

Main Idea: We need to remember the grace exchange for it has power to affect all of life. What is it? On the basis of the grace of Christ, two exchanges occurred according to 2 Corinthians 8:9.

- I. Remember what happened to Christ.
 - A. He was rich.
 1. He possessed all the fullness of God (Col 1:19).
 2. He shared the Father’s glory (John 17:5).
 3. He created the universe (John 1:1-2; Col 1:16).
 4. He is the heir of all things (Heb 1:2).
 - B. He became poor.
 1. He became a man (John 1:14).
 2. He laid aside His glory (Phil 2:6-8).
 3. He experienced the rejection of men (John 1:10-11).
 4. He paid the ultimate price at the Cross (Matt 20:28).
 5. He died without a single possession (Matt 27:35).
- II. Remember what happened to us.
 - A. On our own, we are poor.
 1. We are spiritually bankrupt (Matt 5:3).
 2. We owe a debt we can never pay (Matt 18:23-25).
 - B. Because of Christ, we may become rich.
 1. We receive God’s fullness (Col 2:9-10).
 2. We share God’s glory (John 17:22).
 3. We become heirs of God (Rom 8:17).
 4. We are given eternal life (1 John 5:13).
 5. We receive every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3).
 - C. The basis of it all is grace.
 1. At the Cross, God transferred our poverty to Christ.
 2. At the Cross, God transferred Christ’s wealth to us.

Make It Personal: Two responsibilities...

1. Experience the grace exchange.
2. Live in light of it.

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

“I will do it.”

Those are important words, words of commitment, words we rightfully use when the Lord makes it clear He wants us to do something.

I will read my Bible every day. I will be faithful to my marriage vows, giving my heart to none other, till death do us part. I will be a faithful parent. I will make the most of every opportunity to enable my children to learn God’s Word.

I will love my church and be faithful to it. I will support the ministries of my church. I will meet with my church family for worship every week unless providentially hindered. I will do that ministry in my church. I will teach the kids in Sunday School. I will be an active part of that community group. I will pray for my deacon care group.

I will do it.

We say those words frequently. Indeed, it would inappropriate *not* to say those words if we know something to be God’s will for us.

But here’s where we struggle, all of us. We say, “I will do it,” begin to do it, and then stop doing it. We get distracted, perhaps discouraged. Perhaps we forget we even made the commitment. And when we do remember, we feel some guilt, maybe make a

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous message on this passage, see the “Amazed By Grace” series in 2001 at WBC.

renewed commitment, and then fizzle out again, for guilt is never a good motivator for sustained change.

Good intentions. We mean well. I believe that most of the time, we truly do want to do what we say we're going to do. We need more than good intentions. We need a motivation, something to sustain us in the long haul.

And we have it. What subject has the power to motivate us to follow through with our good-intentioned commitments?

We see it right here in today's text. When the Spirit of God directed Paul to write 2 Corinthians 8, it's because there was a problem. The problem was that the church members in Corinth made a commitment to do something very good. The previous year they heard about a need and rightly responded, "We'll meet that need. We'll do it. We will give a generous gift to help our hurting brothers and sisters in that sister church."

It was a good commitment. It's the commitment the Lord wanted them to make. And after they made it, they started down the right path to do what they said they would do. And then they stopped.

How do you help someone when their good intentions fall short? Should we guilt-trip them? Should we justify? Should we try positive reinforcement? Maybe a bribe? Parents, we face this scenario all the time with our kids. So do grandparents.

How do we motivate someone we love who is struggling to do what they said they would do? How do we motivate ourselves? What subject should be on our lips?

Here's Paul's answer. It's in 2 Corinthians 8:9. We need to remember the *grace exchange*. "For you know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you, through His poverty might become rich."

This is lofty theology, but I want us to see where it's found. It's right in the middle of an exhortation to Christians to give money to a ministry need.

The Bible does this all the time. How do you motivate husbands and wives to work at their marriages? In Ephesians 5 Paul does it by taking them to theology class and reminding them how Christ loves His bride.

This is profound, beloved. We motivate best by reminding people of who God is and what He has done. And perhaps no attribute of God, no action of God, is more inspirational for our lives than this attribute, grace, and this action, the grace-exchange.

What is the *grace exchange*? It involves two parties, although the initiative of the exchange is totally one-sided. In the grace exchange, two transactions (or "exchanges") occurred, and we need to remember them continually.

I. Remember what happened to Christ.

The text begins, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul wrote 2 Corinthians around the year AD 55. This is a very personal letter, and in chapters 8-9 Paul brings up a very personal subject, *money*. The specific matter pertained to a collection of money for poverty-stricken Christians living in Jerusalem. On an earlier occasion, Paul had told the Corinthians about the financial needs of their Christian brothers and sisters, and the Corinthian church responded with gladness. They began to collect money in their benevolence fund.

But for some reason, their good intentions had come to a standstill. The believers in Jerusalem were still in need, but the Corinthians were holding tightly onto their money.

So Paul tackled the problem head-on in chapters 8 & 9. First, he appealed to the example of the Macedonian church in verses 1-5. The Macedonians themselves were poor, but did not let that keep them from giving what they had generously.

Then in verses 6-7 Paul reminded the Corinthians of the promise they had made the year before, their promise to give to this benevolent offering. He doesn't command them to give, but reminds them that giving is a test for the sincerity of one's love (8).

And he reminds them of the subject of grace. He mentions grace again and again in chapters 8-9 (8:1, 6, 7, 9; 9:8, 14). That ought not surprise us for *grace* and *giving* go hand in hand. Notice verse 1, "And now, brothers, we want you to know about the *grace that God has given* the Macedonian churches. Why were the Macedonian Christians, though themselves in extreme poverty (2), so eager to give? The answer is *grace*. Grace is God's unmerited help. God enabled the Macedonian believers to give "beyond their ability," as Paul puts it in verse 3.

Paul wanted the same to occur with the Corinthians. So he exhorted them in verse 6 "to bring to completion this *act of grace* on your part." Christians aren't supposed to be "takers" in life, but "givers." We're not to focus on ourselves, but on God and others. And when we give to others, we're acting like God. We're showing *grace*.

But if the example of the Macedonians wasn't enough to motivate the Corinthians, this would be. In verse 9, our text, Paul puts the spotlight on the greatest demonstration of grace possible. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

This is the greatest incentive for generous giving. Not a tax break. Not getting your name on a plaque. It's what our Savior did.

"For you know," Paul begins. You know. This is common knowledge for the Christian, yet we need to be reminded of it.

"For you know the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Corinthians knew about grace. They were saved people. You can't be a Christian and not know about grace. The world's religions say, "If you do right, you'll reach God." But Christianity says, "Not so. You are a helpless sinner, and you need God to reach you."

Which is what He did, by sending His only begotten Son into the world. "For you know the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*." Notice that Paul used the Savior's complete title, then gives us not a *definition* of grace, but rather an unparalleled *illustration* of it. He reminds us of the grace-exchange, first putting the focus on what happened to Christ.

A. He was rich. How rich was He? So rich that in comparison Bill Gates is a pauper. I want to give you a snapshot of the portfolio of the Son of God. It's not exhaustive, for His resources are infinite. How rich was He before He came into the world? Consider four assets to His credit.

1. *He possessed all the fullness of God (Col 1:19).* That's the phrase Paul used in Colossians 1:19, "For God was pleased to have *all his fullness* dwell in him." Not some, but *all*. The Son of God possessed all the fullness of God.

2. *He shared the Father's glory (John 17:5).* It's impossible for our finite minds to grasp this. To say that Christ shared His Father's glory is to say that He was one in essence with the Father.

"No man can see God and live," the Scriptures teach. Yet Christ not only saw God the Father, but enjoyed intimate fellowship with Him throughout eternity past.

Oh, how sweet that fellowship was, beloved! And cherished, too. Do you know what the Savior looked forward to most about returning to heaven following His work on earth? He tells us in His prayer in John 17:5, "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."

How rich was Christ? So rich that He shared the very glory of the Father. Hebrews 1:3 says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being."

The night before the crucifixion, Philip asked Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us (John 14:8).” Remember the Lord’s response? “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” A third asset...

3. *He created the universe (John 1:1-2; Col 1:16).* How’s that for a line item on your resume? Creator of all things.

“In the beginning was the Word,” says John 1:1-2, “and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” And then verse 3, “Through him *all things were made*; without him nothing was made that has been made.”

Talk about wealth! “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen (Rom 11:35-36).”

This universe belongs to Christ. He made it, and it exists for His honor. Colossians 1:16 explains, “For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.” A fourth asset...

4. *He is the heir of all things (Heb 1:2).* That’s how the writer of Hebrews referred to Christ in Hebrews 1:1-2, “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in many ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed *heir of all things*, and through whom he made the universe.”

How rich was the Lord Jesus Christ? So rich that the Father has declared Him to be the *heir* of everything. In the last book of the Bible, John sees a vision of Christ in which the Son of God takes a scroll in hand, indicating He actually holds the title deed of the universe (verse 7).

And furthermore, we know that today Jesus has a name that is above all names (Heb 1:4; Phil 2:9). He is the source of all blessing (John 1:16).

“For you know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that though *He was rich*.” Indeed, there was none richer anywhere in the universe. Which makes the next three words in our text mind-boggling.

B. He became poor. Who became poor? The One who possessed all the fullness of God, who shared the Father’s glory, who created the universe, and is the heir of all things. *He* became poor.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes *he became poor*.”

What did Paul mean when he said that Christ *became poor*? Is he talking economics? Indeed, none ever lowered his standard of living as did God’s Son. When He came to the world, God’s Son did not choose a famous city like Rome or Athens, but the obscure village of Bethlehem. And He didn’t enter as a Roman citizen, but as a second class Jew. And it wasn’t the King’s palace He selected, but a cattle stall.

In fact, the home He chose—Joseph and Mary’s—was so poor that this young couple couldn’t afford the typical lamb for purification. They settled for a pair of doves (Luke 2:24), the offering of the poor.

Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor. But is that what Paul had in mind, the poor *social status* the Savior chose? I don’t think so, not primarily.

Oh, He did enter the world at the bottom end of the economic scale. But He wasn’t destitute. In reality, Jesus was no poorer than most first-century Jews, and better

off than some. As an adult He and His followers actually had sufficient money to provide help for those worse off than themselves (John 12:3-6; 13:27-29).²

This is something greater than economic poverty. Jesus became poor in a way that no one else ever has. This poverty has to do with His redemption. Christ *became poor* by willfully taking five self-humbling actions.

1. *He became a man (John 1:14)*. “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” When Christ came from the Father, He took as His wardrobe the rags of human flesh. The theological term is *incarnation*. God actually became a man.

2. *He laid aside His glory (Phil 2:6-8)*. Listen to Philippians 2:6-7, “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

Don’t misunderstand. When God became a man, He didn’t give up His deity. He never stopped being God. But when He humbled Himself and took the form of a man, He voluntarily chose to lay aside His glory. For 33 years, He chose to forfeit the privileges that are inherently His as God.

You would think that if God would pay a visit to the world, the world would respond with a grand reception. You would expect the world to roll out the red carpet, wouldn’t you? But it was just the opposite. When Christ *became poor*...

3. *He experienced the rejection of men (John 1:10-11)*. One of His followers, John, saw it happen firsthand, and wrote, “He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.”

Unthinkable. *His own* did not receive Him. He came as a Jew, but the Jews did not receive Him. Neither did the Gentiles, for Pilate authorized His execution, and the Roman soldiers carried it out. Yet there was more to His poverty.

4. *He paid the ultimate price at the Cross (Matt 20:28)*. Why did He become a man, lay aside His glory, and subject Himself to man’s rejection? Jesus Himself answered that question in Matthew 20:28, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to *give his life as a ransom for many*.”

That’s what it means to say *He became poor*. Christ gave up everything. Christ chose to pay the ultimate price, giving *His own life* on calvary’s cross.³ And so we sing, “Jesus paid it *all*. *All* to Him I owe.”

But there’s more. We haven’t yet exhausted the magnitude of that statement, *He became poor*. Ponder how He died.

5. *He died without a single possession (Matt 27:35)*. Literally. Matthew 27:35 tells us what the soldiers did while He hung on the Cross, “When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.” When Christ left the earth, He didn’t even have His clothing. He left behind no bank account. Joseph of Arimathea donated his own tomb for the Savior’s burial (Matt 27:60).

Indeed, *though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor*.

On June 30, 1966, American troops were attacked by a Viet Cong regiment. Among them was Sergeant Donald Long, from Oak Hill, Ohio. When the enemy

² Colin Kruse, p. 154.

³ “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross (Philippians 2:8)!”

threatened to overrun a disabled carrier nearby, Sergeant Long disregarded his own safety to help the severely wounded crew to safety.

Suddenly, a grenade was hurled onto the carrier deck. Long shouted a warning to the crew and pushed to safety one man who had not heard the warning over the roar of the battle.

Realizing that these actions would not fully protect the exposed crewmen from the deadly explosion, Sergeant Long threw himself over the grenade to absorb the blast. In so doing, he saved the lives of eight of his comrades. But he did so at the expense of his own life. He gave his life in exchange for theirs.⁴

It's amazing to ponder such love, to honor it, to appreciate it. But Sergeant Long died for his comrades. The Lord Jesus Christ died for His *enemies*.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain.

Mine, mine was the transgression, but Thine the deadly pain.

Lo, here I fall, my Savior; 'Tis I deserve Thy place;

*Look on me with Thy favor, assist me with Thy grace.*⁵

How do we motivate someone we love who is struggling to do what they said they would do? How do we motivate ourselves? First, by remembering what happened to Christ. But there's a second transaction in the *grace exchange*.

II. Remember what happened to us.

Listen to our text again, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

We learn two things about ourselves in this verse.

A. On our own, we are poor. Just as Christ's "poverty" in the first part of the verse pertained to something other than economics, so here for us. To say that we are poor indicates two things about our condition.⁶

1. *We are spiritually bankrupt (Matt 5:3).* Jesus began His Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3)." The "blessed" person, that is, the person who has God's approval, is the one who is *poor in spirit*.

The truth is, we are sinners. We have broken God's law, and are guilty before Him. Spiritually bankrupt. What's more...

2. *We owe a debt we can never pay (Matt 18:23-25).* Remember the parable of the unmerciful servant? In Matthew 18:23-25 Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents [that is, millions of dollars] was brought to him. Since he was *not able to pay*, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt."

That servant, of course, represents us. We are *debtors*. We're not only poor, but we owe God a debt that we can never pay.

You'll recall that in the first exchange, Christ was rich yet chose to become poor. In the second exchange it's just the opposite. On our own we are poor, but...

⁴ Account taken from the medal citation for Donald Long, as reported in the *Portsmouth Times*

⁵ *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*, by Paul Gerhardt, based on Medieval Latin poem ascribed to Berhard of Clairvaux.

⁶ Though not stated explicitly in our text, Paul assumes them to be true based on other texts (see Rom 3:10ff.).

B. Because of Christ, we may become rich. “For your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty *might become rich.*” That’s right. Paul says that his readers who were once spiritually bankrupt and owed a debt they could never pay are now *rich*.

How rich? The riches of the *grace exchange* are inexhaustible, but to whet your appetite, allow me to mention five treasures. If we are in Christ, this is ours. How rich are we? On the basis of the *grace exchange*...

1. *We receive God’s fullness (Col 2:9-10).* Paul explains in Colossians 2:9-10, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and *you have been given fullness in Christ*, who is the head over every power and authority.”

What do we possess? *Fullness*. What kind of fullness? The *fullness of Deity*. Don’t confuse this with New Age teaching. We are creatures, not “gods.” But because of the *grace exchange*, we receive God’s *fullness*. More about that in a moment.

2. *We share God’s glory (John 17:22).* Here is what Jesus said to His Father in John 17:22, “I have given them [the disciples] *the glory that you gave me*, that they may be one as we are one.” What did Jesus say He gave His followers? The *glory* that the Father had given Him. A third treasure...

3. *We become heirs of God (Rom 8:17).* “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

Do you see a similarity between our riches and the riches of Christ? What’s true of Christ? He possessed all the fullness of God. He shared the Father’s glory. He’s the heir of all things. And what’s now true of us? We’ve been given the fullness of God. We share in God’s glory. And we have become heirs of God. These are not ours inherently like they are Christ’s. We have received these treasures. They are gifts. And there’s more...

4. *We are given eternal life (1 John 5:13).* 1 John 5:11-13 says, “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have *eternal life.*”

5. *We receive every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3).* “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with *every spiritual blessing* in Christ.”

Fellow Christian, when this text says, “So that through His poverty we might become *rich*,” it means *rich*.

“But how?” you ask. “How can a spiritually-bankrupt debtor become rich?”

C. The basis of it all is grace. Remember, this verse is an illustration of *grace*. “For you know the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Because of grace of Christ, two exchanges took place. First, the One who was rich became poor. And secondly, we who were once poor become rich.

But how do we tap into these resources? The answer is contained in these three key words. *Through His poverty*. It’s *through His poverty*, that is, through the great payment that Christ made in His redemption, that we become rich.

My friend, though the naked eye could not see it, a transaction occurred when Christ hung on the cross. A transfer took place, accomplished by God Himself.

1. *At the Cross, God transferred our poverty to Christ.* And secondly...
2. *At the Cross, God transferred Christ’s wealth to us.*

Hebrews 2:9 says, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the *grace of God* he might taste death for everyone.” It’s called *substitutionary atonement*. Christ died as a substitute for us. He tasted death for us.

We’re told in 1 John 3:5, “But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.” A holy God cannot overlook sin, but to satisfy His justice must punish it. And that’s what He did. At the cross, God transferred the sinner’s poverty to Christ, and Christ’s wealth to the sinner.

Martin Luther explains, “Although out of pure grace God does not impute our sins to us, He nonetheless did not want to do this until complete and ample satisfaction of His law and His righteousness had been made. Since this was impossible for us, God ordained for us, in our place, One who took upon Himself all the punishment we deserve. He fulfilled the law for us. He averted the judgment of God from us and appeased God’s wrath. Grace, therefore, costs us nothing, but it cost Another much to get it for us. Grace was purchased with an incalculable, infinite treasure, the Son of God Himself.”⁷

No verse makes this any clearer than 2 Corinthians 5:21. “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” This is sacred ground. Marvel at it, go deep. God treated Jesus the way we deserve to be treated, so that He can treat us the way Jesus deserves to be treated.

This is the *grace exchange*. The sinner’s poverty is given to Christ, and Christ’s wealth is given to the sinner. Has there ever been a greater demonstration of love than this? No, a thousand no’s!

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior’s blood?

Died He for me who caused His pain, for me who Him to death pursued.

Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, My God, shouldst die for Me?

Now, back to where we started. *I will do it.* That’s what I said. *I will read my Bible. I will be faithful to my church. I will do that ministry. I will make sure my kids are learning God’s Word.*

But now I’m not doing it, not as I said I would. Can’t we all relate? What subject has the power to motivate us to follow through with our good-intentioned commitments? A guilt trip won’t do it. But this will. *The grace exchange.*

We who are members of this church made a series of promises to the Lord and to each other when we joined. We committed ourselves to fulfill our church covenant.

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, the angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to faithfully attend its regular services; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions, to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk

⁷ Martin Luther, *Daily Walk*, May 5, 1992.

circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; and to be temperate in all things, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, and courtesy of speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.

We more over engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Let's be honest with ourselves. We've made some promises that we're not keeping. All of us. Are we faithfully attending its regular services? Are we contributing cheerfully? Are we striving to spread the gospel? Are we remembering each other in prayer? As a church we have all the money we need to do all the Lord wants us to do to fulfill our mission. We also have all the people we need to do all the ministries the Lord wants us to do. God has assembled a wonderful family of people who entered this church saying, "I will be faithful to the Lord, to supporting my church, and to participating in the ministries of my church."

But to the degree we're not doing what we said we would do, we as a church are not able to do what He intends for us to do. What's needed? What can renew and sustain us for obedience in the long haul? Paul says it's remembering the grace exchange.

Make It Personal: Two responsibilities...

1. *Experience the grace exchange.* Have you experienced the grace exchange? To do so, two things must happen.

First, stop clinging to your rags. Look at what's in your hands. What do you treasure? Is it your image or pleasure or the vain façade of your own goodness? If so, you must let go.

"But I've got too much to give up!" you say. Really? What do you have compared to the treasure of Christ? Nothing. But know this. To experience the *grace exchange*, you must stop clinging to the rags of your self-righteousness. Then you are ready to do this. Indeed, you must do this. You must...

Second, receive the riches of Christ. You cannot earn God's salvation. You must receive it. It is a gift. Receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and God will give you new and eternal life.

2. *Live in light of it.* I urge you to do something very practical, starting this week. Meditate on verses about grace (and why not start with 2 Corinthians 8:9). And sing songs about the grace of Christ (old and new; in a moment we'll be singing an old one that may be new to you, "*Arise, My Soul, Arise,*" by Wesley)

What commitments have you made that are now on the back-burner? Nothing motivates like remembering the grace-exchange.

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."