

THE MAGNIFICENT

grace

OF GOD

SESSION SEVEN: GIVING BY GRACE

"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; as it is written, "He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, His righteousness endures forever." Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God." 2 Corinthians 9:6-12

*connect* Open your group time by creating an environment in which you may begin to develop a community of connection. Get to know one another through sharing prayer requests and experiences that provide members with an opportunity to engage.

**CONNECTING IN PRAYER:** Begin your time together with prayer and praise.

**CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER:** Why is giving such a difficult topic? In what ways has the principle of Giving by Grace been distorted by things you have heard within the body of Christ?

*grow* Watch the DVD for Session 7 now. Use the space below to record your thoughts, key points and questions you would like to either remember or discuss.

**GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING:** Giving by grace is the proper response to God's infinite goodness which He freely gives us. Because we give in light of God's grace, we are to be cheerful givers (2 Corinthians 9:7). God's grace is called an indiscernible gift (2 Corinthians 9:15), and such a powerful gift should challenge us to be powerful givers. We have the opportunity to express powerful giving by sowing seeds through our generosity in support of God's Kingdom Vision here on earth.

As believers, we often struggle with the concept of giving our time, talent, and treasures simply because we do not understand the blessing we have through the grace of God. 2 Corinthians 9:8, summarizes the breadth, sufficiency, and purpose of God's grace within the context of giving. In this passage we find that God's grace is never ending; God can give you more grace than you could ever need! His grace is also perfectly sufficient; there is not a situation that grace cannot handle. Lastly, God's grace was not created to be received and contained by you, rather it should direct you to sow back

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into God's mission by accomplishing every good deed.

Many are afraid of giving because they view it as a personal loss rather than an investment. Yet, we find that many still expect to receive from God when they are not willing to give. According to the law of the harvest found in 2 Corinthians 9:6, one will reap what they sow. If they sow sparingly, they will reap sparingly, if they sow in abundance, they will reap in abundance. When you give you will find that God multiplies your gift. Remember, a wise farmer does not simply eat all his harvest, rather he will take the seed he was given and sow back into the ground, yielding an even greater harvest in the end. In the same way, let us be inspired to sow abundantly knowing that it is by God's grace that we even possess a seed in the first place!

# NOTES

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**GROWTH THROUGH DISCUSSION:** As you dive into the heart of Dr. Evans' teaching, utilize the following questions to generate discussion among your group.

1. Have you ever connected the concept of God's grace to how you give? Share some ways God has demonstrated His grace toward you. How have you responded to the goodness of grace in previous circumstances?
2. Many believers do not give their money or personal time because they claim to be restricted in those areas; however, they have the time and means to do many other things one may not consider essential. Have you ever noticed this pattern in your life? How did you correct it?
3. The law of the harvest tells us that we reap what we sow. Why do many of us continue to withhold our best from God but expect Him to give us His best?
4. According to 2 Corinthians 9:8, the purpose of grace is not simply for you to hold on to it for yourself rather God expects us to be a conduit of His blessings through every good work. How can your generosity personally bless others? How does this generosity reflect God?

*serve* Now is the time to apply the wisdom of what you have learned to your life, as you express the depth of your relationship with God through service to Him and others.

**SERVING GOD:** Has your generosity to serve God through giving of yourself and financial resources properly reflected your gratitude for God's grace? Spend some time thinking about the depths of God's grace toward you. Repent and confess where your attitude about giving has been selfish.

**SERVING OTHERS:** James 1:27 says "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." Serving others with our generosity is clearly of high importance to God. What is one way you can tangibly meet the need of someone this week?

THE DAILY

# Grace Guide

Live out God's Kingdom principles here on earth by putting feet to your faith. Over the next 5 days, utilize the Daily Grace Guide to help you meditate on God's word.

## DAY ONE

**MEDITATE: Read 2 Corinthians 9:8**

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed"

**MOVE:** This scripture reminds us that grace is totally sufficient, meaning that it is capable to fit any situation you find yourself in. Is there anything in your life, a task, a dream, a burden you carry that may seem too difficult to address? Whatever it is, remember that God supplies you with abundant grace to meet any challenge.

## DAY TWO

**MEDITATE: Read Proverbs 23:4-5**

"Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your consideration of it. When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly, makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens."

**MOVE:** Do you ever find yourself consumed with thoughts about money? When we weigh all of the responsibilities of life, (simply paying bills, our children's college fund, or planning for retirement) it is easy for wealth management to become our number one focus. When your mind drifts toward worrying about money today, take the time to immediately thank God for what you do have. Write down a list of financial blessings you currently have despite your lack and praise God for his provision.

## DAY THREE

**MEDITATE: Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-3**

"Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality."

**MOVE:** The scripture informs us that the process by which a believer experiences genuine ongoing transformation is "by the renewing of their mind." The battle over who controls the mind is a daily decision for the believer. Begin, today, to ask the Holy Spirit to shield your mind from any thoughts that would affect your transformation.

## DAY FOUR

**MEDITATE: Read Luke 6:38** "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure-pressed down, shaken together and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

**MOVE:** Luke 6:38 highlights the reproductive nature of giving by grace. Many people see giving as a personal loss but this scripture reminds us that when we give we will receive. In fact, the standard by which we give governs how much we receive in return. What is God challenging you to give more of? Your time, talent or treasures?

## DAY FIVE

**MEDITATE: Read Ecclesiastes 11:4-5**

"He who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap. Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things."

**MOVE:** Here the author of Ecclesiastes is saying don't let your circumstances determine what you sow or how you sow. In other words, the author is saying if you are too concerned with the conditions of the wind and the clouds you may decide based on your circumstances that now is not a good time to sow seed. He goes on to remind us that we do not know the mystery of how God works. We must continue to sow trusting the God of the harvest rather than the conditions surrounding us. In the same way, we are not to allow the changes in our political, financial or even our emotional state to forecast how we trust God with giving by grace. Those circumstantial restrains do not block God from blessing us. What are the various changes in the wind that may keep you from planting seeds today? Make a list of these things and give each one over to God in prayer.