

The Christian and... Joyful Giving

6/19/22

2 Cor 8:1-11 *"Put your money where your heart is."*

Paul sends Corinthians some news about the churches in Macedonia, for the purpose of encouraging the Corinthian believers to more and greater good works.

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.

Generosity starts with God's Grace.

Eph 2:7-8 "...so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."

God's grace - the work of the Gospel - has power to generate praise and good works in us.

Grace leads to joy, and joy leads to generosity.

2 Cor 8:2: "...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."

The proof of God's grace leading to joy is in the fact that the Macedonians gave eagerly from a place of extreme poverty. Also, they considered the opportunity to be a favor – not to the recipient, but to themselves!

The Old Testament Tithe

"Tithe is a literal ten percent. It was instituted in the original Law given to the Israelites.

"Tithe was never in the old Testament a means of free will giving to the Lord. It was the way the theocracy was funded." ~ John MacArthur

New Testament Generosity

Under Christ, who fulfilled the law on our behalf, we live under a new familial, relational system of free-will giving. *Giving is in the "DNA" of God's family.*

2:Cor 9:7 "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Cor 8:8 "I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine."

Normal Christian giving is "within your means," as God directs. Generosity is a relational act.

1. Grace, Joy, and Love are what drives generosity **Matthew 6:21**
2. The body of Christ is your priority target of giving. **2 Cor 9:12**
3. Giving should be done Cheerfully **Prov 15:15**
4. Giving results in returns (Universal law of sowing and reaping) **Prov 11:25**

*"A man there was, though some did count him mad; The more he cast away, the more he had."
~ John Bunyan*