



MC Bible Study

2nd Corinthians 8:1-9

Leader's Guide

Subject(s): Gospel Generosity

Discover the generosity of God as it is revealed in the Gospel.

Objective: Becoming generous because the God of the Gospel is generous

The goal of this lesson is to take a closer look at the generosity of God and seek to have gratitude and thanksgiving compel us to become generous ourselves.

Plumb Line: How can we withhold anything when God has given everything?

Prayer

Lord, please help us as we begin to study Your precious revealed Word. We are incapable of understanding the Bible without the help of Your Holy Spirit. So, we ask that You would come and open our eyes and our hearts to see and cherish the truths of the Scriptures. Amen.

Reading

"We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should

complete among you this act of grace. But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” (2nd Corinthians 8:1-9)

Observations

1. What is it that the Apostle wants his reader to know?
 - a. The Apostle wants his reader to be aware of the generosity of the church in Macedonia.
2. What does it mean that the Macedonian church gave beyond their means?
 - a. No one would have expected them to give. They were in severe affliction and terrible poverty. Yet, they gave abundantly above those expectations.
3. How do you think it looked for the church to give themselves to the Lord and then to the Apostle and his team?
 - a. Judging by their situation, they had to seek the Lord in prayer and fasting in order to be able to even generate something to give. Once generated, they chose to give that to another's needs and not to their own -- even though they certainly could have.
4. Have you ever seen someone “beg earnestly to take part in giving financially”?
 - a. This question is meant to engage discussion → No right answer.
5. Why do you think that the Macedonian church was so desirous to act generously?
 - a. They had an understanding of their role in the generosity of God.
6. What other Christian “Acts of Grace” does Paul mention?
 - a. Faith, Speech, Knowledge, Earnestness, Our love for you
7. Would you have put Generosity on the same level with these other Acts of Grace? Why? Or why not?
 - a. This question is meant to engage discussion → No right answer.
8. What does generosity prove?
 - a. Whether or not your love is genuine.
9. Who provides the ultimate example of generosity?
 - a. Jesus Christ

10. Where does the Apostle ground this teaching on generosity?
 - a. The Gospel and the Generosity of God.

Gratitude

Lord, we are in awe of the overwhelming demonstration of Your unfailing love through the ultimate act of generosity. Nothing could have been more generous than the giving of Your Son, Jesus, as our atoning sacrifice. If You gave us the greatest gift, (for what could be more valuable than the Christ?) what else would you withhold from us?

Reflection

1. Looking to the example of the Macedonians, what would it look like for you to give beyond your means? Is this something that you have ever done before?
 - a. This is supposed to be an open-ended question that encourages a group discussion.
2. How did the Macedonians' generosity show Spiritual Maturity?
 - a. By committing themselves to God. They showed great generosity in their gift, faith in their trust in God's ultimate provision, love for those in Jerusalem, unity in the mission of the Apostle and his team.
3. How does generosity prove that your love is genuine or authentic?
 - a. It is one of the tangible proofs that your love is beyond simple words. Generosity is "costly" and it therefore implies that you are willing to sacrifice of yourself for those that you love.
4. Who is our ultimate example of generosity?
 - a. God is the ultimate example of generosity. The Father in the gift of His Son. The Son in the gift of His life. The Spirit in the gift of Himself indwelling within all believers.

Application

1. Is there any avenue through which you might be able to show the generosity of God?
 - a. This is supposed to be an open-ended question that encourages a group discussion.

2. Is there a particular area of life where we are not fully committing ourselves to God? Is it a lack of trust? Or something else?
 - a. This is supposed to be an open-ended question that encourages a group discussion.
3. Are you actively following the example of our Lord Christ, in demonstrating genuine love, through your generosity?
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Meditation

Our thoughts should perpetually rest on the Gospel of Jesus. In this Gospel, we see the greatest generosity ever demonstrated. It was a free gift and not an act of compulsion; therefore, we do not give because of legalistic demands or out of guilt. The Gospel becomes the basis and motive for our generosity.

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