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Leader Guide

Give

June 18, 2023

Main Passage: Acts 4:32; 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

Theological Theme

Giving has been an essential for the church since its inception. Jesus modeled a generous life and the early church carried on what they had seen in Him. Paul shared the example of how the Macedonian believers gave generously to encourage all Christians to do the same.

Introduction

- ? What type of crowd funding have you been involved in? What is the most unusual crowd funding effort you have seen?
- ? Why do you think this type of fund raising is so popular?

1. An Example of Generous Giving (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

The churches in Macedonia had been collecting an offering to help with the needs of the poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem. The church at Corinth was to participate in this offering, but Paul needed to encourage them to follow through with their gift. He used the example of the Macedonian churches, who gave out of their poverty, to challenge the Corinthians to excel in the grace of giving.

- ? How does viewing the opportunity to give as a gift and not a duty challenge your typical perspective?
- ? How have you seen people give beyond their means in the way Paul described? What was the result? What did you think about that?
- ? Application: Have you viewed giving as a gift of grace in the past? How are givers blessed through their generosity toward others?

2. Encouragement to Give (2 Corinthians 8:6-8)

Titus brought the message to the Corinthians from Paul. In writing that Titus should complete this act among the church at Corinth, Paul again described giving as an act gift of grace from the Lord. He went on to make it clear he was not commanding them to give but encouraging them to do so as an expression of their love.

- ? What changes when we move from claiming to believe giving is good to actually giving? How does the cost of this action give evidence of what we truly believe?
- ? What obstacles are there to excelling in giving that may not exist in other areas of Christian growth?
- ? Application: How can you practically focus on excelling in the gift of giving?

3. Giving like Jesus (Acts 4:32; 2 Corinthians 8:9)

In case the example of the Macedonians didn't motivate the Corinthians, Paul pointed to the example Jesus displayed about giving. From His glorious riches, Jesus came to earth in human form and lived out what it means to be a generous giver—to the highest degree. Although He never accumulated human wealth in the form of money, He always demonstrated the grace of giving. Paul's use of riches in relation to Jesus points to His deity and how He loved us enough to pay our penalty as a man. Just as He added humanity to His deity, He also assumed poverty while being vastly rich.

- ❓ How does it impact you to reflect on the willingness of Jesus to give up everything for your sake? How does this encourage you to give for the sake of others?
- ❓ What are some ways Christians have been made rich because of the poverty of Jesus?
- ❓ Application: How does holding tightly to the things of God enable us to loosen our grip on the things of the earth? How does this directly impact our giving?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).