

Be Encouraged

“To Ability and Beyond!”

May 6, 2001

Reading: [Isaiah 32:5-8](#)

Text: [2 Corinthians 8:1-15](#)

Introduction:

A. How many of us do our best EVERY time we do something?

1. Wouldn't we be required to improve every time we did it in order to do our best EVERY time? Maybe not. Yet...
2. Sometimes we don't try. Sometimes we are lazy. Sometimes we fail.

B. Paul said the Macedonians did BETTER than their best!

1. [2 Corinthians 8:1-7](#)
2. How do you compete with that? Well, you don't. It's not a competition!

C. “This Grace”

1. “the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints” [v. 4](#)
2. [1 Corinthians 16:1-4](#)

#1 Give To The Lord [v. 5](#)

A. Seek Him First

1. [Matthew 6:33](#)
2. [Colossians 3:1-4](#)—If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

B. Good causes are not the point!

1. God is the point!
2. God's way is the point!
3. God's glory is the point!

#2 Give Willingly [v. 12](#)

A. It is certainly appreciated more!

1. [2 Corinthians 9:7](#)—*So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*
2. [Acts 5](#) Don't make the same mistake as Ananias and Sapphira

B. Do what you can, not what you can't!

1. One reason why people feel guilty about giving is because they think they must give more than their ability!
2. It's not a matter of what you can afford, it's what you are willing

#3 Give Readily [v. 19](#)

A. Usually that means “quickly”

1. But here it simply means be ready!
2. When there is a need, be ready!
3. When something has to be done, be ready!

B. A Ready Mind

1. [Galatians 6:10](#)—Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
2. It is a mindset of helping others, even anticipating their need.
3. [v. 21](#)—not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men

Conclusion:

A. To God be the glory great things HE has done!

B. v. 24—What proves you love someone?

1. Could be many things, it's certainly not doing something sinful!
2. Yet here, the proof of the pudding is the willingness to help, in particular, financially.
3. Are you willing to give your money to God? Not just some of it, but all of it? He owns everything anyway? Let it be used by Him!
4. Are you willing to let God use YOU?
5. Prove you love Him, as HE has proven His love for you, give your life to Him.
 - a. Obey the gospel—repent and be baptized, [Acts 2:38](#)
 - b. Renew your promise to Him, renew your faith.