

Excel in the Grace of Giving
2 Corinthians 8:1-7

2 Corinthians 8:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

2 Corinthians 8:7 (ESV)

⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

THREE THINGS ABOUT THE GRACE OF GIVING

The GRACE OF GIVING was on the entire Macedonian Church

2 Corinthians 8:1–4 (NKJV)

¹ Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

The GRACE OF GIVING had to BE COMPLETED in the Corinthian church

2 Corinthians 8:6 (NKJV)

⁶ So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.

The GRACE OF GIVING was something they were to excel in

2 Corinthians 8:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

2 Corinthians 8:7 (ESV)

⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

HOW DID THE MACEDONIAN CHURCH EXCEL IN THE GRACE OF GIVING?

Difficulties did not dictate their giving

2 Corinthians 8:1–2 (NKJV)

¹Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

²that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.

2 Corinthians 8:1–2 (NLT)

¹Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia.

²They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.

They were determined to give

2 Corinthians 8:3–4 (NKJV)

³For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,

⁴imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2 Corinthians 8:3–4 (NLT)

³For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will.

⁴They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem.

They dedicated themselves to the lord

2 Corinthians 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

2 Corinthians 8:5 (MSG)

⁵This was totally spontaneous, entirely their own idea, and caught us completely off guard. What explains it was that they had first given themselves unreservedly to God and to us. The other giving simply flowed out of the purposes of God working in their lives.