

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of September 18-24, 2022

Strength in Weakness

The Act of Grace

2 Corinthians 8:1-9

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Men's Conference, *Under Construction* September 23-24. Sign up on our website.
- 2) Bible Learning Center classes: *Worship Guitar & Bass* with Pastor Mike, Mondays beginning 9/26/22; *Eschatology* with Pastor Nick, Tuesdays beginning 10/4/22. Sign ups in the Commons or by Email begin this Sunday

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Which person in the Bible do you most identify with and why?

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time, caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

MAIN POINTS:

Generous giving is a mark of genuine love in the likeness of Christ.

DIGGING DEEPER

Generous giving...

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-3.** In these verses, Paul explains what has occurred in the churches in Macedonia. Describe, in your own words, what occurred.
 - a. What "severe test of affliction" is Pauls referring to in verse 2? **Read Acts 17:5-8** for an example of this affliction.
 - b. In verse 3, Paul says that "they gave according to their means", and "beyond their means? What was their motivation in giving?
 - c. Although the people were living in "extreme poverty" they gave in "a wealth of generosity". **Read Mark 12:41-44.** In Jesus' eyes, what is more important, the amount given or the sacrifice made in giving? Discuss why you think this is important to Jesus.
 - d. Define and discuss sacrificial giving?
2. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:4-7.** The Macedonians were "...begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints..". Discuss the contrast between earnest giving and giving as an obligation. Which do you believe God desires and why?

- a. In verse 5, Paul says that the Macedonians did something before they gave to Paul's mission. What was it? Why was this important to the Macedonians and why is it important for us as well?
- b. In verse 7, Paul refers to giving as "this act of grace". Does this agree with how we should view giving? Why or why not?

..is a mark of genuine love...

3. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:8.** Paul asks for the Corinthians "to prove by the earnestness of others that your love is also genuine." i.e. he used the example set by the Macedonians to test the sincerity of their love. Do you view giving as a "mark of genuine love"? Why or why not?

..in the likeness of Christ.

4. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:9.** How should the example Jesus set for us affect our willingness to give? Paul says that Jesus "became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich." Discuss what this means and how we should respond.

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back at this week's study, what is important for you to remember and why?

PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

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