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14 DAY DEVOTIONAL

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*The*  
GRACE  
*of*  
GIVING

TIMELESS REFLECTIONS ON  
GIVING AND GENEROSITY



BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF  
A. B. SIMPSON

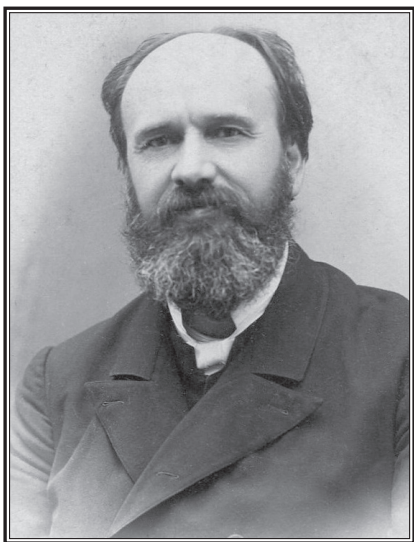


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*A. B. Simpson, 1885*

# *Introduction*



Alliance founder Albert Benjamin Simpson was passionate about three things: (1) The **profound richness** of life that can be experienced through an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus; (2) the **joyous urgency** of taking His message of love, mercy, and grace to the whole world; and (3) His long expected return for His Bride and the establishment of His **glorious Kingdom** on earth.

Dr. Simpson was serious about evangelizing the world and therefore equally serious about funding the efforts to bring it about. It made perfect sense that he raised the issue of generosity and boldly asked believers to support the work at hand. It was a testament to the depth of his love for his Savior and unwavering commitment to see His Kingdom established in the hearts of all humankind.

In 1899, Simpson crafted *The Grace of Giving*, expounded primarily from the eighth and ninth chapters of the second letter to the Corinthian church. The brief devotionals on the pages ahead capture some of his most profound, Scripture-rooted, Spirit-inspired thinking on the subject of generosity and giving. We pray it will enlighten and encourage you in your ever-deepening relationship with Jesus and commitment to His purposes.

Orchard Alliance

*Serving the Kingdom Together*

# Day 1

*I will give thanks to you, LORD, with  
all my heart; I will tell of all your  
wonderful deeds.*

—Psalm 9:1



I remember taking up a collection in Boston, in starting our mission there on Tremont Street. The largest gift was \$25. I asked who the \$25 man was and was introduced to him at the close of the meeting. He was a poor shoemaker and had a little shop. When I spoke to him about his gift, he said, ‘If only you knew what the Lord has given to me, you would not wonder at all.’ —ABS

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Like the shoemaker, what has the Lord given to you?
- ☞ When you consider the Lord's abundant generosity toward you—what He has given and done for you—how does your life response toward Him and His Church compare?
- ☞ What is the Lord asking you to do in the areas of generosity and/or giving?

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## Day 2

*In the midst of a very severe trial,  
their overflowing joy and their extreme  
poverty welled up in rich generosity.*

—2 Corinthians 8:2



Giving is a privilege of the poor. The very poorest may give, and God will enable them to give. It is not for the wealthy and for the millionaire, but for those of the smallest resources and humblest means. God requires the poor to give because it is a grace. It is God's doing, not man's—therefore God chooses the weakest of the people to do it.  
—ABS

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ What do you think about Dr. Simpson's statements "Giving is a privilege of the poor," and "God requires the poor to give because it is a grace?"
- ☞ How have you seen giving as anything other than a grace?
- ☞ In what ways have you taken credit for what you've been able to give?

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## Day 3

*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.*

—2 Corinthians 8:7



Grace is something given us; not something we give, but something we get. God does not require you to give as a hard exercise. He wants to give you the spirit of giving; something you must do in the power of the Holy Spirit, something you must take as a divine gift. It belongs to the essential qualities of holiness and right living. —ABS

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ What does it mean to you that “the spirit of giving...belongs to the essential qualities of holiness and right living?”
- ☞ Have you ever asked God for the gift of generosity?
- ☞ Take some time to reflect on Dr. Simpson’s assertion that giving must be done in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ☞ How might your giving or generosity change if done in the power of the Holy Spirit?

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# Day 4

*For I testify that they gave as much  
as they were able, and even beyond  
their ability.*

—2 Corinthians 8:3



If giving is a grace it is always beyond our ability. Now, we do not understand this naturally. We go about holiness supernaturally, but we go about giving as a matter of business. God wants you to go about your giving as you do about your blessing, in faith. Give believing that He can supply even more than you can see of resources and ability.  
—ABS

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ How do you feel about Dr. Simpson's contrast between how we approach holiness and giving?
- ☞ How regularly do you approach giving or generosity as something beyond your ability, needing supernatural grace?
- ☞ How might God want to change the ways you think about giving and generosity?

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## Day 5

*They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations.*

—2 Corinthians 8:4



**W**hen we give ourselves to The Lord, then everything is given. Your clothes, your food, the support of your family—all of these are consecrated to The Lord. Holiness unto the Lord is written upon everything you do. It is not merely what you put in the plate. When the cords of self are cut, then it is a joy to give everything to Him. —*ABS*

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Think about whether your giving has been more out of duty or joy.
- ☞ Have you ever thought about consecrating your giving to the Lord, similar to how you may have dedicated your calling, children, marriage, gifts, etc.?
- ☞ How would your thoughts on giving and generosity change if they were consecrated to the Lord?

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# Day 6

*They gave themselves first of all to  
the Lord, and then by the will of  
God also to us.*

—2 Corinthians 8:5



**T**his must ever be the spring both of beneficence and service. When we cease to own ourselves, then all the selfish bonds that hold us to our belongings are sweetly broken and we rise into the glorious liberty of a life of unselfish love. It seems to be clearly taught in the Scriptures that God does not want either our gifts or our services until He has us. —*ABS*

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Have you given yourself fully to the Lord? What are you holding back?
- ☞ In what ways has the topic of giving been more of a source of bondage rather than freedom?
- ☞ How have you seen yourself as the owner of your resources and gifts, rather than as a steward?
- ☞ How has the Lord changed your heart regarding generosity and giving over the years?

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# Day 7

*Each of you should give what you  
have decided in your heart to give, not  
reluctantly or under compulsion, for  
God loves a cheerful giver.*

—2 Corinthians 9:7



**H**ere we are distinctly taught that our giving is to be prompted not by our calculations of how little we can spare but by the impulses of our heart. The old proverbial exhortation that we should give till it hurts falls far short of the divine philosophy. Here we are taught that we should give till it doesn't hurt, and if we give enough to really reach and kill the core of our selfishness, it will slay the thing that hurts and make it a divine and eternal joy. —ABS

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Do you “give till it hurts” or do you give with “divine and eternal joy?”
- ☞ If the Lord prompted your heart to give extravagantly to someone (i.e.: pay their mortgage for a month or year), how would you respond to that prompting?
- ☞ Take some time to consider the concept that through giving and generosity, we will overcome our selfish tendencies.
- ☞ Where in your life have you seen the connection between selfishness and a lack of joy?

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# Day 8

*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 8:9



**H**ere the Lord appears among His people as a great and infinite Giver. He gives not a part but the whole. He gives till He has exhausted all His riches and absolutely impoverished Himself, for we are told ‘That though he was rich, yet he became poor.’ He emptied Himself, He kept nothing back. He has nothing left but the heritage of His people. ‘The Lord’s portion is His people.’ All else He has given away. —*ABS*

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Some people are comfortable being generous with their time and talent, but less so financially. In what ways are you comfortable or uncomfortable being generous with what has been entrusted to you?
- ☞ As Dr. Simpson wrote, “He kept nothing back.” In which areas are you more likely to hold something back and be less generous?
- ☞ How can the example of “the great and infinite Giver” inspire you?

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## Day 9

*So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.*

—2 Corinthians 9:5



This surely is the very method which God has led us to adopt in these great offerings; namely, to lay upon the hearts and consciences of God's children, the claims of Christ, the needs of the world, and the obligation of giving liberally to send the gospel everywhere. There is something in such a principle and system fitted to give a glorious incentive to our whole business and life and to put into even our secular pursuits

and daily callings a sacredness and sweetness that no language can express. —*ABS*

### REFLECTION:

- ☞ What is the most generous gift you've ever given to someone? How does that compare to the most generous gift you've given to support the church?
- ☞ When has your heart been compelled to give generously to spreading the gospel message?
- ☞ Which is more compelling to you—being generous in your support of the local church or supporting international mission efforts? Why?

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# Day 10

*Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need.*

—2 Corinthians 8:13–14



**H**ere we have God's message to the rich just as we had it a little while ago to the poor. How often it happens that when our means are limited our hearts are large and when our resources increase our desire shrinks. Beloved, have your gifts to the Lord been increasing with your income? Has He shared proportionately the fruits of His blessing upon your business? 'Will a man rob God?

But ye have robbed Me in tithes and offerings.’  
—*ABS*

### REFLECTION:

- ☞ As you look back on times of financial limitation and financial abundance, what do you see about your heart for generosity and giving in those phases?
- ☞ What would it mean for you to be as generous today as you were during lean financial times?
- ☞ Have there been times when you have robbed God? Are there ways that you rob God even today?

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# Day 11

*For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.*

—2 Corinthians 9:2



**T**here is no doubt that the noble gifts of the faithful in this convention have resulted in a vast increase of missionary liberality on the part of the other churches and religious societies.—*ABS*

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ How have others' expressions of sacrificial generosity and giving encouraged you to do the same?
- ☞ How have your expressions of sacrificial generosity and giving encouraged others to do the same?
- ☞ How do you respond to the concept that the gifts of the faithful are noble?

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# Day 12

*Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. . . . And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

—2 Corinthians 9:6, 8



**T**he blessing of God upon our temporal affairs is the certain fruit of our giving. There is no doubt that this passage refers directly to temporal blessing and God's promise to prosper us when we give liberally—that we may be able to give more. —*ABS*

## REFLECTION:

- ☞ Which are you more inclined to be, a sparing sower or a generous sower? Why?
- ☞ Pray about inviting the Lord to make you a more generous sower so that you can reap generously.
- ☞ Pray about the conditional nature of the verses and quote regarding giving and reaping.
- ☞ What do you think about Dr. Simpson's assertion that "The blessing of God upon our temporal affairs is the certain fruit of our giving?"

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# Day 13

*Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.*

—2 Corinthians 9:10



Our giving enables us to have a partnership in the work of others and to sow the seed of the gospel in fields which we personally could never visit. The men and women whom we support are simply the bearers of our own precious seed. The businessman who never can visit China or Africa may be able to preach the gospel around the world through the lips and hands and feet that he sends around the world.

Someday these souls will meet him in the great harvest and shall be counted the fruit of his own direct ministry. —*ABS*

### REFLECTION:

- ☞ What gospel efforts has the Lord put on your heart? How have you responded?
- ☞ How is He calling you to invest in those efforts, even if you can't directly do the work?
- ☞ What does it mean to you that efforts you support will be credited to your own direct ministry?

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# Day 14

*Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.*

—2 Corinthians 8:10–11



Paul is explaining here that the Corinthians made their commitments in advance. They did it in meekness and gentleness of spirit, and the news went abroad through the churches. It reached Macedonia and the Macedonians were inspired to do likewise. It encouraged many of them, and it was a blessing even before a single cent was paid.

The pledging was a blessing, and it was undoubtedly acceptable to God. He was pleased with their planning.

God is still pleased when we plan our giving. As we review our mercies and blessings, as we look out upon a world in need of Christ Jesus, we can determine that by God's help we will give X amount in the next 12 months for the spread of the gospel. This is not pledged as a promissory note. It is a covenant between us and God. It is simply an endeavor on our part—just like what the Corinthians were doing. —*ABS*

### REFLECTION:

- ☞ Why do you think God was pleased with the Corinthians for planning their giving?
- ☞ What do you think it means to “finish” or “complete” the work of generosity?
- ☞ How are you planning your giving for the next year, decades, and after you die?
- ☞ How will you include your family, friends, and church in your generosity plan?



**Orchard Alliance**, a supporting organization of The Alliance since 1978, serves individuals, Alliance churches, subsidiaries, and affiliated ministries with lending products, property project advisement, investment and retirement products, gift and estate design services, and biblically-based training in stewardship and generosity. We also support several like-minded ministry partners with planned giving services.

For any assistance with planning your giving, contact Orchard Alliance at 833-672-4255 or [info@OrchardAlliance.org](mailto:info@OrchardAlliance.org).



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