

Sharing God's Blessings 2Corinthians 8:1-8

Helping Others

Many parables, unrighteous steward, rich man and Lazarus, rich fool, teach us to share the blessings God provides

Paul provides examples and teaching for giving in our text

He also reminds that we find joy and peace in helping others

This also helps us deal with problems of greed and selfishness

We should have a generous heart which leads to sharing with needy

When we share what we have with others it comes back to us with a life of love and joy and peace

Examples Of Others

Macedonians were generous in spite of poverty & affliction - **2Corinthians 8:1-5**

Often it is the poor who are most willing to help

Certainly they understand poverty and can empathize

Common people, poor, heard him gladly - **Mark 12:37**

Most of the rich elite rejected him - **1Corinthians 1:26**

Riches: a curse, or blessing, depends on use of them; Not wrong to have; but wrong not to share!

The good Samaritan - **Luke 10:25-37**

He had some wealth, but used it to help

Good examples inspire others. Paul knew this and used Macedonians to inspire Corinthians

If you observe one using God given means to bless church & fellow man, follow their example

God's Compassion

Giving began in heaven, not earth - **2Corinthians 8:9**

And the gift He gave was "his only begotten son" - **John 3:16**

Jesus voluntarily laid down his life - **John 10:18**

He could have had help from heaven - **Matthew 26:53**

He loved lost man, and knew this was God's plan to save them - **Romans 5:8-9**

Lord's wonderful example of compassion and liberality should stir us to new heights of giving

We can save lost only to extent we are willing to give (not just money)

It costs to share gospel with lost

Desire Into Action

Paul appealed to their obvious desire

It is necessary to put good feelings into action - **2Corinthians 8:10-12**

Imperative they finish what they started - Many good plans fail because they are left unfinished

God will judge us according to our own opportunities and abilities - **James 1:21-25**

It is never right to rest on laurels of past; our present negligence cancels out good deeds of past

Edgar Guest, in the famous poem, "Sermons We See" said: The best of all are the men who live their creeds, For to see good put in action is what everybody needs."

Equality

Not to cause hardship - **2Corinthians 8:13**

Jews first received gospel and shared with Gentiles, Paul being one of those Jews

Gentiles in Greece prospering, but Jews in a famine, and many persecuted because they had left Judaism and had become Christians.

Now, it would even things up - **2Corinthians 8:14**

Be Like God

The harvest is greater than the planting - **Ecclesiastes 11:1; Luke 6:38**

God blesses richly - **Psalms 37:25; Galatians 6:7-10**