

## Biblical Foundations

### Jesus, Our Example in Giving

*But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*

—2 Corinthians 8:7–9 (NIV)

The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians and challenged them to “excel in this grace of giving.” Paul was right. Giving is a good thing. Giving is something we should pursue with excellence. As a means of encouragement, he shared the wonderful example of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was rich. He possessed and freely exercised His divine attributes and enjoyed every measure of divine “wealth” that goes with that. But He chose to surrender the independent use of His divine attributes in order to become human, like us. In doing so, He remained God, fully God, and yet became man, fully man.

Jesus entered time and space as a baby. He grew up in humble conditions—not in a palace, but in a crowded home in Nazareth. He was ridiculed by the religious leaders of His day, and He was ultimately rejected by His own people, the nation of Israel. Our Messiah suffered betrayal, humiliation, shame, and torture. He was beaten and hung on a cross to die. He did all of this so that we might enjoy the riches of salvation, fellowship with God, and eternal blessing. Jesus became desperately poor so that we might become abundantly rich.

How, then, should we respond to such a sacrificial gift? We should respond with awe. We should respond with immense gratitude and love. And, as Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers, in response, we too should excel in giving. Let us follow the inspiring example of Jesus Christ by earnestly giving back to Him.