



LEADER'S GUIDE



HIGHLIGHT: *Primary Passage from Sunday*

2 Corinthians 8:8-15: ⁸ *I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.* ⁹ *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 through his poverty might become rich.*

¹⁰ *And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so.* ¹¹ *Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.* ¹² *For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.*

¹³ *Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality.* ¹⁴ *At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality,* ¹⁵ *as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little"*



EXPLAIN: *To Be Reviewed before the group gathering*

The book of 2 Corinthians is actually a letter the Apostle Paul wrote to the believers at Corinth to celebrate/encourage them in the steps they had taken to grow in their faith, but also to challenge them to address some weaknesses – specifically generosity. In 2 Corinthians 8:8-24, Paul shares with the Corinthians the motivation behind generosity isn't just the resulting joy or the blessing that comes of it; the motivation of generosity is this: ***we give because God first gave to us.*** Paul clearly shares that we are to be motivated toward generosity because of what Jesus gave for us – His life so that we might be redeemed and become children of God. Paul wanted the Corinthian church, and in turn us as well, to see that even though generosity brings joy, blessing, and favor, the main motivation is that our God is a generous God and He has given generously to us through His Son.



APPLY: *For Group Discussion*

1.) Have you ever had a negative experience when you were told WHAT to do, but not WHY to do it? Mom saying, “Because I told you so?” A Boss that just demanded things? Misunderstanding of Bible commands? **Why was this negative?** Knowing WHAT to do, without WHY to do it will never bring lasting change.

2.) Read 2 Corinthians 8:9 and Philippians 2:6-9. If being generous is the “WHAT” we should do, verse 9 is the “WHY.” How does this verse motivate our generosity? Christ is the example of generosity. Though he is divine and in heaven, he withheld those rights and came as a man and died for us. There has never been a more rich person who gave more sacrificially.

3.) What keeps most people from being generous? Control of finances, comfort of lifestyle, etc. **If we believed fully verse 9, how would that change our actions?**

4.) Read 8:10-12. How does the motivation from verse 9 impact what the Corinthians should do? The understanding of Christ’s generosity should move the Corinthians to be willing to give. In verse 12, Paul doesn’t emphasize an amount, but the heart’s willingness to be generous.

5.) In verse 12, how does Paul describe an acceptable gift to God? It is not based on the amount we give, but our willingness to give. Willingness should be understood as a desire to give, not a duty to give (Think back to the joy of the Macedonians). **How is this different than what we may think to be an acceptable gift?** We make the focus about the money amount, not the state of the heart.



RESPOND: *Bringing the discussion to a point of action*

We always want to finish with one personal takeaway from our discussion.

- **For you, what is one thing from the group’s discussion that you need to pray or act on this week?**

Finish by discussing the group’s Generosity Jar:

- **What is one cause that we as a group want to give to?**
- **What is one way that you can live more simply, so that you can give more generously? Take that expense and give it to the generosity jar!**