

January 17, 2006

## Principles of Generous Giving

***Generous giving is a sign of God's grace at work in your life.***

Verse one speaks of the grace of God.

*Can mean unmerited favor, but when speaking with reference to believers; it often means an enablement to accomplish growth.*

*Might expect God's grace to lead to souls won to Christ, the fruit of the spirit produced, or some difficult ministry accomplished.*

Verse two says that the Grace of God resulted in generous giving.

*How generous? Verse three tells us "they gave as much as they were able, even beyond their ability"*

Verse two says that generous giving is often in spite of difficult circumstances.

*Most severe trial*

**Life was hard**

*Overflowing joy*

**Even though life was hard they were joyful**

*Extreme poverty*

**For some unknown reason, the people of the Macedonian churches were mostly poor at this time.**

What might the reason be that people don't enjoy giving generously to Christ and his church?

*Ignorant of the principles?*

**Of course this is possible**

**God is longsuffering, patient, you should be too.**

**God is forgiving, you should be too**

**God is loving, even to his enemies, you should be, too**

**God is generous, you should be, too!**

*Cold heart?*

*Not saved?*

**Generous giving is a result of an understanding of the Cross of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor 8:8-9.**

It was through the sacrifice, the generous giving of Jesus Christ that you became rich.

*Not necessarily in terms of money*

We in the west think of wealth in terms of money. In the ANE, in the culture of biblical days, even unbelievers did not always see wealth in terms of money or possessions.

*You became rich*

Blessed with heavenly blessings

Forgiven

Given the Holy Spirit to guide, convict, enable

Given a future hope

Given access to the blessings of Church

God calls on you to follow this same example.

*By giving and prospering others, by prospering Christ's church and his kingdom*

*You become rich by "becoming poor" and making others rich.*

**Generous giving is proportional giving, 2 Cor 8:12, cf. 1 Cor 16:2; Acts 11:29.**

Tithing, giving 10%, is a benchmark, not necessarily a straightjacket, that pre-dates the Mosaic Law, Genesis 14:20.

In the Mosaic law, allowances were made for poor people, Leviticus 5:7, 11; 12:8; 14:21,22, 30, 32; 27:8.

It would seem that New Testament giving should be sacrificial, proportional and regular.

*If you make \$20,000 a year and tithe, you have \$18,000 a year to live on.*

*If you make \$200,000 a year and tithe, you have \$180,000 to live on.*

**Generous giving should be carefully supervised, 2 Cor 8:16-24.**

<sup>20</sup> We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. <sup>21</sup> For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.

*Both Titus and “the brother,” v 18*

*Chosen by the churches, v 19*

*“often proved to us...,” v 22.*

***Generous giving is the result of “excelling in the grace of giving,” 2 Cor 8:7.***

This passage implies that generous giving must be continually developed.

*Generous giving calls for a deep commitment, serious consideration*

**So what?**

**Do you enjoy giving to your local church?**

**Do you enjoy giving to others?**

**Do you want to enjoy this?**

**To you want to grow to enjoy this?**

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**Generous giving will enjoy the Law of the Harvest, 2 Cor 9:6-11.**

The principle of sowing and reaping, 6

The decision to sow generously, 7

The decision to do must be one of heartfelt delight, 7b.

The result of sowing generously, 8

*So that in all things at all times, having all you need, you will abound in every good work*

*You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, 11*

**Generous giving brings solidarity to the body, Romans 15:25-27.**

There was an interchange of blessing between the Jewish and Gentile believers.

**Generous giving encourages thanksgiving to God, 2 Cor 9:11-15.**

It supplies a need, v 12

It leads others to be thankful, 12b, 13