For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 2 Corinthians 8:3, 4.

The gospel, extending and widening, required greater provisions to sustain the warfare since the death of Christ, and this made the law of almsgiving a more urgent necessity than under the Hebrew government. Now God requires, not less gifts, but greater than at any other period of the world. The principle laid down by Christ is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. He has said, “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Luke 12:48).

The blessings of the Christian age were responded to by the first disciples in works of charity and benevolence. The outpouring of the Spirit of God, after Christ left His disciples and ascended to heaven, led to self-denial, and self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul writes to the Gentile Christians in regard to works of benevolence, and says, “Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also” (2 Corinthians 8:7). Here benevolence is placed by the side of faith, love, and Christian diligence.

Those who think that they can be good Christians, and close their ears and hearts to the calls of God for their liberalities, are in a fearful deception. There are those who abound in a profession of great love for the truth, and as far as words are concerned, have an interest to see the truth advance, but do nothing for its advancement. The faith of such is dead, not being made perfect by works. The Lord never made such a mistake as to convert a soul, and leave [that soul] under the power of covetousness.—The Review and Herald, August 25, 1874.

This devotional is taken from Ye Shall Receive Power by Ellen G. White.