

THE JOY AND GRACE OF GIVING

2 Corinthians 8:1-15

- **“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35).**
- **Grace received produces generosity toward others.**

GENEROSITY IS GRACE IN ACTION (VS 1-6)

- *“Now about the collection for the saints: Do the same as I instructed the Galatian churches. On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he is prospering, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. I can testify that, according to their ability and even beyond their ability, of their own accord, ⁴they begged us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints and not just as we had hoped. ⁵Instead, they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us by God’s will.” (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)*
- **A devotion to Jesus will always pour out into generosity for others.**

GENEROSITY IS EXCELLING IN LOVE (VS. 7-12)

- *“Now as you excel in everything—in faith, speech, knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love for us—excel also in this act of grace.... ⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:7-9)*
- *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14)*
- **Be like Jesus in your generosity.**
- *“For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³It is not that there should be relief for others and hardship for you, but it is a question of equality.” (2 Corinthians 8:12-13)*

GENEROSITY SERVES OTHERS (VS. 13-15)

- *“The person who had much did not have too much, and the person who had little did not have too little.” (2 Corinthians 8:15)*
- **Love does not allow abundance to become indifference while brothers and sisters are suffering in genuine need.**
- **Biblical generosity thinks of others first and keeps the aim to glorify Christ as the goal.**
- *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9)*

Question: Where is grace of God leading you to become more generous? With your resources? With someone in need? With the ministry of your church?

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- What circumstances were the Macedonian churches experiencing, and what was remarkable about the way they responded to the needs of other believers?
- How does Paul connect generosity with grace and love, and how does he present Jesus as the ultimate example of generosity?
- What principles does Paul give concerning a person's willingness and ability to give? What does he say makes a gift acceptable?
- What does Paul say about meeting the needs of others?

Understanding

- Why is generosity often one of the first things we are tempted to reduce when we experience financial uncertainty or hardship?
- What does the Macedonians' example teach us about the relationship between generosity and how much we possess?
- Why is giving ourselves to the Lord the necessary starting point for biblical generosity?
- Why do you think generosity should be considered an important area of spiritual growth rather than merely a financial issue?
- How does reflecting on what Jesus willingly gave up for us change the way we think about what we are willing to give for others?
- What are some ways we can cultivate an eager and willing heart toward generosity rather than viewing giving primarily as an obligation?
- What can cause us to become indifferent to the genuine needs of people around us?
- What is one specific way you can respond generously, not because you are being pressured or compelled, but because God's grace has produced a willing and joyful desire to bless someone else?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?