

LESSON
11

STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION

SUNDAY – The Example of Jesus (theological foundation)

1. Read 2 Corinthians 8:9. What does this passage tell us about the example of Jesus?

A: He took our place so that we could take His place.
Principle of exchange

2 Corinthians 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 become rich.

The Desire of Ages, p. 25 (online ed.).

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. “With His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5.

MONDAY – Motivation (why?)

2. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1, 5, 9:7, 9, 13, 15. What is the central message of these passages?

A: God donates grace. The brethren of Macedonia donated themselves.
Proportional contribution. God distributes his righteousness.
Thank God for the gift of liberality.

2 Corinthians 8:1, 5; 9:7, 9, 13, 15

¹Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; ⁵and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God. ^{9:7}Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ⁹as it is written, He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; His righteousness abideth for ever. ¹³seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all; ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

TUESDAY – Planning (how?)

3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7. What does this passage say about the act of offering?

A: Offer with joy.

Proposal is individual and free

God loves the one who loves to donate

2 Corinthians 9:7

Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

WEDNESDAY – Attitude (what?)

4. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. What possible reason could have been behind the Macedonians' willingness to give their offerings with such generosity?

A: Privilege of being able to participate in the assistance of the saints.

Abundant joy and constant generosity.

Own initiative. Voluntary act.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

¹Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; ²how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. ³For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, ⁴beseeking us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: ⁵and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.

THURSDAY – Unit (for what?)

5. How does Romans 15:26, 27 reveal Paul's desire for unity here?

A: Greeks financing the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem.

Money also expresses gratitude for what we receive, even spiritual things.

Romans 15:26, 27

²⁶For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. ²⁷Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things.

FRIDAY – Further Thought

“Money, time, influence—all the gifts they have received from God’s hand, they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 71)

“The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich Him by our gifts. Says the psalmist: ‘All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.’ Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of His mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other.” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 18, 19)