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### SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF LIBERALITY

The scripture largely teaches by example, and would lead us to the discharge of duty by a record of the deeds of others. And there is, perhaps, no duty more frequently set before us, both by precept and example, in the sacred volume, than Christian liberality. One instance we have recorded in the 8th chapter of 2 Corinthians, viz: the case of the churches of Macedonia, contributing to the relief of the poor saints which were at Jerusalem. To a few of the features of this case we would direct the attention of our readers.

1. The givers were very poor. They were "in deep poverty" (v. 2). In those days Christians were oftentimes called on to suffer the spoiling of their goods. A profession of Christ's name was often the signal for the loss of all earthly possessions. This was the case of the Macedonian Christians. "In a great trial of affliction,"—their deep poverty, &c. They had thus what would consider the best excuse for not giving. Yet still they gave. If in their poverty they acted thus, what results would

have followed had they been as rich as some modern Christians. It has been doubted whether we should ask the poor to give to the schemes of the church. But this arises from want of scriptural views of Christian liberality. Giving is never represented in the word of God as a burden, but a privilege. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Christian benevolence is represented as pleasing in the sight of God, and a gracious reward following in its train, Heb. 6: 10, 11, 13, 16; Phil. 4: 18; 2 Cor. 9: 6, 7, &c. Should the poor then be hindered from those works of faith, which Christ will crown with his distinguishing favor. Let them cultivate self-denying liberality; let them do whatever their circumstances admit, that they may at last hear the Judge say, "They have done what they could."

2. They gave very liberally. "Their deep poverty abounds to the riches of the liberality." They gave not only to the full extent of their ability, but even beyond it—"to their power, yea, and beyond their power," as the Apostle testifies (v. 3). They