

# PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

## Edification

2 Cor.8:1-7

### INTRODUCTION:

A. Please turn to the text. This is going to be an expository, class-participation lesson on Edification.

1. Read text.

2. In 2 Cor.8:7 the word “**abound**” (4052) comes from the Grk. word perisseuo (per-is-syoo’-o) [περισσευο] and means “*to be in excess, abound, have more abundance, exceed, increase, redound, excel, remain (over & above), overflow, add to!*”

B. The logical pursuit in a study on edification is usually to go to such places as Matt.28:19; 2 Pet.1:5-11 and Eph.4:11-16- “*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, **to the building up of the body of Christ**; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a mature man**, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up** in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the **growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.**”*

1. Such passages ARE extremely important in setting forth the responsibility to continue toward spiritual maturity, along with others like Matt.5:48; Heb.5:10-14; and 2 Pet.3:18.

2. Our study tonight is going to be more of an expository adventure through 2 Cor.8:1-7.

3. One of the advantages we have going for us in this study is that we did talk about some of these things on Sunday night in our lesson about our Stewardship of Material Possessions.

## 2 Cor.8:1-7: Expository Lesson on EDIFICATION:

Vs.1: - “*Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, **GIVING** is not only a **manifestation** of, but also a **result** of the **love** and **grace** of God.*”

Vs.2: *that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. cf. Lk.21:1-4- re. the “widow with 2 mites”. Their generosity came from:*

a) The abundance of their JOY

b) Their deep poverty (they empathized with).

Vs.3: “*For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord,*” They were **FREELY WILLING** [NKJV]! See also 2 Cor.9:7. Weren’t extorted/ threatened/ demeaned/ coerced/ pressured/ etc.

Vs.4: “***begging us** with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,*” They considered it a FAVOR for the recipients to accept their offering. Acts 20:35- “*Remember the words of the LJ, that He said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive!**”*”

Vs.5: “*and this, not as we had expected, but **they first gave themselves** to the Lord and to us by the will of God.*” They **FIRST GAVE THEMSELVES!** [Although a lot of emphasis is placed on this phrase, I don’t believe this is the primary thrust of the teaching here!]

TO THE LORD .. I bel. **THIS** is the main thrust of truth!

**And to US:** (1) The LORD was recipient of their gift because of HIS great love to them!

(2) They gave themselves to **HIM** [a mental-assent-thing] **MANIFESTED IN-**

(3) **AND TO US!** How can anyone give themselves to the Lord? To country? To spouse or family? → by serving the needs of the Lord/ country/ spouse/ family!

**WHAT ELSE CAN WE GIVE OURSELVES TO?** Rem. Solomon in **Ecc1.1 & 2?** **SELF/ JOB/ RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES/ ANY IDEAL OR PURPOSE!**

**Vs.6:** “Consequently we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.” Titus had a mission! He had BEGUN [this grace in you], so now he should COMPLETE [this grace in you]! HOW could he do this? Just like **HE HAD BEGUN: TEACHING!**

**Vs.7:** But just as you abound in everything, in faith<sup>1</sup> and utterance<sup>2</sup> and knowledge<sup>3</sup> and in all diligence [earnestness]<sup>4</sup> and in the love we inspired<sup>5</sup> in this grace also!” **Abound! Excel! REACH ON OUT!** NOT about miraculous gifts, but (**vs.7**) “this GRACE also!” Ch. graces in **2 Pet.1:5-11**. Seems to be some things they could **ADD TO!** **Verses 7-16** trying to get these people to increase their liberality, in keeping with how they’d been urged in the **FIVE OTHER ITEMS** mentioned in **vs.7**.

(1) **FAITH:** Rather than a “gift of faith”, I bel. it’s that which is produced by the word of God - **Rom.10:17**. **How can we abound in FAITH?**

(2) **UTTERANCE:** [Power to spk. in other languages??] Rather, prob. speaking of the DOCTRINE they were to proclaim! See also **2 Jno.9**. **How can this be a practical and pertinent part of the growth of this congregation?**

(3) **KNOWLEDGE:** Again, not miraculous. Something that you can ADD to your virtue! **2 Pet.1:6; 3:18**. *This comes from a STUDY of the word of God, attending classes & preaching services, home studies, et al. **What do we GET when we STUDY the Word of God?***

(4) **DILIGENCE [EARNESTNESS]:** A general term for the energy & vigor of their spiritual life, of which their love was only ONE manifestation! **In what OTHER ways can you show your diligence or earnestness?**

(5) **LOVE:** *Why does our love need to grow, and how can we instigate that growth? **From the moment of our obedience to the gospel, does our love increase or diminish?***

(6) **THIS GRACIOUS WORK:** (liberality) What would you say that liberality has to do with edification? **How do we get to be more liberal? How can we ABOUND in this work?**

**CONCLUSION:** Every member here must participate in the edification process. cf. **Heb.10:24**. Everyone of us must GROW! MATURE! See also **2 Cor.8:8-9, 12, 24**: “I am not speaking this as a command, but as **proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love** also. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, **that you** through His poverty **might become rich**.” 12 “For if the readiness is present, **it is acceptable according to what a man has**, not according to what he does not have.” 24 “Therefore openly before the churches **show them the proof of your love** and of our reason for boasting about you.”

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