



2 Corinthians 9:12-15

"For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God. They will glorify God for your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with others through the proof provided by this service. And they will have deep affection for you in their prayers on your behalf because of the surpassing grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift."

Meditate

What is the bottom line – the result – of your generous giving? It accomplishes many purposes, especially as you give through Mobberly's Ministry Action Plan (MAP, or budget). People in East Texas and around the world hear the story of Jesus' love for them, others in crisis receive assistance, believers are helped to grow in their faith and much more. But, the ultimate result is that God is glorified. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says we are to do everything for God's glory – including generous giving. When God is glorified people see His nature and character – love, grace, faithfulness, kindness, majesty, sufficiency. They will want to know this great God that we serve. We point the way to God through our generosity. The word "glorify" is the word from which we get the name for the hymn of praise called the Doxology: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow... Praise Him all creatures here below." When you are generous God will receive the ultimate praise because He alone is worthy of that praise. **Meditate** on who God is to you, and how you can glorify Him through generosity.

Merge

Talk to your family about glorifying God. Note that our praise does not make God more special...it just tells Him how special we know that He is. List the traits of God that make Him glorious (love, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, etc.). Share how you have seen evidence of these traits of God expressed towards you. Ask how it might help someone else if they learned how glorious God is. Take time to pray together and glorify God by telling Him how special He is for each of these reasons.

2 Corinthians 8:1-7

"We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God granted to the churches of Macedonia: During a severe testing by affliction, their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed into the wealth of their generosity. I testify that, on their own, according to their ability and beyond their ability, they begged us insistently for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints, and not just as we had hoped. Instead, they gave themselves especially to the Lord, then to us by God's will. So we urged Titus that just as he had begun, so he should also complete this grace to you. Now as you excel in everything – faith, speech, knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love for us – excel also in this grace."

Meditate

God calls us to a life of generosity. But, generosity doesn't begin with the checkbook... it begins with the heart. The Macedonian believers were generous givers even in difficult times, but this began with a willingness to offer themselves to the Lord before anything or anyone else. When we give ourselves to the Lord first it means that we give Him authority over every aspect of our lives. But, note the words associated with that total giving of self – abundance of joy, wealth of generosity, privilege, love, grace. What a paradox! St. Francis of Assisi put it this way: "It is in giving that we receive." The peace and joy of generosity begins when we hold nothing back from our Savior. In Romans 12:1 we find that our real act of worship is in presenting our lives to God first. Meditate on what it means in your life to experience true joy and freedom that begins with offering your total self to God.

Merge

Talk to your family about what it means to "give yourself to the Lord." Ask what it means to say that Jesus is "Lord" of our lives. Talk about those to whom we willingly submit or choose to obey as authorities in our lives (parents, bosses, police officers). Note that the result of submission to those who care about us accomplishes good in our lives. Pray together as a family and together give yourselves to the Lord, describing a willingness to obey Him first in everything.

THE JOY OF GIVING LIKE JESUS

Sunday, Feb. 24

2 Corinthians 8:8-9, 9:6-7

"I am not saying this as a command. Rather, by means of the diligence of others, I am testing the genuineness of your love. 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... 9:6 Remember this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. Each person should do as he has decided in his heart – not reluctantly or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Meditate

Who is our role model for giving generously? We know of many men and women who give of their wealth and abundance to the Lord and to help others. But only One gave up Heaven and laid aside His glory in being equal with God. Jesus held nothing back in giving Himself in payment for our sins. Hebrews 12:2 says that for the "joy that lay before Him [Jesus] endured a cross." He gave because, despite the sacrifice or cost required for the gift, there is joy in the result of giving. And the result of this willing and generous giving? Eternal life for billions who receive His gift and trusted Him as Savior. While our cheerful giving doesn't provide salvation, God does use it to help spread the message of His loves to those we can impact. Giving – especially through God's church family – provides the resources to share the gospel. Meditate on the sacrifice Jesus made for you...and the joy that Jesus exhibited in sacrificial giving. Who or what is the standard for your attitude in giving?

Merge

Talk to your family about examples of generosity you have witnessed. Have you received a very special gift? Have you given someone a gift that cost a lot – a lot of time, effort, money, etc.? How did you feel when you were working towards getting that gift? How did you feel when the gift was received with joy? As age appropriate, talk about how Jesus was generous when He gave us salvation. What did His generosity cost Him? Be sure to talk about the joy that comes from the gift that Jesus has given (joyful life, peace, security, life in Heaven with Jesus one day, etc.).

GIVE AS GOD GIVES TO YOU

Wednesday, Feb. 27

2 Corinthians 9:8-11

"And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work. As it is written: He scattered; He gave to the poor; His righteousness endures forever. Now the One who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us."

Meditate

What does generous giving look like in our lives? For each of us the amount we give will differ, but one thing is true. God provides for us and, out of that provision, He calls us to sow seeds of generosity. Your amount and my amount of provision probably differ. God treats us as the unique creations He has made us. But God says "The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the Lord." He has given each of us material blessings to use to create a "harvest of righteousness" by helping people come to know Him. God gives us a beginning point in giving – the tithe (10%). Can you imagine the wonderful Kingdom purposes that could be accomplished if each of us gave a tithe of our resources for those purposes? But our goal isn't how little we should give... it should be a joyful desire to free up all that we can to give for eternal purposes (laying up treasures in Heaven). And remember...He has promised that "having all you need" (He provides!) you will be able to excel in this good work. Meditate on what God has given to you, and what generous giving might look like in light of what God has provided to you.

Merge

As a family make a list of the physical things that God has given to you (individually and together). As you look at this list share how each thing can be used generously to impact others and share His message. As you talk about the financial resources God has entrusted to your care, share about the things that your tithes and offerings accomplish through the ministry of Mobberly Baptist Church. How do people come to know Jesus because of your giving? Pray for a heart of generosity.