



Grace Under Pressure: Cheerful Giver
The Sermon Study Guide
2 Corinthians 9:6-15
November 1, 2009

Opening Prayer

We thank God for his word:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16

Leader **The Lord be with you.**
People **And also with you.**
Leader **Let us pray**

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Remembering the Message (Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

1. In 1 or 2 sentences and using your own words, summarize Paul's message to the church in Corinth in this passage.

2. According to Paul, what are some results of the service of giving?

Introduction

Fr. David likened our journey to that of the NW pilots overshooting/missing their destination by 150 miles. Just like those pilots we are at the same risk of losing our way, being distracted from the single most important thing there is, and missing our destination. He directed our attention to a dial in our lives: something that appears throughout scripture. That dial is found in v. 8 – **God is able...**

Paul encourages the church in Corinth with these words in v. 8, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." He says something very similar to the church in Philippi in

Philippians 4:19, “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” The truth that “God is able” is a bedrock understanding for everything that comes from the Bible.

Going Deeper

1. What are some other places in scripture where you see this foundational principle that God is able at work in the lives of people? Using the concordance found at the back of most Bibles, write one or two “God is able” statements.

2. Where have you seen this principle (God is able) at work in the lives of friends, family, brothers and sisters in Christ?

Is God Able?

“**God is able**” is one of the most important ‘dials’ on your life in Christ ‘dashboard’. The culture of convenience, consumerism, affluence, and self-reliance encourages us to dial our ‘need for God’ way, way down. When we’re out of work or facing some crisis we may dial it up temporarily and say to God that we need him. But the setting of this dial on a day-in, day-out basis will determine how you and I live as disciples of Jesus. Our answer to this question, “Is God able?” will determine the time and content of our prayer, it will determine our focus in times of worship, it will determine our giving. If we trust that God is able then we will pray expectantly for the things we need, for others, for hearts to be changed. If we have seen that God is able we will not worship idols – things or people – we will worship the only One who is worthy of praise and thanks and adoration. If we remember the ways that God is able then we will give generously, cheerfully, and with a deep sense of joy.

Going Deeper

1. Where is the “God is able” dial set in your life in prayer? In worship? In giving? What does that look like in each of these areas?

2. When have you experienced this foundational principle that God is able as being true in your life? Specifically in the area of giving? What was your response?

God is Able to Make All Grace Abound

Fr. David reminded us that when we give we are sowing seeds. How that giving comes back to you in abounding grace is determined by God. If we’re looking at the fine print and expecting to see that grace come from a slot machine win or a big gain in the stock

market or money for a big screen TV we're looking in all the wrong places. Grace abounding in our lives is what makes life worth living. It's measured in forgiveness, mercy, kindness, love, peace, contentment, relationship. It is grace that brings us the joy we long for. C. S. Lewis said that just as a car is made to run on petrol, so we, as humans, were designed to run on God Himself. We run on God's grace – that is the way we function best. Our God is able to bring an abundance of grace into your life so that you may become more closely the person God intended you to be.

Going Deeper

1. How have you experienced God's grace abounding in the last week?
2. When have you trusted God's ability to work in your life and felt a corresponding awareness, power, confidence, a presence, and 'peace that passes understanding'?

Can You Believe It?

1. In all things....not some
2. At all times.....not some
3. Having all you need....not some
4. You will abound in every good work....not some.

Take a few minutes to reflect on this question.

Going Deeper

1. Are you being challenged and exhorted in any of these areas of prayer, worship, and/or giving to turn up the dial of "God is able"? If so, where? In prayer, ask for God's help and commit these areas into his grace and care.
2. Write and commit to memory this verse: 2 Corinthians 9:8. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

Closing Prayer

Holy Father, through the witness of creation, the witness of scripture, and the testimony of the saints who have gone before, you are revealed as the mightiest power in the universe, the God of heaven and earth. We praise you - you are able in all things and at all times to make all grace abound. Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts, into our lives that we might see your grace at work all around us. Empower us to live out of the abundance of your grace. May the overflow of the grace that you pour into our lives flow into the lives of others in order that they might know you. And may the service of our giving and our confession of the gospel of Christ result in thanksgiving and praise of you, for you alone are worthy of all glory and power and praise. *Amen.*