



*Carry the Light*

2 Cor. 8:1-9

*“Carry the Light to Exhibit God’s Grace”*



2 Cor. 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their power they were* willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.



7 Therefore, as ye abound in every *thing, in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and *in* your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.





## Review

During the Christmas season, we are following our theme, *Carry the Light*, by focusing on how carrying the light of the Gospel will allow us to *exhibit God* with our lives.

The conduct of a true Christian, one who is genuinely “born again,” is the outcome of a doctrinal foundation. We are **“living out our faith,”** and our testimony indicates the quality of it, be it good or bad.

**As I believe, therefore I live.**



## I. CARRY THE LIGHT TO EXHIBIT GOD'S GREATNESS

Mt. 5:14 **Ye are the light of the world.** A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 **Let your light so shine** before men, that they **may see your good works, and glorify your Father** which is in heaven.

## II. CARRY THE LIGHT TO EXHIBIT GOD'S GUIDANCE

Prov. 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.**

- A. Guidance in Limiting Self
- B. Guidance in Learning the Savior
- C. Guidance in Living Simplistically





# Why People Get Depressed at Christmas

Ray Williams of *Psychology Today*

- Hospitals and police forces report high incidences of suicide and attempted suicide.
- Psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals report a significant increase in patients complaining about depression.
- One North American survey reported that 45% of respondents dreaded the festive season.



- For some people, they get depressed at Christmas and even angry because of the excessive commercialization of Christmas, with the focus on gifts and the emphasis on "perfect" social activities.
- Other get depressed because Christmas appears to be a trigger to engage in excessive self-reflection and rumination about the inadequacies of life (and a "victim" mentality) in comparison with other people who seem to have more and do more.
- Still others become anxious at Christmas because of the pressure (both commercial and self-induced) to spend a lot of money on gifts and incur increasing debt.





Other people report that they dread Christmas because of the expectations for social gatherings with family, friends and acquaintances that they'd rather not spend time with.

And finally, many people feel very lonely at Christmas, because they have suffered the loss of loved ones or their jobs.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/wired-success/201011/why-people-get-depressed-christmas>

### III. CARRY THE LIGHT TO EXHIBIT GOD'S GRACE

#### A. The Grace for Living

2 Cor. 8:1 Moreover, brethren, **we do you to wit of the grace of God** bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in **a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.**





- Too often, life is very tough for everyone.
- The Macedonians exhibited grace for living when times were very challenging:

2 Cor. 8:2 How that in **a great trial of affliction** the **abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.**

- Tough times included “...a great trial of affliction...and their deep poverty...”
- How can a believer face such challenging times?



1 Sam. 30:6 And **David was greatly distressed**; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: **but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.**

- Finding such strength in distressing times is an exhibition of grace.

2 Cor. 8:1 Moreover, brethren, **we do you to wit of the grace of God** bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 Cor. 12:9 And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee**: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.





- God's unmerited favor – grace – is given to us for strength to face any circumstance!

Phil. 4:13 **I can do all things through Christ** which strengtheneth me.

## B. The Grace for Learning

2 Cor. 8:3 For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and **beyond their power they were willing** of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but **first gave their own selves to the Lord**, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so **he would also finish in you the same grace also.**



- Grace for living is acquired by engaging and learning from each situation.

Phil. 4:9 Those things, which ye have both **learned**, and received, and heard, and seen in me, **do**: and the God of peace shall be with you. ...

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for **I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.**

- We can learn how to face life as we look at the lives of those in the Scriptures.

Rom. 15:4 **For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning**, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.





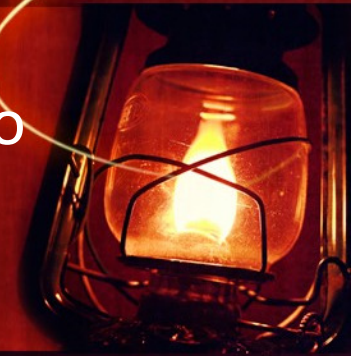
Prov. 13:20 **He that walketh with wise men shall be wise:**  
but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Prov. 1:5 **A wise man will hear, and will increase learning:**  
and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

Prov. 9:9 **Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser:** teach a just *man*, and he will increase in learning.

- The greatest opportunity for learning grace for living is in learning more of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mt. 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and **learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

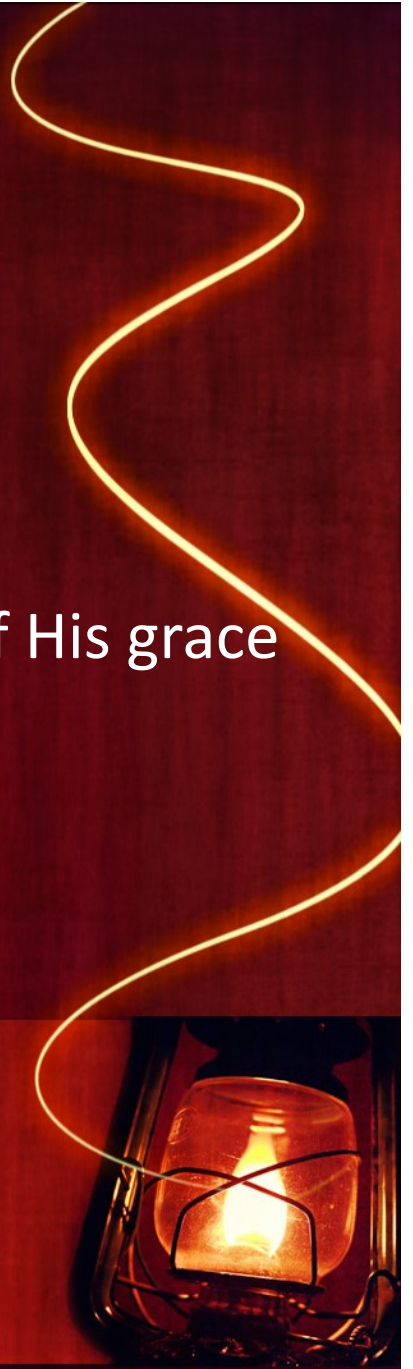


- As we learn more about fellowship with Christ, it will affect the way we live. By His grace, we will exhibit such learning to all who know us!

Titus 3:14 And let ours also **learn to maintain good works** for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

- The grace for living and learning is an exhibition of His grace for loving.

### C. The Grace for Loving





2 Cor. 8:7 Therefore, **as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us,** see that ye **abound in this grace also.**

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to **prove the sincerity of your love.**

9 For ye know **the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,** that, though he was rich, yet **for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

- God loved us, first.

1 Jn. 4:19 We love **him, because he first loved us.**



- God loved us even while we were yet sinners.

Rom. 5:8 **But God commendeth his love toward us**, in that, **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.

Eph. 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, **for his great love wherewith he loved us**,  
5 **Even when we were dead in sins**, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

1 Jn. 4:10 **Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us**, and sent his Son *to be* **the propitiation for our sins**.





- God's love for us is reciprocated when we love Him enough to live for Him

2 Cor. 5:14 For **the love of Christ constraineth us**; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And *that* he died for all, that **they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him** which died for them, and rose again.

- We exhibit God's grace for loving when we love like He loves!

1 Jn. 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, **we ought also to love one another.**

1 Jn. 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, **when we love God, and keep his commandments.**

3 For **this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**



## Conclusion

Jn. 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on me** through their word;

21 **That they all may be one**; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, **that they also may be one in us**: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; **that they may be one, even as we are one**:

23 I in them, and thou in me, **that they may be made perfect in one**; and **that the world may know** that thou hast sent me, **and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me**.

