

Generous: What Happen When You Give

Part Two: Generosity Looks Like Grace

Poverty Mentality vs a Generous Spirit

- 1) Poverty Mentality says there is a limited amount on the table. .
- 2) If others take what I have there will not be enough for me.
- 3) What I have is mine everybody else needs to get theirs.

Greed is part of a Poverty Mentality --- I finally got something and I can't just give it up.

Setting: The Holy Spirit directed Paul to dedicate two chapters in this letter to the Corinthians to talk about this offering for the believers in Jerusalem. The saints in Jerusalem were suffering a famine, and they were poor to begin with due to persecution. The churches in modern day Turkey and northern Greece were sending an offering to them to help them out. The people in Corinth (Southern Greece) had been some of the first to promote this offering, but they got side tracked and the offering still wasn't done. Paul was encouraging them to complete it.

Text: 2 Corinthians 8:1-9 NIV And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. **2** In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. **3** For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, **4** they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. **5** And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. **6** So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. **7** But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. **8** I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. **9** 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 through his poverty might become rich.

- 1) Generosity and Grace are Connected.

Grace is the capacity to get something or the ability to do something you would not be able get or do without relying upon God's provision and power.

- a) Seven times in these 2 chapters (8 & 9) we find the words "grace" and seven times we find the word "generous" used in these same chapters.
- b) Paul frequently uses the phrase *the grace of God* in his letters to the Corinthians.

The phrase has various meanings that depend on the context in which it is used, and the setting here indicates that Paul is referring not to God's saving grace but to the consequence of that grace. Because you have been saved by the Grace of God, you are now called to release grace out of your life upon others.

To be precise, Paul has in mind a grace to give generously to alleviate the physical needs of some suffering saints in Jerusalem.

2) Grace produces more Grace.

John 1:16 "For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace"

- a) In this setting **grace** is the ability to do provide something you would not be able to do without relying upon God's provision and power.

In fact, Grace is all about God supernatural supply that comes to us as we release it to others.

- b) Use the little that you have and more will be given -- because grace produces more grace.

Luke 6:38 "... For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Greed is part of a Poverty Mentality.

- c) Seed comes to the sowers:

2 Cor. 9:10-11 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. **11** You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

- i) Let's talk about riches. God wants us to be "enriched in every way so we can be generous."

(1) It is possible for rich people to have a poverty spirit!

(2) Don't kid yourself, if you are not generous with a little you will not be generous with plenty.

- ii) It is clear that wants our life and the possessions of our life to be a generous resource for the Kingdom of God.

3) There is a Grace for Giving Generously.

Grace for giving: 2 Cor 8:1,2 NIV And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. **2** In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

- a) Real Poverty or living in lack, is a very difficult trial.

- b) Tap into a grace-filled faith!
- c) Their Grace for Generosity was manifested in two ways.
 - i) Overflowing Joy – heart attitude that unifies with God's heart
 - ii) Rich generosity

(1) We must redefine the word “rich” with the wealth of the Kingdom.

2 Corinthians 8:9 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.

1 Timothy 6:17,18 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. **18** They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.

(a) Kingdom wealth comes from joy knowing Jesus.

He produces in us something money cannot buy.

(b) Kingdom wealth hopes in God not in the uncertainty of one's economics.

(c) Kingdom wealth is meant to be shared.

(2) “Welled up”?

“their overflowing joy welled up with rich generosity” 2Cor. 8:2

(a) Literally means to “move up” or to “flow upward”.

The image is that of underground waters welling up in springs and hills. Like a spring that surfaces from an underground source!

(b) Jesus used this expression about the eternal flow of the new life.

John 4:13,14 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

4) Generous Grace is a Worthwhile Sacrifice.

2 Corinthians 8:3-5 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, **4** they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. **5** And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.

Sacrificial Generosity:

- a) Pleases God.
- b) Taps into the deep waters of life.
- c) Reflects the image of who we are in Jesus.
- d) Produces a flow of more resources.