

## A Picture of Generosity

### 1.10.09

*“We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, <sup>2</sup> for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. <sup>3</sup> For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will. <sup>4</sup> begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints-<sup>5</sup> and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. <sup>6</sup> Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. <sup>7</sup> But as you excel in everything- in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you- see that you excel in this act of grace also. <sup>8</sup> I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. <sup>11</sup> So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. <sup>12</sup> For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. <sup>13</sup> I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness <sup>14</sup> your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. <sup>15</sup> As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.” 2 Corinthians 8:1-15*

**Overview:** Paul uses the example of the Macedonians’ generosity to encourage the Corinthians to give generously to the struggling Christians in Jerusalem.

#### **P: Grace should be the greatest motivator to our giving (v.1-2).**

*Am I currently giving because of the grace of God? Am I giving at all? If I am, what drives me?*

#### **P: Our giving should be proportional to what we have (v. 3, 12)**

*Could this be said of your giving?*

*The tithe: “A great place to start but a terrible place to stop.”*

#### **P: Our giving should be sacrificial in light of what we have (v.3)**

*Could this be said of your giving?*

#### **P: Our giving should be done freely and joyfully (v.3-4)**

*Could this be said of your giving?*

#### **P: Our giving should begin with giving *ourselves* to the Lord first—then our money (v.5).**

*The best question is not: “Is God getting my money?” but “It is God getting me?”*

#### **P: Accountability for our giving will lead toward growth (v.6-7).**

*Upgrades: Finance Team, Giving in Weekly Email, Pledges, Pastoral Meetings*

#### **P: Our generosity flows from the generosity of God seen most clearly in the Cross (v.8-9)**

*Do I make the connection that I give back to God because He gave everything for me?*

#### **P: Giving to the Gospel benefits us. (v.10-11)**

*Do I give in faith recognizing that God will give back to me in some way?*

#### **P: Our passion must be accompanied by perseverance (v. 10-11).**

*Am I someone that follows through on my financial (and other) commitments?*

#### **P: We should manage our finances in such a way that we can help one another in hard times (v. 13-15)**

*Am I managing money in such a way that my ‘extra’ can become someone else’s ‘enough’?*

**The Gospel is our only hope for painting a picture of generosity in our own lives.**

**Works Consulted:** “Giving and the Gospel Message by Daniel Montgomery, Stewardship Resources by Tim Keller, Generous Series by Mark Driscoll, Change You Can Believe Series In by Steven Furtick, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible