

Material Offering and the Lord's Move Today

Week 5 – Day 1

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 8:7

But just as you abound in everything, in faith and in word and in knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love in you from us, abound in this grace also.

2 Cor. 8:13

For *it* is not that to others *there would be* relief, *yet* to you affliction,

2 Cor. 8:14

But *it* is out of equality; at the present time your abundance for their lack that their abundance also may be for your lack, so that there may be equality;

2 Cor. 8:15

As it is written, "He who *gathered* much had no excess, and he who *gathered* little had no lack."

Today's Reading

In the wilderness the children of Israel did not do any farming, sowing, or reaping. Instead, they gathered manna. Some may have greedy and tried to gather a large amount of manna, much more than they needed. However, by the end of the day, what was left was no longer useful.... In the case of those gathered an excess of manna, perhaps wanting to store it up for days and weeks to come, God caused the excess to be taken away.

Those who were rather feeble and not able to gather much manna did not have any lack. The divine way is that those who gathered little had no lack and those who gathered much had nothing over. This God's heavenly way of balancing the supply among His people.... God balances the daily supply among His children by His sovereign and miraculous hand.

In [2 Corinthians 8](#) Paul likens our giving to the needy ones to the gathering of manna. To our realization, we are giving, not gathering. But what Paul says indicates that our giving is gathering. Paul's word at least implies that as children of God we should not be greedy. We should not think that if we earn a large sum of money, we shall be able to preserve it all for ourselves. We need to see that whether we give or not, eventually the outcome will be the same.

Suppose a brother earns \$40,000 a year, but what he actually needs for his living is much less than that amount. Being rather greedy, he wants to reserve a large amount for himself. He tithes ten percent, or \$4,000, with the intention of keeping the other \$36,000. This tithing is a good practice. However, it is possible for this brother to follow an even better way. According to this better way, the brother should keep what he needs for his living, perhaps \$20,000, and give away the remainder. No doubt, humanly speaking, almost everyone would follow the first way, the way of tithing, instead of the second way, the way of giving all that he can. If the brother decides to tithe and keep the extra \$16,000 for himself, eventually he will learn that, in His sovereignty, God has many ways to cause this excess money to disappear. There may be illness, accident, or calamity. If the money does not disappear in this generation, it will disappear in the following generation or certainly in the third generation. God's mighty, sovereign hand will be active to practice a heavenly balancing of the wealth among His people.

No matter how wise you may be in the handling of money, God is wiser. As the heavenly pilot, he knows how to cause your money to fly away. He did this with the manna in the Old Testament and does it with money today. The question that faces you is this: do you want to balance the material supply willingly, or will you force God to balance it in a miraculous, sovereign way? I can assure you that sooner or later you will be balanced in financial matters. Concerning this, we need to understand God's heart. Deep in His heart God desires that His people be balanced in the daily supply.... You should remember that whether or not you willingly share with others, eventually the outcome will be the same. (*Life-study of 2 Corinthians*, pp. 419-422) *Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Corinthians*, msg. 48

Week 5 - Day 2

Morning Nourishment

[2 Cor. 9:6](#)

But *take note of* this: He who sows sparingly shall also sparingly reap; and he who sows with blessings shall also with blessings reap;

[2 Cor. 9:7](#)

Each one as he has purposed in his heart, not out of sorrow or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.

[Prov. 11:24](#)

There is one who scatters and increases yet more, And there is one who withholds what is appropriate but ends up only in want.

Today's Reading

The Christian way of managing money is not to hold on to money. The tighter you hold on to your money, the more it dies. The more you grasp it, the more it disappears; it will evaporate like vapor. But the more you give away, the more you will have. If God's children would learn to give more. God would have many ways to work out His miracles. Keeping back money only makes God's children poor. God will not entrust Himself to those who hold on to their money and who will not give. The more you give, the more God will give to you.

Please read [2 Corinthians 9:6](#), which says, "He who sows sparingly shall also sparingly reap; and he who sows with blessing shall also with blessings reap." This is also a scriptural principle of financial management. When Christians give, they are not throwing their money away; they are sowing. The Word does not say, "He who throws away his money sparingly shall also sparingly reap; and he who throws away his money with blessings shall also with blessings reap." It says, "He who sows sparingly shall also sparingly reap; and he who sows with blessing shall also with blessing reap." When you give, you are sowing. Do you want your money to grow? If you do, you need to sow. When you give your money away, it grows. When you do not give it away, it does not grow.

Brothers and sisters, can anyone be so foolish as to expect a harvest without sowing? How many times has God not answered your prayers for your needs? You are a "hard man," trying to reap where you have not sown and gather where you have not winnowed. This is impossible. Why do you not sow some of your money? There are many brothers and sisters who are in difficulty. Why do you not sow money upon them so that you may reap when the reaping time comes? The more a person holds on to his money, the less he will have. In the above portion of the Word, we see a very beautiful picture. The Corinthians gave to those in Jerusalem, remembering their needs, and Paul said that it was a kind of sowing, not a kind of throwing away. Please remember that money can be our seeds. If you see a brother or sister in difficulty, and you remember him or her, God will cause that money to grow and harvest thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and even a hundredfold. I hope that more of your money will be sown.

A new believer should learn to sow, so that when he has needs, he can reap what he has sown. You cannot reap what you have not sown. There are many brothers who are getting poorer and poorer. If you eat what you have, of course, there will not be anything left. But if you keep half of your seed for sowing, you will have a harvest next year. If next year you also keep half for planting, you will have another harvest the following year. If you want to sow anything, you must not eat all that you have. Some people always eat and never sow. They also never receive anything when they are in need. Suppose some young brothers sow some money upon other brothers, praying as they sow, "O God, I have sown upon the brothers. When I have needs, I want to harvest." If you do this, God will honor His own words. (*Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 439, pp. 429-431)

Further Reading: The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol 49, ch.28

Week 5 - Day 3

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 9:10-11

Now He who bountifully supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and cause the fruits of your righteousness to increase. You in everything are being enriched unto all liberality, which works out through us [thanksgiving to God](#),

Today's Reading

[Second Corinthians 9:6 speaks of] [a natural law](#) established by the Lord in the [biological realm](#). This law contains His promise. Offering material riches is like sowing. Since sowing eventually brings in reaping, he who sows sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall reap bountifully. [In](#) man's eyes, the offering of material riches is to give away their riches. However, [in](#) God's eyes, such offering is a kind of sowing which will result in reaping. He...who offer much shall reap much. We ought to believe in the Lord's promise in this law (*Life Lessons*, p. 182)

According to 9:6, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows blessings shall also reap with blessings. In verse 6 we have the thought of sowing for the benefit of others. But what farmer, when he sows in his field, has the thought of sowing for others? Surely, most farmers have the concept of sowing for themselves. This kind of sowing, however, is not with blessings. To sow with blessings is to give to others... When we give of our money, we are sowing, and this sowing, and this sowing is not for ourselves, but is for others. If we sow with blessings to others, we shall reap with blessings from God.

When we sow with blessings to others, we shall reap with blessings from God. Furthermore, the harvest will always far surpass the amount of seed sown. It may be multiplied thirty or even one hundred times. This does not happen miraculously; it takes place according to [natural law](#). God controls the life supply among His children by miracles. Because of this no Christian family can maintain its wealth for generations. [But](#) sowing is according to [natural law](#), not according to miracle. Regarding this, there is no need for God to do anything miraculous. We all need to sow, to give. The more we give, the more we shall reap. However, we should not do this in a superstitious way for the purpose for gaining riches for ourselves.

The two illustrations of gathering and sowing are related to Paul's profound thoughts in these chapters. In chapter nine the deep thought is that as Christians we give in the sense of sowing. Moreover, we should not sow sparingly. If we sow sparingly, then according to [natural law](#) we shall reap sparingly. We need to sow with blessings to others. If we sow with blessings to others, then, also according to [natural law](#), we shall reap with blessing from God to us. This blessing will be many times more than what we have sown....The Lord will always honor the [natural law](#) He has ordained.

We should sow more and in turn reap more. The goal is not to make ourselves rich. The result is the abounding of thanksgiving to God [9:11]. I hope that in the time to come many saints will become a factor of thanksgiving to God. This means that your giving will abound in much thanksgiving to God. I have a full confidence that if the saints in the Lord's recovery are willing to give, the recovery will never be lacking in material supply. Instead of lack, there will be abounding in thanksgiving to the Lord through many saints. Therefore, let us all practice our giving, a giving which is carried out by gathering and by sowing. (*Life-study of 2 Corinthians*, pp. 422, 425-426)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 48-49

Week 5 – Day 4

Morning Nourishment

[Mat 6:19-21](#)

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves dig through and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not dig through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

[Mat 6:31-33](#)

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we be clothed? For all these things the Gentiles are anxiously seeking. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Today's Reading

In [Matthew 6:19-20] the King decrees that the kingdom people should not lay up for themselves treasures on earth, but treasures in heaven. To lay up treasures in heaven is to give material things to the poor (19:20) and to care for the needy saints (Acts 2:45; 4:34-35; 11:29; Rom. 15:26) and for the Lord's servants (Phil. 4:16-17). Verse 21 says, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The kingdom people must [send their treasure to heaven](#) so that their heart can also be in heaven. Before they go there, their treasure and their heart must go there first.

Apparently, in this section...the Lord is speaking about the dealing of the kingdom people with material riches. Actually He is dealing with the matter of anxiety....It may also seem that the Lord is touching our heart, for where our treasure is there our heart is also....The whole world is involved with anxiety. Anxiety is the gear that makes the whole world move. It is the incentive for all human culture. If there were no anxiety regarding our living, no one would do anything. Rather, everyone would be idle. Thus, by touching our anxiety, the Lord touches the gear of human life.

Let us now consider the Lord's intention in verse 19 through 34. Does the Lord intend that the young people finish school or drop out and be like birds in the air? It is wrong to have anxiety, for anxiety does not belong to the divine life. There is no anxiety in the life of God. However, the Lord does not mean that we should not do our duty. When the Lord brought the children of Israel into the good land, they all had to work on the land. That was their duty.... They labored not only for themselves, but also for the birds. If they did not do the work of farming, it would have been difficult for the birds to live. To do their duty was right and necessary, but to have anxiety was wrong. Likewise, we must do our duty today, but do it without being anxious about our living. The reason you are so reluctant to give to others is your anxiety. Because of anxiety, you love the material things. If you had no anxiety, you would not care for the material things. Rather, you would let others have them. It is anxiety that causes us trouble.

After a number of years, many of our young people will have college degrees. I believe that under the Lord's sovereign blessing, many riches will come in. At that time you will need to remember that you have gone to school not for anxiety, but to do your duty. Your duty is to give, to lay up treasure in heaven. Do not aspire to be a millionaire. Do not endeavor to have a savings account of million dollars. Rather, learn to give and lay up treasures in heaven. Transfer your treasures from the earth to the heavens. In this way you will not be a millionaire on earth, but a millionaire in the heavens....Be a good giver according to the life and nature of your heavenly Father. (*Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 271, 273, 275-279)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msg. 22

Week 5 – Day 5

Morning Nourishment

1Ti 6:17-19

Charge those who are rich in the present age not to be high-minded, nor to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches but on God, who affords us all things richly for *our* enjoyment; To do good, to be rich in good works, to be ready to distribute, to be ones willing to share; Laying away for themselves a good foundation as a treasure for the future, that they may lay hold on that which is really life.

Today's Reading

From the time that man developed a problem with God because of the fall and left the position where he took God as everything, material riches have become critical matter in the life of a fallen man. In his fallen condition, man fell into the darkness of acknowledging only material riches and not God, of trusting only in material riches and not in God, and even of serving material riches taking material riches as God, and allowing material riches to replace God. God's enemy, Satan the devil, exploited the fallen condition of men to come in and deceive men to worship idols, such as the god of wealth, for riches and gain. By being behind these idols, he supplants men's worship and service that are due God. For this reason, the Lord Jesus told us that one "cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Literally, the service spoken of by the Lord here refers to the service of a slave...This tell us that Satan utilizes material riches to seduce people to worship him on the one hand, and enslaves people in materials riches, as misers, on the other hand. However, we have received God's mercy and the Lord's salvation, which delivered us from the authority of Satan and turned us to God (Acts 26:18). After we have received God's salvation in this way, we are confronted with an issue in our practical living, that is, what should we do with material riches that Satan used in time past to delude us and all the world...Should we be the same as we were in the old manner of living before we were saved? Or we should we have a change regarding our material riches according to the salvation which delivered us from the authority of Satan and turned us to God?

[First Timothy 6:17] exposes Satan's plot to delude men, showing us that all the material things and enjoyment in our living apparently come from the uncertain riches, but they actually come from God's giving. They are supplied to us from God's rich giving. Hence, we must not set our hope on deceitful and uncertain material riches, but on the very God who gives us all things richly for our enjoyment.

We ought to endeavor in our businesses. The Bible also requires that we learn to maintain good works for necessary needs (Titus 3:14, 8). Yet without God's blessing, all our labors, endeavorings, and painstaking enterprises will yield little. Therefore, in this matter of material supply, unlike the worldly people who trust only in their own abilities, we have to learn to set our hope in God.

[First Timothy 6:17-19] is the apostle's charge, which is simply the Lord's charge to us. The rich refers to those who have excess from their gain after the needs of their living have been met. To do good and to rich in good works refer to distributing the surplus from one's living to the needy ones. To be rich in doing good and good works is to be ready to distribute and willing to communicate. This is also to lay up treasure in heaven, to lay up as a treasure a good foundation for the future. During this will enable one to lay hold on, that is, to possess, to use, and to enjoy, that which is really life, the eternal life of God. To save up the surplus riches from our living on the earth is to lay hold on and make use of our natural life; while to save up the same in heaven, spending it on God, is to lay hold on and employ the eternal life of God. (*Life Lessons*, pp. 179-181)

Further Reading: Life Lessons, lsn.24

Week 5 – Day 6

Morning Nourishment

1Cor. 12:1-2

Now concerning the collection for the saints, just as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also do. On the first day of the week each one of you should lay aside in store to himself whatever he may have prospered, that no collection be made when I come.

Today's Reading

All of fallen mankind are under the domination of mammon and material possessions (Matt. 6:19-21, 24-25, 30; 19:21-22; Luke 12:13-19). At the day Pentecost, under the power of the Holy Spirit, all the believers overthrew this domination and had all their possessions in common for distribution to needy ones (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32, 34-37). That practice, due to the weakness of the believers' fallen nature (see Acts 5:1-11; 6:1), did not last long. It was already over by the apostle Paul's time. Then the believers needed grace to overcome the power of mammon and material things and to release them from Satan's domination for an offering to the Lord to fulfill His purpose. Resurrection life is the supply for the believers to live such a life, a life trusting in God, not in treasures of material possessions, a life not for today but for the future, not for this age but for the coming age (Luke 12:16-21; 1Tim. 6:17-19), a life that overthrows the usurpation of temporal and uncertain riches....This dealing is related to God's administration among the churches.

It is a crucial matter that this dealing follows a chapter concerning the reality of resurrection life. Resurrection is not only the power over sin and death; resurrection is a power over mammon and material possessions. Therefore, immediately following the chapter on resurrection, Paul turns to the matter of material possessions.

In the second sections of 1Corinthians, chapters eleven through sixteen, Paul deals with matters in the realm of the divine administration. This section begins with the headship of God and consummates with a seemingly insignificant matter—the gift of material things for the saints. Whether or not we are truly in God's administration...and are carrying out God's administration, can be tested by how we are related to material things and how we handle our money. If we use our money in a worldly way, then no matter what we say about resurrection, we are not truly in God's administration. The extent to which we are in the divine administration...is determined by how we care of money and material possessions.

If we all would be faithful to live for God's administration in caring for money and material matters, there would be no financial needs in the recovery. For example, certainly we can exercise our spirit and our will to save a small amount of money each week, perhaps just two dollars and fifty cents, and give this to the Lord for His move on the earth. One day, instead of having our lunch at a restaurant, we may eat a simple meal prepared at home. Then the money saved could be given to the Lord. Imagine what the situation would be if we all were faithful to do something like this week by week!

In such a spiritual book dealing with spiritual and heavenly matters, Paul eventually turns to the very practical matter of finances. It is quite easy to talk about the headship and say, "Praise the Lord, I am under the headship of Christ! Christ is my Head. Concerning His headship, I do not have any problems." But can you say that you have no problem with the matter Paul brings up in chapter sixteen? We may talk about the victory of resurrection over sin and death, but what about the victory in resurrection over your use of your money and material possessions?...For this reason, Paul, in God's wisdom, deals with the matter of giving immediately after the matter of resurrection. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, pp. 625-628)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Corinthians, msg. 69, pp.625-628