



January 7th Sermon Questions

Generosity

2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Icebreaker: What was the best gift you've either received or given this holiday season?

Discussion Questions: Read the scripture verses above.

1. What role did money and generosity play in your earliest Christian and/or church experiences, and how do you think that shaped you?
2. Do you tend to give to the church, other people, etc. out of a sense of duty, guilt, fear, pride, or delight? Why do you think that is? How might this passage help you to view generosity as a privilege and a joy instead of a burden?
3. Paul writes that the churches in Macedonia gave "beyond their means" (v.3) even though they were in a situation of "extreme poverty" (v.2). These words are directed at the Corinthian church, which had plenty, but was hesitant to give the gift they had promised. What can we learn from the Macedonian Christians' example? What can we learn about pushing towards generosity even during times of scarcity and financial challenge?
4. In this passage the Apostle Paul uses economic terms to describe our salvation in Jesus (v.9). Does that seem odd? Why or why not? How does that illustration of the Gospel strike you? Is it compelling, confusing, or something else?
5. Jesus impoverished himself for our sake. How does Jesus' example challenge us to become more generous men and women?

6. How does God's grace generate generosity? How might growing in your understanding of and affection for God's grace cause you to be more generous?
7. The German Reformer, Martin Luther, said that becoming a Christian involves three "conversions," i.e., of the mind, the heart, and the wallet. Why do you think the wallet is on that list? Why must our wallet be converted (i.e. "become Christian")?
8. What would it look like for you to give in such a way that you have to "stretch within your situation" to do it? What choices would you have to make? What things would you have to say "no" to?
9. Do you struggle with the love of money, financial self-indulgence, and/or idolatry of possessions? How so? How do these things keep us from being generous?
10. Describe an example from your life when you have given generously. What impact did this have on both you and the recipient?
11. Author Donald Whitney hits the nail on the head when he says the question we should ask is not, "How much of my money should I give to God?" but rather, "How much of God's money should I keep for myself?" How does that second version of the question strike you? What does it reveal about the heart of stewardship and generosity?
12. How could you make your giving more substantial, sacrificial, and/or regular? How might you grow this year into a more joyful giver?