

Week One

The Best is Yet to Come **The Door of Authentic Faith-Giving**

So here it is, the big devotion on giving. Maybe when you hear it coming you experience some things physically- a little tightening in the chest. Do you feel some nerves? Or maybe even a little anger, "Why's it always come to money?" Well, I know money often equals anxiety, especially in these days, and I don't expect this one devotion to change things instantly, but listen to these words from the Bible.

2 Corinthians 8:7-9 *7*But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. *8*I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. *9*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

What did this verse call giving, a grace? It's true. After all, our giving is only a response to the greatest gift which these verses also reminded us of- how Jesus flooded us with grace as he came down to earth and even died on the cross, all for us. And I also want you to think about the tone in this text. Did you notice how it was excited? Grace in these words is viewed as a privilege, something we get to do. Have you ever thought of your giving as a privilege, that God is allowing you to partner with him in the ministry? He could do it without you, but he chooses to use you. Finally, we need to remember that everything we "give" to God isn't really ours to begin with. Everything we have is a gift of God. He created it all and he gives it to us. So instead of thinking about how much you are giving, marvel at what he's given you and how much he allows you to keep.

I know giving is hard. That's why this is called the door of authentic faith, because often this is one of the hardest areas for people. But just think on those you know who give deeply and think of their joy. You know giving is a gift, a grace given to us by God. Now, take a moment and let God work that truth in you. Let God's words guide you and pray to Him about it.