

A Heart of Generosity

Part 2 - Seven Principles that change lives

A Study on 2 Corinthians 8 & 9

P4: Generosity is a **HAND UP**, not a **HAND OUT** 8:13-15

Generosity is not a **WELFARE SYSTEM** for the poor

'For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction'

BALANCE in life is accomplished through **RECIPROCITY**

*'your abundance being a **supply for their need**, so their abundance also may become a **supply for your need**...'*

'He who gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH,

AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK'

Reminder: Generosity **BALANCES** the highs and lows in life
Acts 2:41-47; Galatians 6:2, 5

P5: Generosity **GIFTS** must be managed with **INTEGRITY** 8:16-24

Generosity must be managed by **People** of integrity

*'being himself very earnest', 'appointed by the churches',
'tested and found diligent'*

Generosity must be managed through a **Process** of integrity

'For the glory of the LORD Himself'

'taking precautions so that no one discredits us', 'regard for what is honorable in the sight of the Lord, also in the sight of men'

Reminder: Generosity demands an **honest** team
and best **accounting practices**

P6: Generosity must result in **ACTUAL** giving, not just in **WILLINGNESS** 9:1-5

DESIRE is ingredient **One** - *'I know your readiness... your zeal'*

GIVING is ingredient **Two** - *'arrange your promised bountiful gift'*

Reminder: Generosity is both an **ATTITUDE** + an **ACTION** step

Life Group Discussion Questions – April 14, 2024

2 Corinthians 8:13-14 *"For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality— at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality..."*

DISCOVER (read 2 Corinthians 8 and 9)

1. What areas in your life are you generous with (time, treasure or talent)? What areas are you stingy with? Share how you might account for the difference. What were you doing last year at this time that remains unfinished? Has your passion or joy abated?
2. A commitment you made to give has unexpectedly become burdensome in some way. Identify some common indicators that would prompt a cheerful giver to say "Nope. Not this time." Is it possible to measure if your generosity will lead to the idleness of others?
3. If you were to evaluate your zeal for God in light of your checkbook or auto-pay accounts, what grade would you give yourself? From Jesus' example in 8:9, what prompts you to be generous with your finances? What inhibits you?
4. The larger the financial amount, the greater the covetousness for it. Do you agree with this statement? Why does the lust for the money increase? What safeguards should be put in place and when?
5. Whom do you trust with your money? Discuss the ways the church might gain your trust with the money God has given you.

EXPLORE

1. What is this large collection all about that Paul is addressing? (see 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 and Romans 15:25-27)
2. What do you learn about the Macedonian Christians (2 Cor.8:1) from their giving? In light of the struggles of the Corinthian church, why would Paul draw their attention to the Macedonian example? What would this test of generosity reveal? What principles of giving do you observe?
3. Why does Paul expect the Corinthians to be generous? (see 9:1-5) In what specific ways?
4. Read Exodus 16:16-18. Every household had to provide for itself. Yet in v. 18, we see that some gathered much yet had no excess and those that gathered little had no lack. What do you infer about giving and receiving? Now read Acts 2:41-47. Are the same giving and receiving attitudes in play as in the Exodus account? What basic needs are being met in both instances?

EXPERIENCE

1. How do the groups you contribute to practice Paul's principle in verses 8:20-21? Why is this especially critical for Christian organizations? If groups are slipshod in their accounting of your gifts, how might you make God-honoring adjustments?
2. Re-read 2 Corinthians 8:13-15. How can the equality principle (balance through reciprocity) help you decide what needs your immediate attention?
3. To become more generous, what would have to change? Your job, time priorities, spending habits or ...
4. In the Body of Christ, should the believers who have more than they need always help those believers who have less and are in need? What parameters might be put in place so that the giving and receiving are done with the utmost integrity?

PRAY

Pray...Father in heaven, You have blessed us with full, abundant lives and have faithfully drawn from Your treasures to provide for our every need. Help us to be discerning stewards of Your treasures; that our decisions would make a Kingdom difference; that though we make financial plans, each one of them is ordered by You. For Your glory alone. Amen.