMISE IS EXPEDIENT FOR THE GIVER

A. God promises blessing to the individual giver.. who gives sacrificially, and by faith. (vs. 8; I Cor. 4:2; II Cor. 9:6-8)

1. God has many ways to bless.
2. God is concerned about our motive.
3. God blesses when we have truly first given ourselves to Him. (8:5)
4. God blesses when we are willing to be in His will. Consider how God blessed Elijah as he obeyed the Lord at the brook and at the widow's home.

B. God's principles always work -- (Gal. 6:7-9; II Cor. 9:6-8; Luke 16)

1. We are not only commanded to sow -- but we will reap as we sow.
2. What about the high cost of farming the farmer asks? What is the answer? He had better sow if he is to also reap. Of course sowing costs money.
3. Prov. 11:24-25 -- Those who do not giving cannot receive a harvest of God's blessings. (Consider Luke 6:38) What is this teaching?

- a. Giving comes first... then comes blessing.
- b. We often expect, or want the blessing (even the money on hand) before we give. When God lays upon the heart **what** we are to give, it should be given without waiting to see how God will meet our needs.
- c. How does God provide the faith promise monies? In many wonderful and even miraculous ways.

“God can meet your faith promise one of three ways: He can increase your income, He can decrease your expenses, or He can give you the grace to give it anyway.”

B. Faith Promise assures riches in Heaven. (Matt. 6:19-20)

1. How will you lay up treasures in heaven? What method can you use to be sure you won't go to heaven in poverty?
2. We may not expect to be rich on earth, but through giving to the Lord (for His will and purpose) we can be rich in heaven.
3. The only possessions which can be kept are those things given to God.
4. We will be separated from houses, lands, furniture, fine clothing, stocks, bonds, etc. The church offering envelope becomes a deposit slip for the *bank of heaven*.
5. Faith Promise offerings for missions are deposited in a heavenly account.
6. God has promised to reward... Christ spoke of rewards... we can have something to lay at Jesus feet.

C. Faith Promise will produce in us... a growth in faith:

Consider Joshua marches around the walls of Jericho with the Nation of Israel. God told him on the seventh day the walls would fall down flat. As he walked around the city he fully expected God's promise to come to pass.

However, did Joshua always have that much faith? Faith grew when he saw what God did in Egypt... the ten plagues, the miracles, the power of God at the Red Sea... the waters rolled back, in all of this his faith grew. He, along with others, ate the manna, and his faith grew as he saw God care for all their needs. He witnessed the Jordan river cease her flowing and they walked over on dry ground. and his faith grew. When he came to Jericho he had a well developed faith, yes, a bold confidence in God's faithfulness. God keeps His Word.

Elijah and Elisha could tell a similar story.

1. Faith comes from doing. (Heb 11:6; 11:1)
2. In the process of trusting God we exercise our faith for we see God at work and we trust Him more.
3. What do you think God desires to do through you? Or IN you?

The Execution of Faith Promise!

II Cor. 8:11-12

Introduction:

“Now therefore perform the doing of it: that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.” (II Cor. 8:11)

In review:

1. Remember we began with the understanding that the Corinthians had failed to keep the promise they had made to give a special offering to the needs of those in Jerusalem.

Paul had given them the example of the Macedonians, who had also made a promise to give and by grace has expressed their promise.

2. Titus was sent by Paul to Corinth with the view of finishing that same grace in the Corinthians. In order to do that they must first give themselves. (vs 5)

3. Remember -- love is giving... they were to give willingly... they were to do so because of Christ's example... vs. 9

4. It is expedient for the Church and for the individual.

The Corinthians had been sufficiently instructed and challenged -- it was time to act, it was time to fulfill the promise of it. 8:11a

Three thoughts will be considered: 1) Remember the Promise, 2) Receive His Provision, and 3) Realize the Potential.

I. REMEMBER THE PROMISE THAT WAS MADE

Those who make a faith promise can expect to be tested. He will have a visitor who will participate for Satan will mock, ridicule, tell you how foolish you are to make such a promises. He will tell you that all you are doing is out of some emotional appeal... that you are duped. Remember you made a promise to GOD! Satan will do all he can to harass you and defeat you. (I Pet. 5:8-9; Lk 22:31-32)

Time will test us, God will test us, resolve will be tested, difficulties will test us, even losses will test us. But in the tests, God will abide faithful.

A. Remember the manner in which the promise was made, and to whom:

1. It was not out of coercion; nor was not out of pressure from Paul.
2. It was God's leading. It was the Holy Spirit's moving. In our lives the Scriptures do the convincing, and the directing.
3. It was **to be an act** out of dedication, out of a surrendered heart.
4. Their zeal had provoked many others to give. (II Cor. 9:2b) Paul communicated the testimony of their zeal to others for the Corinthians were excited about the promise they had made.
5. Some do get excited, but do not follow through. It is easy to have a superficial faith and a poor spiritual commitment.

B. Remember that failure threatens the testimony.

1. What would their testimony be when they had failed to follow through?

2. They had impact on many others and then failed to do what they had promised. (II Cor. 9:3-4) Consider what Paul is saying here.
3. If we fail to honor sacred promises made to the Lord our testimony will be threatened.
4. The husband who leads his family to do God's will needs to keep his testimony by consistently fulfilling what was promised.

C. Remember God's Word about vows we make to Him.

(Eccl. 5:2-5; Deut 23:21-23)

1. It is serious to vow -- and not fulfill it.
2. A vow is not made to man -- but to God. God does not take it lightly.
3. We can trust God to do His part.

II. RECEIVE GOD'S PROVISION.. TRUST HIM!

(Phil. 4:19; II Cor. 9:8)

A Christian's economic status is never a legitimate reason for not being involved in Faith Promise. If so the Macedonians could not have given as they did. Many hundreds of poor, but faithful Christians have found God faithful to meet every need. Our NEEDS... not necessarily our wants.. maybe that is the problem.

The Christian with a desire to give will be granted the ability to give.

A. God will bestow sufficient grace... to fulfill our giving.

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit (know) of the grace of God..." (II Cor. 8:1)

1. The grace of God bestowed on the Macedonians was available for the Corinthians.. as it is available for us. *"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."* (II Cor. 9:8) What a wonderful promise this is!
2. The Lord is ready to give grace to all who will commit to Him.
3. First give yourself, then trust Him. (8:5)

B. God manifests His grace through His own.

1. Since the grace of giving is a gift from God, we should expect that He will exercise it through the recipient. Consider II Cor. 9:11-13.
2. As the Lord provides *seed for the sower* God also provides the **means** for the saint of God to make a sacrificial gift or faith promise.
3. God sent Elijah to Zarephath to be cared for by a widow whose only resource was a handful of meal and a small cruse of oil. We must not forget that the meal and oil had been supplied by the Lord.
4. When the Macedonians gave *to their power* (sacrificially) they gave what they had.
5. Though they were in deep poverty.. they even gave **beyond** their power. The little they had came from God. He gave them seed to sow. (I Chron. 29:14b)

C. Through giving the needs of the giver is supplied. (Phil. 4:19; Luke 6:38)

Do we truly believe this? Do we actually, truly believe what God has said?

1. Some do not give because they are fearful that their personal needs will not be met.
2. Some churches do not enter into the method of *Faith Promise Giving* because they are fearful their church's needs will go unmet.
3. God makes many promises to the sower... look at II Cor. 9:10. "*Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread from your food.*"
 - a. Those who faithfully give are assured food for their table.
 - b. Luke 6:38 If we are generous with Him, He will be generous with us.
 - c. "*There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*" (Prov. 11:24-25) Consider what God is saying here.

The Widow in I Kings 17 sowed her handful of meal and received food for herself and son. They would have starved if she had not sown the seed in the barrel. This is a good illustration of God's desire to meet our needs when we are willing to serve Him.

4. The Christian that allows the Lord to exercise the grace of giving through him will receive an enlarged opportunity to be used. Though Faith Promise giving we are involved in reaching souls around the world. Every missionary receiving support is an extension of our own personal ministry.

III. REALIZE THE POTENTIAL

A. The Need is Great:

1. Over 6 billion people in the world.
2. We could evangelize our present generation... if God's people would give sacrificially and by faith. And we are accountable for our generation.
3. Paul was able to establish the church in Corinth because of the giving of the people of Macedonia.

B. We can give according to our measure... (II Cor. 10:13-16) **And we will be doing that which is according to our measure.**

1. The word "*measure*," is found five times in this passage.

It refers to the area of ministry giving to Paul.

- a. God had commanded him to evangelize the world, but God carved out a slice of it and called it Paul's measure.
- b. His measure extended from Antioch and included Corinth. "*but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.*"
- c. Paul could not boast in the ministries of Peter, Apollos, or others.
- d. He could only speak of how the Lord had used him in the measure he was given.

- e. Paul had faithfully ministered in his measure but was unable to go beyond it. *“For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ.”* (vs. 15)
2. Paul emphasized that he did not boast in the labors of others. *“Not boasting of things beyond our measure, that is, of other men’s labors.”*
3. Then Paul revealed his passionate hope for Corinth: *“...but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly. To preach the gospel **in the regions beyond you**, and not to boast in another man’s line of things made ready to our hand.”*
4. Paul had great hope ... his earnest prayer and desire was that the Corinthians will experience an increase in their faith so that they will help him onward on his missionary journey.

Their help could result in God giving him an enlarged measure.

Paul's Message To The Church At Corinth

II Cor. 8:6-12

I. GOD BLESSES WHEN WE ACT UPON HIS WILL:

A. They needed a readiness of will: (8:10,11,12; See I Chron. 28:9; 28:21; I Chron. 29:2-3, 5, 6-9, 10-14, 17))

“And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.” (vs. 10)

“Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.” (vs. 11)

1. As they had promised.. now they needed a **readiness of will** to perform the doing of it.
2. We need, out of zeal and enthusiasm to participate... to get the job done.
3. Blessing comes to our lives out of **doing** the will of God.
“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” (vs. 12)
4. It is **strange** that some Christians always seem to have the resources to give and are liberal in the matter of offerings to God. And others don't seem to be able... why?
5. Here Paul that if you have a **willing mind** -- then God will provide that which is needed to be able to give.

B. We are rich, we have the resources of God, so there must be obedience and faith in God for this. God will do His will through His own people. (vs. 14-15)

1. God provides through His own people so the needs are mutually met for all.
2. You note here God's plan for mission-giving in these verses and it become a ministry of all churches for the evangelization of the world.
3. A church will be limited by human reasoning. Trusting God for His blessing is to believe God for what He calls us to do.

Giving by faith -- a faith promise offering is God's will and plan

C. God will bless when we Set a Goal for Giving. II Cor. 9:6-7

1. We must set goals or we won't accomplish much. Haphazard giving is never dependable. We must learn to give!
2. This plan allows us to set a **definite** amount in **giving**, trusting God *we will get it done.*
3. It gives us something definite to contribute to world evangelism.

II. GIVING WILL BE A BLESSING TO MANY

A. It is a Blessing to the Church.

1. The church collectively can **increase** giving.

2. The church can make **firm commitments** to support others.
3. It is a Biblical and **business-like** approach to reaching the world for Christ.
4. It **increases** the missionary vision and prayer support to send our best for Christ.
5. It is a local **church-centered** plan!

B. It makes possible the fulfillment of the Divine Plan!

1. What does God desire? World Evangelization is what God wills. (Mark 16:15)
How can it come to fruition?
2. How can we reach the World? (Rom. 10:14-18)
3. What did Christ state? (Luke 24:44-48)
4. It is exemplified in the early church -- Study ... Acts 2, Acts 4, Acts 13
5. It makes possible an ongoing evangelization as God prospers. (Luke 6:38)

Note: *The principle is that if we desire to give, God will enable us to give **more**.*

III. IT MAKES PROVISION FOR THE NEED:

verses 7-8a

A. There is No Other Source of Supply. (vs. 7)

1. There is the need of all kinds of things to build a church in a foreign land where the people have nothing to offer.
2. It is only from the ranks of God's people in the local church that missionary personnel, provision, equipment etc., will be available.

B. This is Our Moral Obligation. (vs. 8a) (see Romans 1:14-16)

1. Paul said... "*Woe is me...*"
2. The early church knew what it meant to give all to God, lay it all before Him, allowing the Lord to use...to take what they had.
3. It reminds us of Exodus and the compromises given by Pharaoh...
"*you can go, but leave your herds here...*" Mose's answer -- We know not what our God may require of us. The herds must be with us in order to serve God.

1. Faith giving goes beyond our ability -- vs. 1-3

2. Faith giving proves our love -- vs. 4-8

3. Faith giving involves a promise -- vs. 10-15

4. Faith giving provides church involvement -- vs. 16-24

The Heart of Faith Promise Giving

Text: II Corinthians 9:6-8

The Challenge:

A church in south Georgia with 25 people in Sunday School makes a faith promise commitment of \$27,000.00, and at the end of the year had given more than \$30,000.00. A church in northern Virginia with an attendance of 57 had a Faith Promise commitment of \$53,000.00 and gave in excess of that during the year for worldwide evangelism. A church in Manila where the average income is less than a \$100.00 a month gives literally hundreds of pesos every week for missions. A Church in Japan has a large missionary budget.

A widow who is living on a meager Social Security pension gives regularly through her church for worldwide evangelization. In order to get money for her faith promise gift she sits with elderly people. She is 75 years old, but is in good health and her desire to give has directed her to this ministry.

The stories of commitment and blessing are many and we could fill a book about the exploits of God's people who give by faith, who give sacrificially.

I. PRINCIPLES OF FAITH PROMISE GIVING:

"But I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (II Cor. 9:6)

A. Giving and receiving is like sowing and reaping.

1. The Apostle Paul is not teaching the Corinthians about farming, or about a garden. He is simply laying down a principle.
2. In Chapters 8 and 9, Paul had given extensive teaching about giving... grace giving or faith giving.
3. Now he says to them that just as those who sow will reap, so those who give can expect to receive. Note that. (Luke 6:38)
4. He elaborates saying, **if** we sow sparingly then we should expect to reap sparingly. But if we sow bountifully.. we shall reap accordingly.

B. There are four simple principles seen here. We need to examine how this principles apply:

Principle # one: (Matt. 6:19-21) ***We reap what we sow.*** If we sow beans we will reap beans. if we sow corn, we will reap corn. We can expect to reap just as we sow.

1. If we sow that which is materialistic, that which is temporal, then we should expect to reap that which is only materialistic and temporal.
2. Most Christians are sowing for time and not for eternity. Most of our time, and most of our talent is used for temporal and materialistic things.
3. Most of our money is used for things that will last for only a short time. Food lasts a very short time, clothing possible a decade or so, furniture might last up to twenty years, but all in all the things we consider so important last but a short time.

4. Anything, yes, everything we have on this earth will one day be worthless. Only that which is given to God is eternal. Only two things are going to last into eternity -- that is the Word of God and people.
5. We will reap what we sow at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (Gal. 6:7, Rev. 22:12; Rom. 14:12; II Cor. 5:10; I Jh. 2:15-17)
 - a. If we are planning to reap eternal, spiritual rewards, then we must use our time, our talent and our money for eternal, spiritual things.
 - b. Time is for sowing, eternity will be for reaping. What will you reap?
 - c. Consider Matthew 6:19-21. We need to understand that what we sow here on this earth will be of no value, unless it is sown in heaven. Anything we have on this earth will be worthless in time to come.
 - d. If we are planning to reap eternal, spiritual rewards, then we must use our time, talent, temple and treasure for eternal spiritual things while we are living on this earth.. ***this is the time for sowing. Eternity will be for reaping.***

Principle # two: *We reap more than we sow.* *We do not plant one grain of corn expecting to reap one grain of corn. We do not sow one bean and expect to reap one bean. When we sow the seed in the spring we expect to reap much more in the fall than we had sown in the spring.*

1. The teaching of the entire Word of God is that we receive much more than we give. (Acts 17: Luke 6:38)
2. As we give to faith promise commitment we will reap, and reaping will be abundant. We will see great numbers in heaven that our giving made possible their salvation.
3. Stories abound about what God is doing in the countries of the world. I could share with you many stories of great harvests taking place in many parts of the world. God is drawing people unto Himself.
4. Many ministries are constantly seeing people come to Christ. We gave and we sowed. Now we are receiving and reaping.
5. We will see reaping in heaven far beyond what we have sown. Investing in world evangelism is the very best way of reaping more than you have sown.

Principle # three: *We reap in proportion as to how we sow.* *If one plants one row of corn and another man has a farm and plants twenty acres of corn we do not have to wonder which one of the men will reap more corn in the fall. The one who sows the most will reap the most. Thus, we reap in proportion as we sow.*

1. We hear singers sing the song... "I wish I had given Him more!" When we stand face to face before Jesus Christ we will wish we had given Him more.
2. We should not give in order to receive but it still is a fact that as we give to God will give us more than we receive.
4. Consider Proverbs 11:24-25.
5. In every aspect of the Christian's life... "There is God's part and our part. God will never do our part. God will do His part when we are in the process of doing our part. So God will honor our giving when we have done what He commands us to do.

Principle # four: We reap after we sow. *If we expect to reap anything in the fall, there must be some sowing in the spring.*

1. This is the hardest principle for us to accept. The first three are relatively easy for us to accept and understand.
2. Here God is saying that... we do not reap until we have sown. We receive **AFTER** we have given. We think we are to receive and then out of that we will give some. Too many people want to receive first, then they will give.
3. Such giving is based on what we already have, not on the basis of what we expect God to make possible for us to give.

Can you imagine: A farmer asks the church to pray... *“Please pray for me. Pray that God will give me a good crop. Pastor, if God ever gives me a good crop, I will begin to plant some seed.”* We could pray all we want, but he will have to plant before he can harvest.

What would you do if you inherited a large amount of money? You would do exactly what you do with the amounts you have now. If you are generous with the little bit you have, you will also be generous if you inherited a large amount. If you are stingy with the small amounts you would be stingy with the larger amount. (Consider: Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38; Prov. 3:9-10; I Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19)

4. We reap after we have sown. Multitudes are waiting until they can afford to give to God. The simple fact is we can't afford not to give to God. If we wait until we have in order to give we may never give. It is surely true that we won't give what we ought to give for we will never give by faith or sacrificially. Don't wait... give now!
 - a. Some are waiting until they get out of debt, they probably never will.
 - b. Some are waiting until they get a car paid for, or save for such.
 - c. Some are waiting until they have purchased a house.

II. PURPOSING OF THE GIVER IN FAITH PROMISE:

Let us look at the purposing of the giver in faith promise giving. (II Cor. 9:7)

A. The purpose is to fulfill the great commission.

1. Every born again person should desire that the unsaved who have not heard may hear. (Rom. 10:10-17)
2. When surrendered Bible believers are given an opportunity to give to missions, they will respond positively.
3. *“Every man,”* Paul was urging them to ALL be involved in giving in a cause outside their local church.

B. Paul expected every person to give. None are too poor to give for everybody can do something. It depends upon your willingness to trust God for what you don't have, not what you already do have or it is not a gift by faith.

1. *“Every man according... as he **purposeth** in his heart.”* It does not say every man according to how he can fit it in his budget. Our hearts must be moved for a lost and dying world. We must be tender toward the perishing millions.
2. The Holy Spirit will give us conviction, guidance, direction. He will lay upon our hearts what we ought to give. It is based on our love. (II Cor. 5:14)

3. You say, *"I don't believe in making promises!"* How did you get your home? Your car? Every time you bought anything on time you made a promise. That is how you keep your electricity on or your gas, etc.

III. THE PROVISION OF THE LORD IN OUR GIVING

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (II Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:19; I Thess 5:24)

A. God is able, God is sufficient.

1. God is not asking us to give to Him so He will be richer.
2. God is not asking us to give to Him because He is incapable of doing things for Himself. God is in reality, testing us with what we have before He commits more into our hand.
3. Psa. 24:1 *"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that are therein."*
 - a. God's promises are not dependent upon the prosperity of the company where you work or on your ability.
 - b. Many will say, *"I would love to be able to give to the work of the Lord."* The promise of God is -- if you will purpose in your heart to give -- God is able to give unto you so that you, having sufficiency, will be able to give to others.
 - c. Too many Christians feel they are about to exhaust God's supply.
 - d. My dear friend, never fear... we have not even begun to scratch the surface of God's unlimited resources.

B. God will bless and honor our obedience, faith and expectation of His blessings.

"Some one has said.. tithing is a debt I owe. Giving is a seed I sow. "

1. Everybody that gives to missions has some kind of program of giving.
 - a. It may be haphazard,
 - b. it may be -- come and get it, if you are to have it. Some churches never give anything to missions unless the missionary comes by and presents his need, then they give a one time gift.
 - c. It may be -- a budget item in the local church to give a certain amount.
 - d. Some churches give emotionally like individuals do.
 - e. Some, yes, probably **all** could do better.
2. Churches that use the faith promise method are the ones that see God at work in their lives... blessing the church, giving vision, supplying their needs. (Phil. 4:19)
3. **We will be tested.** Time will test us. God will allow you to be tested. Difficulties will test you as well as losses and trials. Satan will be there to ridicule, to laugh at you and to tell you that you are foolish and duped to give as you do. He will harass and uses his wiles and snares to defeat you. God will bless, direct and give you overcoming grace as you do His will.

Our Attitude In Faith Promise Giving!

“Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” (I Cor. 8:7)

I. THEIR GIVING WAS NEGLECTED

A. One year prior to the writing of the letter to the Corinthians, the church had promised Paul that they would participate in the offering being received for the saints in Jerusalem. *“And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.”* (II Cor. 8:10)

1. After the passing of a full year these saints had not kept their promise.
2. How quickly they had forgotten. Their emotions had been stirred, but they had no real lasting commitment.

B. Paul challenges these Corinthians by giving them the wonderful example of the Macedonian churches, and how they had responded to their appeal.

1. It is interesting to note that the Macedonians had responded because of the expected example of the Corinthians, about whom Paul had written.

“For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, for Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.”

2. The example of the Macedonians is shared in II Cor. 8:1-5.

II. THEIR GIVING WAS BY GRACE

A. God bestowed grace on the Macedonians.

“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia.”

1. Grace is bestowed... not to be stowed (for our own ends) but to have expression in ministry.
2. Remember: (8:1-5)
 - a. They have in spite of two serious problems: great affliction and deep poverty.
 - b. Their manner of giving was twofold -- *to their power* and *beyond their power*.
 - c. They gave both sacrificially and by faith.
 - d. These saints practiced Grace Giving.
 - e. Due to their deep poverty they were limited to sacrificial and faith giving.
 - f. If tithing has ended, as some believe, then Grace Giving is the means of all New Testament giving.
 - g. They gave in this manner because they had first given their own lives totally to the Lord. ***God bestows grace on all who obey Him.***

B. Paul commissions Titus to GO to Corinth with the mission of competing the same grace of giving among the Corinthians.

“Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.” (II Cor. 8:6)

1. Before this grace could be bestowed on the Corinthians -- they had to do as the Macedonians had done -- **they must first give themselves to the Lord.**
2. The mission of Titus was to bring the Corinthians to the place that God could bestow the grace of God on them as well.
 - a. He focused on the heart -- every aspect of the Christian’s life is heart issue.
 - b. (Prov. 4:23) It is universally true that every church problem, every personal problem Christians face is a heart problem.
 - c. There are many symptoms of this problem -- coldness of heart, indifference, criticalness, apathy, disobedience, etc. ---
 - and these symptoms are seen in many ways -- such as unfaithfulness in attendance,
 - inconsistent giving, lack of witnessing,
 - lack of willingness to serve, unholy living.

C. Paul had commended them for positive grace they already possessed and exhibited:

1. On that basis he challenges them to abound in the grace of giving.
“Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” (II Cor. 8:7)
2. Are we aware of the need of the grace of giving? Do we have many talents, abilities, gifts of the Holy Spirit? ** He has gifted every saved person.

III. IN THEIR GIVING THERE WAS AN ATTITUDE OF WILLINGNESS!

A. Paul gave two exhortations concerning faith promise. (II Cor. 8:8)

“I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.”

1. We must note that believers are not commanded to give this offering.. many things we are commanded to do: witness, be faithful in services, tithe, live holy lives, evangelize the world. **But IF we don’t give this kind of offering to reach the world.. to evangelize -- then we best have some other way to do it.**
2. But note what he is saying here..
 - a. The Macedonians were willing of themselves. (8:3b)
 - b. Paul did not coerce nor put them on a guilt trip.
 - c. He told them of the need and they joyfully responded.
3. We can’t take comfort in not being commanded to give this kind of offering. Giving to evangelize ... is a specific way by which we prove our love.

4. **Attitude in giving is very important.** (Cf I Chron, chapter 28, 29: Exod. 25)

- a. The context here flows through chapters 8 and 9... Paul continues to exhort the Corinthians regarding the attitude required for giving Faith Promise offerings.
- b. They were to respond -- *“Every man according as he **purposeth** in his heart, so let him give: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”* (II Cor. 9:6)
- c. Each person must respond in their heart. They must seek God’s will.
 - Some may misjudge their own level of commitment and make unrealistic promises.
 - Some may give not even up to their power.. or according to their power and never consider what God wants to do through them by faith.

IV. THEIR GIVING WAS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

A, We prove whether we love the Lord or not. *“To prove the sincerity of your love.”*

1. Many believers do not know how love is expressed. It is usually seen as a feeling or an emotion.
2. Some describe love as goose bumps or chills down the spine, but love is neither a feeling nor an emotion, though feelings or emotions may be involved.
3. Love is commanded regardless of human emotions. the word *“love”* is a verb, and not a noun... it is something you do, not something you feel.

Christ commands us to love our enemies. If love is a good feeling about one’s enemies, most would have difficulty loving them. It would be difficult to generate love feelings about a person trying to harm you. That is not what is commanded by Jesus. Feelings are not responsive to command. Following the command that Jesus gave is an explanation of how to obey the command. (Matt. 5:44b) *“... bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.”*

4. Jesus proved the sincerity of His love... II Cor. 8:9... *“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, through he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”*
5. Christ/ the Heavenly Father exhibit their grace and love -- John 3:16; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:25; I John 4:9-10; Rom. 5:8
 - a. His gift the Son on the cross provides positive proof that He loves us.
 - b. Our voluntary giving... proves that we love Him. We can live without loving, but we can’t love without giving.
 - c. Some might say that there ought to be an easier way to prove that we love Him. Did He seek an easy way? (rejected; hated; endured lies, beatings, mockings, thorns, scourging, Calvary itself... could He have found an easier way?)

Exposition of II Corinthians Chapter Nine

- II Cor. 9:15 tells us of a gift that cannot be measured.
- So, if God has given His best, then we should give our best.
- There should be a continual attitude of thanksgiving in our hearts unto God for sending His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ unto us.
- If we by faith have received Him as our personal Savior then we are the children of God.
- Then, if we will do beyond that and give by faith then we shall tap the resources of God and go far beyond what we would do ordinarily. May the Lord help us to do just that.

I. FAITH PROMISE SHOULD BE GIVING BY COMPASSION: 9:7a *“Every man according as he purposeth in his **heart**.”*

A. Giving is a heart affair.

1. A motive for giving originating out of the deep inner most desires of the heart will make a big difference.
2. Giving ought to be out of a **love affair** with God and true Christian giving is always a matter of the outpouring of the heart.
3. Many Christians never experience this. They are touchy and complain about money because their heart is not in it.

B. We should not only purpose in our heart, but we should proceed with our heart in the matter of giving.

II. FAITH PROMISE GIVING SHOULD BE DONE BY CONVICTION: vs. 7a *“purposeth”*

A. Giving is also a matter of the will.

1. Giving for missions or other matters is not based on tear-jerking stories because these may vary... but they are based on rock-solid convictions.
2. It should be based on what we believe about God’s Word... **we should be command and commission driving.**
3. Giving liberally is a test of the will -- a test of faith -- will we believe God?

B. Do we believe that he that soweth sparingly will reap sparingly?

1. We should ask God how much to give.. begin giving, and trust God to supply the amount He has laid upon our hearts.
2. This is what Faith Promise giving is all about.

III. FAITH PROMISE GIVING IS TO BE DONE CHEERFULLY: vs. 9:b. *cheerful*

A. This type of giving does effect our emotions.

1. Without this, giving is careless, unconcerned, without sacrifice, without heart.
2. Large sums of money can be giving... if we truly trust and give cheerfully.

B. The action of giving should be-- hilarious and liberal giving.

IV. FAITH PROMISE GIVING IS TO BE DONE COLLECTIVELY: 9:7a; 16:2a

A. Missions is not for a few... but done by the total church body.

1. Giving by faith ought to be done by all ---- every child, youth, parent, every women and every man.
2. All can participate... all should be involved... all need to pray through what God desires them to give.

B. Rewards are for all.

1. I Sam. 30:24
2. The missionary is not alone... we all have a part... by giving.. by praying, be our sacrifice... we expect him to sacrifice, what about us?

WHAT IS FAITH PROMISE MISSIONARY GIVING?

Introduction:

Credit is generally given to Dr. A.B. Simpson, founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, for introducing this plan of missionary giving that has gained much popularity in the last forty years. It has proven to be a productive method for many to be more involved in missionary giving.

Actually, “faith-promise giving” is not something new. It was started in the New Testament. It is presented in chapters 8 and 9 of II Corinthians.

The Apostle Paul had been to Corinth a year previously and had taken a *faith promise* from the members of the church. They had been generous in their promise. From Corinth he had gone on to Macedonia or northern Greece. He told these churches what the Corinthian church had promised and then received a promise from them.

In II Corinthians 8 and 9 Paul is writing the church at Corinth encouraging them to fulfill their promise. This offering Paul was receiving was to help the poor saints in Jerusalem. It was a promise by faith that a certain amount would be given in the coming year.

I. DEFINITION of the “FAITH PROMISE” PLAN OF GIVING:

The *Faith Promise Plan* is a method of missionary giving by individuals and family through the ministry of a local church.

A. A “Faith Promise” is promised by the giver.

1. The plan is to contribute a certain amount, either weekly, or monthly, to the missionary fund of his local church, over and above the usual tithing or giving to the budget of the church.
2. This plan is made for a year and renewed annually.

B. The Faith Promise Plan is a “*promise by faith,*” that I, personally, will trust the Lord that I can give a certain amount to my church for the work of missions around the world.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FAITH PROMISE METHOD OF GIVING:

A. It is sacrificial -- Lk 6:38; II Cor. 9:6-8

1. To carry out successfully the great commission, the following are required:
 - a. **devoted work** and **sacrifice** on the part of the individual;
 - b. **prayer** and financial **aid** on the part of all members of the local church:
and
 - c. **direction** and enabling **power** of the Holy Spirit.
2. Paul says: “*Even so hath God ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel.*” (I Cor. 9:12) This is God’s plan for support of His workers in this church age.

B. It potentially involves the entire membership of the Church in missionary giving:

It helps solve one problem, that of involving all the members of the church in missionary outreach. This plan will reach more of the membership of the church than any other system that I know, especially if every family will pray together over what God would have them do for missions.
What does God want YOU to do? Your family?

C. It is an act of the will ... by faith. Heb. 11:1, 6; 10:38

1. We all rejoice in the stories of the way God **supplies** the needs of His workers by **bold faith in His promises to His workers.**
2. It becomes a greater blessing when it **happens to each one of us by personal experience.**
 - a. The meeting of our needs in answer to prayer increases our faith.
 - b. The Lord becomes very real as we claim His promises that we might give liberally.

Summary

1. Faith Promise Giving is a **Promise!**

It is not a cash offering, nor is it a pledge. It is a solemn **promise before God** that I will give a certain amount for missions, **regularly**, over and above my normal giving for the local budget.

2. Faith Promise is **Personal!**

It is individual involvement in the work of world missions, **each** doing his or her part.

3. Faith Promise is by **Faith!** Lk. 6:38; Heb. 11:6

It is an agreement with God that by faith the person plans to give -- expecting God to provide for giving!

Exposition of II Corinthians, Chapter Eight

Introduction:

- In chapters 8 and 9 of II Corinthians, we find the basis of Faith Promise plan of mission giving in the churches of the New Testament.
- As we go through the chapters we will find that they gave not only according to what they had but according to the supply of God's resources.
- You will note also that the promise was made the year before and that the churches were urged to perform the doing of it.

I. PAUL'S ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHURCHES OF MACEDONIA: 8:1-5

A. The Macedonian churches were an example. (churches of Philippi, Berea, and Neapolis). *"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit (understand) of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."* 8:1

1. Paul is writing to the Church at Corinth.
2. The Churches of Macedonia were **examples** because they were not churches of great wealth, but he referred to them ... as having the **grace** of God bestowed upon them.
3. So the grace of God is one of the marks of a N.T. Church that is active in the work of the Lord.

B. These churches of Macedonia were unusual churches. 8:2

"How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

1. They had abundant **JOY** in the midst of great trials and afflictions, and in deep poverty.
2. Here are people who were poor.. they had no money or abundance of things, but yet, through their deep poverty they experienced the riches of God supply. (II Cor. 9:8)
3. Out of their trial and poverty.. they were able to give liberally because of the blessings of God upon them... and because of God's resources.
4. It was **not a matter of giving out of what they had**, because they had nothing. But God supplied them with an abundance of things so they were able to give liberally. (Lk 6:38)

C. These churches gave willingly beyond their ability, (8:3)

"For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves."

1. This verse may be strange to some people because it states that they were **able to give beyond their power or limit.**
2. How is this possible? It simply means that they were able to give **by faith** and that **God provided** some resources that they would not ordinarily have and this made it possible for them to give **far beyond** what they could do

based upon their natural conditions.

3. The **Grace of God was bestowed** upon them.. **by faith** they were able to give of themselves...
4. What a challenge for us today... they were able to participate *because they trusted God for what they did not have.*

D. These churches begged their gift be received. (8:4)

“Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.”

1. The words.. *praying..* speaks of the compassion and tenderness of these churches.
2. They desired Paul to receive this gift and to use it in the ministry, even if they were poor and in the midst of great trials.
3. The **outreach of faith is always based upon compassion and urgency..** for without this none of us would participate in ministry.
4. God had supplied and even through they were still in need they would give.

E. These people first gave themselves: (vs. 5)

“And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.”

1. Here is the **KEY** to it all.
2. It says **they gave their own selves to the Lord..** this is the key to all giving, to faith-promise, and in every matter of our Christian lives.
3. They gave themselves to the Lord, and then to Paul for the ministry.

II. PAUL’S CONCERN ABOUT THE PROVISIONS FOR THE NEED: (vss. 7-8a)

A. There is No Other Source of Supply. (vs. 7)

1. There is the need of all kinds of things to build a church in a foreign land where the people have nothing to offer.
2. It is only from the ranks of God’s people in the local church that missionary personnel, provision, equipment etc., will come.

B. This is Our Moral Obligation. vs. 8a (see Romans 1:14-16)

Paul said... *“Woe is me...”* The early church knew what meant to give all to God, lay it all before Him, allowing the Lord to use.. to take what they had.

It reminds us of the Exodus compromises given by Pharaoh... *“you can go, but leave your herds here...”* Moses answer was they must take all with them.

1. Faith giving goes beyond our ability -- vs. 1 -3
2. Faith giving proves our love -- vs. 4-8
3. Faith giving involves a promise -- vs. 10-15
4. Faith giving provides church involvement -- vs. 16-24

Understanding Faith Promise Giving

Introduction:

What is faith promise giving for missions? That is a very important question.

I. WHAT IT IS NOT!

A. It is not a pledge -- (Eccl. 5:4-5)

B. It is not something that someone will come to you to collect.
II Cor. 8:12

C. It is not something you sit down and figure out how much you can give.

D. It is not something taken away from what you are already giving and then just redesignated to a different need.

II. WHAT IT IS?

A. It is between God and you -- (II Cor. 8:12)

B. It is something you arrive at by waiting upon God to tell you how much He wants you to give for reaching the world for Christ. -Phil. 2:13

C. You must trust Him to supply it -- (II Cor. 9:6-8)

D. You and the missionary become partners in *faith*. You trust the Lord by faith to meet the promise for the missionary. He trusts the Lord, by faith, to go and to see his need supplied through people.

III. WHAT IT WILL DO!

A. It will help the church to know what it can do this year to further the cause of reaching the world.

B. It encourages united effort - (Phil. 3:15-16)

C. It is good for the Christian as it does away with merely asking him to give what he has.

It should involve the Christian in a walk by faith. The plan challenges him to trust God to permit him to do something for world evangelization every week, every month. Every person can participate. . . even a child.

D. It fosters solid stewardship. - (I Cor. 4:1-2)

E. It gives the local church a real incentive to be co-laborers with Christ.
(I Cor. 3:9-12; II Cor. 5:14-15)

F. First things become first - (II Cor. 5:14-20; Matt. 28:18-20)

G. It encourages the missionary - (I Thess. 3:5-7; Phil. 4:15-19)

IV. HOW SHOULD IT WORK?

People are encouraged to give the money every week - (I Cor. 16:2; Luke 6:38)

V. THE “FAITH PROMISE” IS IN ACCORD WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT!

A. Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give.

II Cor. 9:7 -- Purpose, then give.

B. Giving is a spiritual exercise. (Prov. 3:10-11; Prov. 11:

C. Consecration is its only valid basis --(I Cor. 8:4-5) For-- *“first they gave themselves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God.”*

VI. WHAT IS THE “FAITH PROMISE” AIM?

A. First, it is not to glorify individuals or organizations, but Christ only.

B. Its sole purpose is to support adequately the work of world evangelization, which is commanded by our soon returning Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

C. Our Giving Must Be Spiritual - (II Cor. 9:6-8)

1. Giving bountifully, not sparingly.

2. Giving cheerfully, not grudgingly or just because of necessity.

3. Giving purposefully, purposing in our hearts to give. We individually ought to give for missionary outreach.

4. Giving in faith believing, knowing that *“God will make all grace abound toward you, that ye having all sufficient in all things may abound unto every good work.”* (vs. 8) He, by His grace will make possibly our giving.

If we are not giving regularly to missions, to help reach the world, then we are voting to send the lost to hell. We must give in obedience to the express command of God.

Our generation is responsible to reach this generation . We are not to wait for a special call -- we have a command. We are not to wait for a special voice -- we have a verse!

PRACTICAL TRUTHS FROM II Corinthians, Chapters 8 and 9!

1. Giving is a grace, II Cor. 8:7.
2. These folk first gave themselves to the Lord, 8:5.
3. They gave out of deep poverty, 8:2.
4. They gave what they did not have but trusted God for it all, 8:3-4.
5. They continued to do what they set out to do the year before, as a ***“faith promise.”*** 8:10.
6. The need of others was supplied, 8:4.
7. The need of givers was also supplied, 9:8.
8. Giving follows the example of God, the Son, 8:9.
9. Giving follows the example of God, the Father, 9:15.
10. Giving produces praise in the churches, 8:24, and 9:13.
11. Giving produces a thankful spirit, 9:12, 15.
12. Bountiful givers reap bountifully; sparing givers reap sparingly, 9:6.
13. We should give -- not grudgingly or out of necessity -- but cheerfully, 9:7.
14. The stewardship of the gifts was handled by men chosen by the churches. 8:18-19, 23.
15. Giving of one church promotes zeal in other churches and other lives, 9:2.