

Generous Giving

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

I. Generous giving is motivated by love for Jesus.

- A.** The word grace is used four times in the first nine verses of 2 Corinthians 8 (vs. 1, 6, 7, 9). It is grace then that causes charity. God gives to us undeserved and unearned gifts of grace, and we generously give to those in need as God has generously given to us. The Macedonian churches were going through a severe test of affliction that involved persecution and poverty (vs. 1-2). But they begged Paul to take what little they had to give to the church in Jerusalem (vs. 4).
- B.** The Macedonians didn't have much. But what did they have (vs. 2)? Joy! They rejoiced in the grace of God that they had received in Jesus Christ. And their joy overflowed in generosity to other Christians in need. "They gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us." The Macedonians gave themselves first to the Lord Jesus (vs. 5) by giving their hearts to Jesus because of all that Jesus had given to them (vs. 9).

II. Generous giving is motivated by love for Christ's people.

- A.** If you love Jesus, you are going to love Jesus' bride the church. The church first gave themselves to Jesus in response to the grace of Jesus. And then they loved the apostles of Jesus like Paul and gave themselves to Paul (vs. 5). So, the Macedonian churches were willing to do whatever Paul asked them to do because of their love for both Christ and the apostles of Christ's church. Generosity toward people is a response to the grace of God at work in your life (vs. 7).
- B.** Generosity is a sign that your love for Jesus and people is genuine (vs. 8). The goal of our generosity is found in vs. 14: "your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness." You want to be generous enough to meet people's legitimate needs. The source of your generosity to others is not the size of your bank account. The source of your generosity is God's grace account.

III. Generous giving is motivated by joy.

- A.** People who are generous are people who are joyful. It gave the Macedonians joy to generously give to others (vs. 2). Paul then seeks to motivate the Corinthians to give generously by having the same joyful desire (vs. 10) to give that the Macedonians had. If you want to be generous, that is not natural. It is natural to use all your money on yourself. So, God had changed the Corinthians' hearts through the grace of Jesus. The grace of Jesus made them joyful. And their joy made them generous with other believers.

Application:

Rejoice to give generously to those in need because Jesus has been generous to you.

Sources:

The Bible

Commentaries by Trent Casto, David Garland, and Gary Millar.

Sermon Discussion Questions

- 1) If you want to be generous to other people, who do you need to give your heart to first? Why are poor people often more generous than wealthy people?
- 2) What is the connection between the Corinthians' love for Paul and their desire to give to churches that Paul knew and loved? When people are not generous, what does that say about their love for Jesus and people?
- 3) Why are joyful people also generous people? How can you gain more joy through generosity?