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Message Info

Title:

The Grace of Sacrificial Giving

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 8:1-7

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Theme: Give sacrificially by God's grace and for his glory.

Introduction: 2 Corinthians was a difficult letter for Paul. His relationship with the church was strained, yet he still called them to give for the needs in Jerusalem. He was calling them to renew their giving; but he did not manipulate or shame them. Instead, he called them to give by God's grace.

Paul lays out 2 aspects of sacrificial giving:

1. In order to give sacrificially, we need God's grace

Paul highlights the grace of God in Macedonia, not their giving. He's not shaming or comparing with Corinth. Circumstances were stacked against them, and yet they gave generously.

It requires grace to give. Grace is the basis for all good fruit in our lives. Grace gave them joy in their afflictions and generosity in their giving.

The Macedonian giving was not natural. What produced their generosity? They first gave themselves to the Lord (v. 5), and they gave "by the will of God." Their giving was downstream from God's grace at work in their lives.

Some think it's harder for the poor to give sacrificially; but most of their giving is sacrifice. It is the rich who must stretch more to give sacrificially.

No more our level of resources, we all need God's grace to give sacrificially.

2. Sacrificial giving will always differ with our means

There is no indication in the text of the size of their gift. It was *sacrificial* and it was *generous*; but we do not know how much they actually gave.

Paul did not command a certain amount, other than in accordance with our means. All generosity is relative (to our means). The Macedonians gave freely, as God's grace was at work in them.

The same grace should produce different gifts within the church, as we all have different means; but it should all be sacrificial.

Questions:

1. What does sacrificial giving look like for you?
2. How aware are you of the Lord in your giving, and thus of giving with faith?
3. How would you like to grow in generosity?