

Homework #11 - *The Grace of Giving*

II Corinthians 8:1-15

"But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us--see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

--II Corinthians 8:7

Day One:

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 8:1-15. What are the key words in this passage?

Contrasts in Corinthians: What contrasts can you find in this section?

2. What did God give to the Macedonians (8:1)?

How was this evidenced in verses 8:2-4?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. Why do you think Paul shows this good example to the Corinthians?

Is generosity contagious? Explain?

4. Re-read 8:2-3. What words do not usually go together in verse 2?

What words do go together?

Is giving conditional? Why or why not?

5. What words describe the Macedonian's desire to give in 8:4?

What phrase is used to describe giving, in verse 4?

Why do you think giving is a privilege?

6. What does Matthew 25:31-40 say about our giving of time, energy and money?

Page 2

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

7. Do you see giving as a privilege that connects to serving Jesus Himself? Or is this a neglected area or a duty? Write down what you have learned from today's lesson:

Pray and ask God to gift you with the grace to give!

Day Two

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 8:5-7. How does Paul describe their pattern of giving in verse 8:5?
2. What role will Titus play in their lives (8:6)?
3. In what area does Paul encourage them to grow (8:6)?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. Read Romans 12:1-2. What does Paul say we should give to God?

How does this relate to II Corinthians 8:5?

5. Why do you think it is necessary to send Titus?

Why do you think it is easy to begin giving than to continue this "grace"?

6. What do you think it means to "excel in this grace of giving"?

Why does this verse eliminate any excuse for being a private, isolated follower of Christ?

7. What do the following verses tell you about God's generosity?

Romans 8:22

James 1:5

Psalms 36:7,8; Revelation 22:1,2

How does giving allow us to grow more into God's image?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. Do you honestly believe your life belongs to you anymore? Is there anything that you need to lay on the altar as part of your whole-hearted worship? How can you give yourself first to God today?

Day Three

Observe: what does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 8:8-9. What does Paul want to test in the Corinthians?

What is Paul not doing?

2. What example does Paul give them in verse 9?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. Why do you think commanding someone to give does not work?

What should be our motivation in giving? 8:8)

4. read John 3:16. How did God show His love for us?

Explain the relationship between giving and sincere love:
What else could motivate us to give besides love?

Read I Corinthians 13:3. What does this verse tell you about giving?

5. Paul uses the word "grace" four times in this section of scripture. How would you define the word "grace"?

6. Why did Christ become poor (2 Corinthians 8:9)?

Read Philippians 2:7-8. How did Christ give Himself to us?

What did He not grasp for Himself?

7. How do these Scriptures describe God's riches toward us?

Romans 11:33-36

I Peter 1:1-4

I Peter 1:1-19

II Peter 1:3

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. What is truly valuable to you? Spend time meditating on Jesus' great sacrifice on the cross by reading John 19:1-30. What did it cost Jesus? What have you gained? How does this impact what you consider truly valuable?

Day Four

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 8:10-12. In what areas were the Corinthians first?
2. What needs to be matched with the willingness to give (8:11)?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. How are we to give, according to 8:11?
4. What determines whether our gifts are acceptable to God (8:12)?
5. Read Mark 12:41-44. What did the rich people give to God?

What did the poor widow give?

In God's opinion, who gave the most? Why?

What does this tell you about God's view of giving?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

6. Is there any area that God is calling you to finish? Perhaps you were initially willing, but have lost interest or gotten busy with other things?

Or do you ever feel that what you could offer to God is too small compared with others? How can you be encouraged by today's lesson to continue to give what you have?

Day Five

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 8:13-15. What is Paul's desire in 8:13?

What does he not desire?

2. What is the purpose of "plenty" according to 8:14?
3. Read Exodus 16:14-20, the story of God providing manna for His people. (Paul quotes verse 18 in this passage.) What was God's desire for His people, or what was His plan for provision?

What happened to the manna that was hoarded (verse 20)?

How is this an illustration of greed in our own lives?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. What do you think Paul means by the phrase, "that there might be equality"?
5. How do the following verses describe justice?

Psalm 99:4

Psalm 112:5

Psalm 140:12

Isaiah 1:17

Zechariah 7:9

How would you define justice?

How does justice relate to equality?

Page 5

6. What do you think it means to be "hard pressed"?

Why would God not want anyone to be "hard pressed"?

7. What are some reasons a person might be in need even though God wants all to have enough?

8. What will happen if we share our resources (8:14b)?

What promises concerning giving are found in the following verses:

Luke 6:38

Proverbs 22:9

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. How has God made you more aware of the needs around you?

Why is His justice also important to you?

How has this week's study changed your perspective on finances and possessions? Write a prayer expressing back to God all you have learned!