

LC Study Leaders—Special Notes for Leading the 2 Cor. 8-9 Study
Biblical Framework for *A New Day of Grace Giving*

Purpose of this study: to help people grapple with a relevant and classic Scriptural passage that is brimming with insight into giving and generosity. Central to the text is its emphasis on both the action and the attitude (and motivation) that characterizes godly giving. Let's pray that our people will learn from the Scripture, grow in their dependence on the Lord's leadership in their lives, and give generously to the vision in spiritual responsiveness as only God can direct.

2 Corinthians 8-9: This is a big block of Scripture, full of rich spiritual and practical insights. However, it is too much for word by word, verse by verse study, which would require hours. Fortunately, we can subdivide it into 3 major chunks. Realistically, most LC studies (assuming 45-60 minutes) should aim to dig into the first and last of the 3 chunks, and then lightly touch upon or even skip the middle chunk.

A Possible Plan: Our LC did a "test drive" of this study. In our one hour study, we had a pretty high quality study and good application discussion. Here is the rough plan I developed:

- 10 minutes (or less) with the introductory "warm-up" (the "starter question"),
- 25 minutes on the first segment (2 Cor. 8: 1-15),
- 1 minute to summarize the middle segment (which I explained was "largely historical and focused on Paul's concern that the offering be administered wisely and honorably),
- 15 minutes on the third segment (2 Cor. 9: 6-15), as we focused on the spiritual attitudes necessary for godly giving and the results/benefits associated with giving;
- 10 minutes talking through the application of these insights to our own life and lifestyles.

You and our Methodology: Through good observation and reading (observation), we strive to understand Paul's comments and derive the crucial, transferable principles (interpretation). Finally, we seek to integrate these insights, allowing God to transform people's lives and lifestyles' (application). As the leader you will ask an array of questions. Basically, there are 3 types of content questions, which are indicated in the lesson: O for Observation; I for Interpretation; A for Application.

You and Good Process: We want this to be a Bible-centered, group discussion. The Holy Spirit is the teacher. You are the leader—and your asking of questions and affirming people's contributions are crucial to the study's success. If the discussion begins to get off track or bogged down, your role is to move it along. Allow them to wrestle with the passage. Don't spoon feed them. In these ways, the Holy Spirit becomes the teacher and does the transforming work in people's hearts.

As someone once said: *The goal is not to master the text, but to allow the text to master us.*

General Advice for leading LC Studies: (Text is on other page or www.Biblegateway.com)

- a. BIG idea: Just as God's generosity has given us grace and life, so we want to develop similar attitudes and lifestyle.
- b. Key verse/idea: 2 Cor. 8:9 *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...*
- c. Complement your OIA questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? What do others of you see/think?).
- d. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time).
- e. Always reword questions in words are comfortable for you.
- f. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people; encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
- g. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- h. Application: Pace the study to conclude with "difference making" application.
- i. If you are utilizing this "on-line" study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend that you get the 1-volume commentary entitled New Bible Commentary, Revised (21st Century Edition, IVP). It is well worth the \$40.