

Small Group Guide: The Heart of Biblical Giving

Based on 2 Corinthians 8

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when someone's generosity made a significant impact on your life. How did it make you feel?

Key Scripture

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich." - 2 Corinthians 8:9

Main Takeaways

1. Giving is a Grace from God

- Biblical giving isn't natural—it requires God's grace working in our hearts
- The Macedonian churches gave out of deep poverty with abundant joy
- God's giving grace is both the desire AND ability to do God's will

2. The Heart Matters More Than the Amount

- Jesus praised the widow's mite over larger gifts from the wealthy
- God looks at our motivation, not just the numbers
- Giving reveals our spiritual maturity and where our treasure truly is

3. Giving Should Be Between You and God

- Not commanded or guilt-driven, but Spirit-led
- Should be planned, proportionate, and private
- Based on our relationship with Christ, not pressure from people

4. Christ is Our Ultimate Example

- Jesus left heaven's riches to become poor for our salvation
- Everything we have belongs to God—we're just stewards
- We can never out-give what Christ has given us

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. **What stood out to you most from this sermon? Why?**
2. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.** What characterized the Macedonian churches' giving? List at least 3-4 qualities you notice.
3. **How is the grace of giving different from natural human generosity?** What role does the Holy Spirit play?

Personal Reflection (20 minutes)

4. **Paul says in verse 8 that giving is "a test of the sincerity of your love."** What does this reveal about the connection between our love for God and our giving?
5. **The message mentioned that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."** If someone looked at your bank statement or calendar, what would they say you treasure most?
6. **Have you ever experienced God's provision after giving sacrificially?** Share your story with the group.
7. **What obstacles or fears hold you back from generous giving?** (Be honest—this is a safe space!)

Application & Action (20 minutes)

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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2):

Option 1: Prayer & Planning

- Set aside time this week to pray and ask God what He would have you give regularly. Write down what you sense Him saying.

Option 2: Gratitude List

- Make a list of 20 ways God has provided for you materially, spiritually, and relationally. Let gratitude fuel generosity.

Option 3: Examine Your Heart

- Honestly assess: Do you give grudgingly, out of duty, or cheerfully? Ask God to give you His grace to be a cheerful giver.

Option 4: Study Deeper

- Read 1 Corinthians 16 (mentioned in the sermon) and study additional biblical principles on giving.

Option 5: Meet a Need

- Ask God to show you someone with a genuine need this week, and give as He directs (could be time, resources, encouragement, or finances).

Memory Verse for the Week

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich." - 2 Corinthians 8:9

Closing Reflection

Warren Wiersbe's Definition of Ministry (from the sermon): *"Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels to the glory of God."*

Question: How can you be a "loving channel" this week for God's resources to flow through you to meet someone else's need?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Pray together as a group:

- Thank God for His ultimate gift of Jesus Christ

- Ask for grace to be faithful, cheerful givers
- Pray for specific needs within your group
- Ask God to reveal where He wants you to give and serve

Leader Notes

Be Sensitive: Money is a sensitive topic. Create a safe, non-judgmental environment where people can be honest about their struggles.

Avoid Comparison: Remind the group repeatedly that this isn't about comparing amounts, but examining hearts.

Focus on Grace: Emphasize that giving is a grace from God, not a burden or requirement that earns salvation.

Encourage Next Steps: Whatever people sense God leading them to do, encourage them to take one small step of obedience this week.

Follow Up: Consider checking in with group members next week about how God worked in their hearts regarding giving.