



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

II CORINTHIANS 8:7-15

LESSON: SHARING WITH THOSE IN NEED—August 12, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;— Paul now turns to a different subject. He gives the Corinthian church seven challenges. **I. The first challenge** is to **KNOW OF THE GRACE GOD BESTOWED UPON THE MACEDONIAN CHURCHES**—the spirit of the Macedonians. The Roman province of Macedonia included all of northern Greece. The known churches of the region were Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, all at one time.

8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. The churches throughout Judea were suffering great poverty and needed help badly. However, in a great trial of affliction four dynamic facts were apparent.

1. They gave help in spite of terrible trial and deep poverty to others and they gave liberally. "*Liberality*" means singleness of mind, sincerely with an open and free heart. And the churches of Macedonia decided to do just that. When they accepted Christ and took their stand for Him, they were heavily persecuted. However, knowing Christ filled these believers with an abundance of joy. For out of the depths of their poverty, resulted in a flood of generosity.

8:3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;— Paul was able to bear witness, meaning he was able to testify of their power; according to their means, and beyond their means to give.

2. They gave beyond their ability. They gave willingly —no special appeal had to be made; no pressure had to be executed.

8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. With an earnest request, the Macedonians begged urgently for those in need to accept their gifts and share in the honor and joy of supporting their brothers in Christ.

3. They gave insistently begging for the privilege to share because they wanted to share in the fellowship of ministering to the saints. Apparently, they were giving so much that Paul felt it was just beyond their means.

8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. They made a complete dedication of themselves. Such giving was totally unexpected in light of their own needs.

4. They gave themselves to the Lord first. They used this occasion, the occasion of an offering—the occasion when they were asked to help others—to rededicate their lives and possessions to Christ. They dedicated their lives to Christ: all they were. They dedicated their possessions to Christ: all they had. The dedication of themselves to the minister, Paul, in order to serve by his side and to allow them all to serve Christ together. Believers must be examples joining

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hand in hand as a giving church.

8:6 **Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.** 2. The second challenge is to **EXCEL IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF GIVING**. As seen in the Macedonians of their liberty of giving, Titus was urged and encouraged to help the Corinthians finish in the same grace also, for he had begun this work of the grace of giving with them. Titus, a faithful servant, was the acting evangelist at the time in Corinth when Paul's first epistle went out. So Titus, the one who initiated the work is urged to receive from the people and complete it; finish it in the same grace, and that is the grace of giving.

LESSON: I. GIFTED CHURCH II CORINTHIANS 8:7

8:7 **Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.** 3. The third challenge is to **ABOUND IN THIS GRACE ALSO**. Yes, they were gifted, and proud of those gifts, and Paul named the gifts the Corinthians abounded and excelled in: faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence, and love. But Paul wanted them to remember and not neglect that giving is also a grace-gift and abound in it also. It is not as spectacular as the miraculous gifts, but just as important.

II. GENUINE LOVE II CORINTHIANS 8:8-9

8:8 **I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.** 4. The fourth challenge is to **PROVE THE SINCERITY OF THEIR LOVE**. Paul does not command the Corinthians to give. If giving is forced or coerced, it benefits nothing; it does not please God. God is pleased with gifts that are willingly and cheerfully given. Giving must be based upon two things:

1. Giving must be based upon love for those who are lost and needy. And that love is based upon the love for the Lord Jesus who commanded us to go into all the world to reach and help the people of the world. We're all His creations.
2. Giving must be based upon the example of those who give sacrificially. In the case of the Corinthians, they had the dynamic example of the Macedonians. The Corinthians should have been stirred to follow the example of such sacrificial giving. In our case, we thereby prove the sincerity of our love by freely giving because He freely gave Himself! Christ is our example!

8:9 **For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.** 5. The fifth challenge is to **KNOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**. By now we should know the grace of our Lord; we should be aware of His grace. His grace was given to us.

1. Though He was rich...
 - He dwelt in the glory and majesty, dominion and power of the Godhead (Jude 24-25).
 - He possessed every good and perfect thing that can be possessed (Jam.1:17).
 - He had all worship and adoration of heavenly beings (Rev.4:6; 5:11).
2. He became poor.
 - God became an humble man.
 - Our Lord took on flesh and blood.

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- Our Holy God took the place of the lowest.
 - The Beloved became the rejected.
 - The Perfect One became the Sacrifice for sin.
 - His Life became the Substitute for death.
3. That through His poverty we might be rich.
- We can receive the adoption of sons—become sons and daughters of God.
 - We can live eternally with Him in the new heaven and earth.

His ownership brought poverty to Him—His Godhead became a man—His purpose was for our sakes—He gave to us what He possessed from the beginning—richness of eternal life, eternal joy—And His eternal love brought sons and daughters! Knowing His grace brought all of this causes me to rejoice, for He gave it all away for us!

III. GRACIOUS ADVICE II CORINTHIANS 8:10-11

8:10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Paul remembers their past situation and gives his advice, not a command, knowing that the Corinthians had undertaken a mission project of meeting the needs of the poor, yet they wasted a whole year of not committing themselves. Paul is saying that it is expedient; it's beneficial; it's to their advantage personally and for their ministry to complete the mission that had stirred within them a year ago—giving. We, the body of Christ are thereby stirred to go forward and God is stirred to bless the church. Whatever we commit to do that's in God's Will, He is well able to continue with us.

8:11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. Paul is saying now go forth with it. He reminds them that there was a readiness of the Will to do; an eagerness to show forth and perform and complete the task out of whatever means they had to finish doing it.

IV. GENEROUS RESPONSE II CORINTHIANS 8:12-15

8:12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. **6. The sixth challenge is to GIVE READILY AND WILLINGLY.** Four points between verses 11 and 12 give clear directions on missions to any church that is willing to listen.

1. Give yourselves to missions. After a mission's need has been met, there is always another need to meet—a need just as critical. Literally thousands die prematurely and without Christ every day—die because no one cared enough to help them. The call of missions is the constant call to Christ.
2. Finish the mission. The task begins when you reach out, but it also has to be completed.
3. Give readily and willingly—lay hold first with "a willing mind."
4. God is going to judge us for what we give—what we gave and what we kept back. If you have it, give it. Will He approve? Will it be accepted? Yes, it's that that you do have and is able to give. It's not what you don't have. God is far more interested in the love in your heart than in the amount of your gift. *"...I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they*

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all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: But she of her penny hath cast in all the living that she had "Lk.21:3-4.

8:13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:— Paul is not implying that other men be relieved and the Corinthians carry the load and hardship. Or that the rich become poor and the poor become rich. It is certainly unbalanced and unequal.

8:14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:— 7. The seventh challenge is to MEET THE NEEDS OF ONE ANOTHER EQUALLY. It eliminates the principle of hoarding and keeping back of goods beyond our needs. Are we hoarding back clothes we can't wear? Are we hoarding back food we can share? Are we hoarding back money for a rainy day that right now someone is in need of? God wants the needs of the starving and lost masses met. The only way these needs can be met is by giving out of their abundance, and their need can be equally met or shared, so there can be equality.

8:15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack. Paul goes back to what was written in scripture (Exodus 16:18) when they gathered the manna, they were to gather as much as needed. So, those that gathered much, had nothing left over. And those who gathered less had no lack. Each home had just enough.

SUMMARY:

Paul writing from Macedonia hoped that news of the generosity of these churches would encourage the Corinthian believers and motivate them to solve their problems and unite their fellowship. Paul uses the Macedonian churches as an example. They were in poverty and yet they gave. Despite affliction and deep poverty, they gave liberally; gave willingly; beyond their ability, insistently for the privilege to share, and they gave themselves first to the Lord and then unto Paul as God willed (8:1-5).

Titus was sent to complete this grace of giving in them. As the Corinthians abounded in many other gifts, Paul encourages them to abound in this grace (8:6-7). He did not command them to give, but by the example of others Paul seeks to test their love. We are to remember the example of Jesus, through whose poverty we became rich (8:8-9).

Paul advises that it is to their advantage to complete what they started a year before, so that there is not only a desire to do it, but the completion of it as well (8:10-11). There must first be a willing mind; then according to what one has, not to what he does not have. Paul does not desire that they burden themselves to ease others. But that their abundance might supply others' lack, so there can be equality. Each is to have what is needed (8:12-15).

APPLICATION:

Everyone needs help from time to time, therefore, within the body of Christ, God places needs before us to fulfill.

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