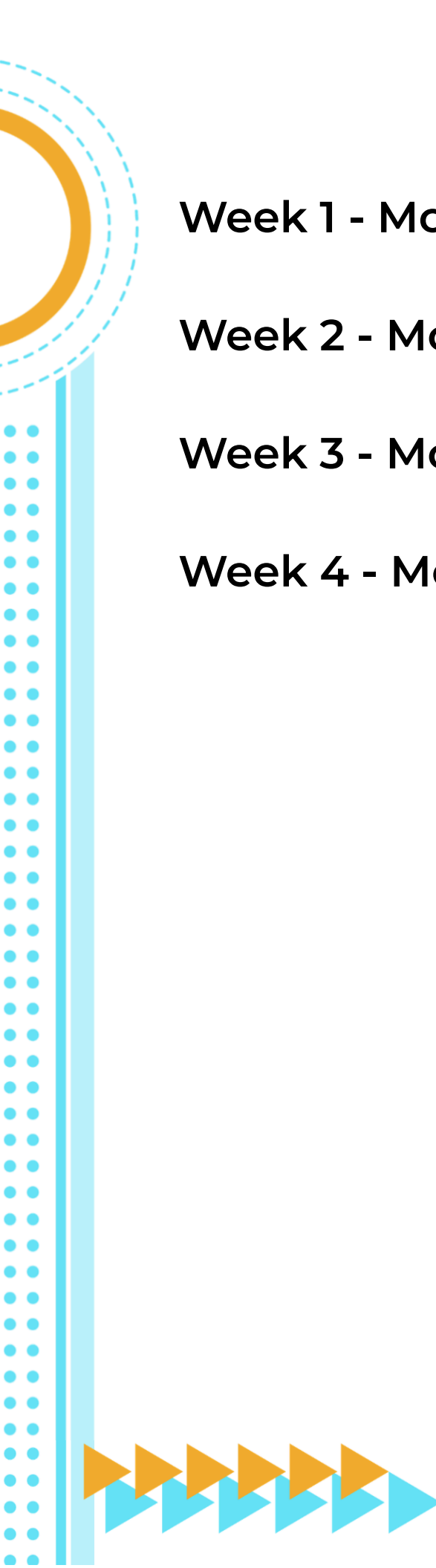


POCKET *Change*





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MONEY AND IDENTITY

You Are Rich in Christ
2 Corinthians 8:1-9

MAIN POINT

Generosity doesn't begin with what you have, but with who you are. Before Paul addresses giving, he addresses their identity. For many, finances are a source of insecurity. Paul points us to the security we've obtained by Grace through Christ as the prerequisite for any giving.

TEXT

1. In verse 1, why does Paul attribute the Macedonians' generosity to "the grace of God" instead of their character or discipline?

(Leader help: The generosity that the Macedonian church had shown originated with the Grace they had received from God. Their generosity was an "overflow" even out of their poverty. He does not tie their generosity to their character, their discipline, or their means.)



2. In verse 7, why does Paul list giving alongside faith, speech, and knowledge?

(Leader help: Generosity is being equated as an evidence of the grace of God. In the same way faith, speech, and knowledge can be an evidence of God's grace in our life, so is generosity.)

3. Read ahead to 2 Corinthians 9:8 - With this verse in mind, what does Paul mean in verse 2 Corinthians 8:9 when he says Christ "became poor" so that believers might become rich?

(Leader help: If our greatest need is spiritual wholeness, then our greatest threat is never financial lack. In Christ, we already possess true riches. That means poverty (like the Macedonians experienced) is not ultimately a threat, because our identity and security are not tied to what we have but who we belong to.)



APPLICATION

1. Have you ever been generous out of feeling pressured or out of feeling obligation? How would you say that affected your spiritual life?
2. Do you feel like you've truly experienced the riches of Christ, or does that feel more like an idea than your reality? Is there a difference between believing that truth and living in light of it?
3. What should your life look like if you truly believe that you possess the riches of Christ and lack absolutely nothing?
4. Does a lack of generosity reveal that we don't actually believe we are rich in Christ?

PRAYER

Praise God for the riches of Christ. Be specific about what you have been given in Christ.

Pray for the areas where you are feeling lacking, that you would see God's provision.

Confess the areas in which you've put confidence in things other than Christ and his riches.



MONEY AND DESIRE

Willingness That Flows from Grace
2 Corinthians 8:10-15

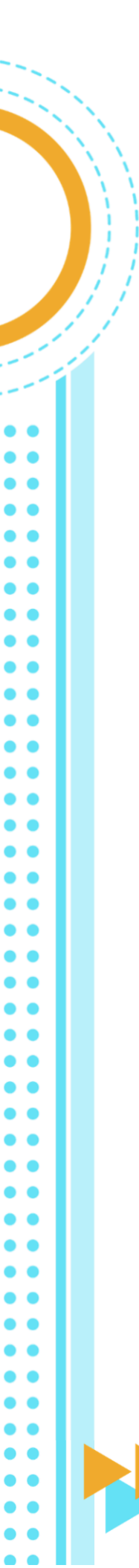
MAIN POINT

Paul moves from identity to our desires. If we truly have experienced the riches of Christ then what should our motivation for generosity be? It is possible to do a good thing for the wrong reason. This is what is at the center of Paul's address here to the Corinthian church.

TEXT

1. In verse 10, why does Paul remind the Corinthian church of their past desire for generosity in order to encourage them now? Why not just encourage them to fulfill their initial commitment?

(Leader help: This was to remind them of the desire they had already experienced. Sometimes our desires fade or even change. Reminding them of the good desire they had experienced was to point back to a work of grace that God had already done in them.)



2. What does Paul emphasize in verses 11-12, an amount or the desire to be generous? Does this perspective leave room for comparison between Christians in how much they're able to give?

(Leader help: Paul emphasizes a willingness to give. v12 - "If the readiness is there... according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.")

3. How does Paul define fairness in verses 13-15? Who is the "you" and who is the "others" in this section?

(Leader help: Paul is not calling them to become poor in order to make others rich. Rather, he is calling them to use their present abundance to meet the needs of fellow believers who are lacking. This is not forced equality, but a gospel centered sharing within the church.)



APPLICATION

1. What happens when we give without a desire to be generous that's rooted in Christ? How does giving out of compulsion affect us?
2. When you don't feel like being generous, what should come first: changing your heart or changing your actions? Is there danger in either choice?
3. Should we act our way into right desires, or wait for right desires before we act? Which is more dangerous to get wrong?

PRAYER

Praise God that he's been so generous with us. Be specific about the ways in which you're thankful for what He's provided.

Pray that God would grow your desire for generosity and that he would tear down barriers that prevent or cause you to be hesitant.

Confess where your giving, or lack of giving, has been out of wrong motivations. Ask that God would correct those desires.



MONEY AND INTEGRITY

Grace That Can Be Trusted
2 Corinthians 8:16–24

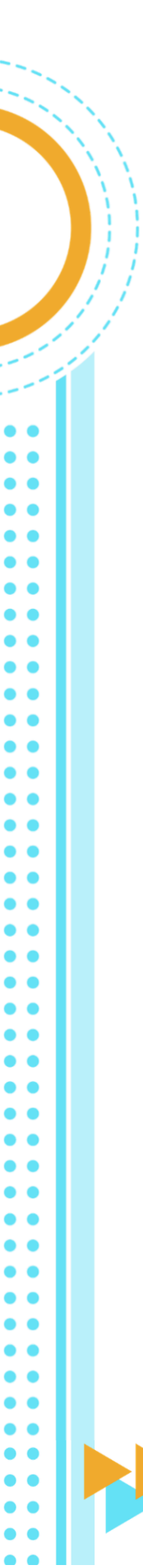
MAIN POINT

Paul emphasizes that how the generosity of the church in Corinth will be used is of utmost importance. He spends nine verses highlighting the need for integrity in handling what is given. When integrity breaks down, whether through misappropriation or through pressure that manipulates people into giving, it doesn't just harm the church; it distorts grace itself.

TEXT

1. In verses 16–17, how does Titus's desire reflect the kind of motivation Paul calls for in generosity?

(Leader help: "Of his own accord" shows that Titus acted out of genuine desire and not compulsion. The same earnestness Paul calls the church to in giving is seen in Titus as he willingly takes responsibility to handle the gift.)



2. Why does Paul emphasize that multiple people will be handling the gift in verses 18-21?

3. What does it mean to “aim at what is honorable” in verse 21? How does this apply to “in the Lord’s sight” and “in the sight of man.”

(Leader help: It is important to do what honors and glorifies God. We should have integrity before Him. It is also important that we build integrity among the people of God. True integrity not only honors God, but leaves no suspicion among His people.)



APPLICATION

1. What has your experience been with financial integrity in the church? How does the way leaders handle finances shape your trust and desire to give?
2. Why is it often difficult to invite others into financial oversight or accountability? What does that reveal about us?
3. Is financial integrity primarily a matter of personal character or structural accountability? Which matters more?
4. If trust in leadership is low, is it right to withhold generosity or should generosity remain regardless of leadership perception?

PRAYER

Praise God that he can be trusted even when we can't. Praise him for good examples of stewardship you've experienced, be specific.

Pray that God would make you and the Church a reflection of the integrity that God has.

Confess areas in which you've been dishonest, lacked accountability or transparency, and have otherwise hidden areas of your life from others.



MONEY AND TRUST

God's Grace Is Enough
2 Corinthians 9:1–15

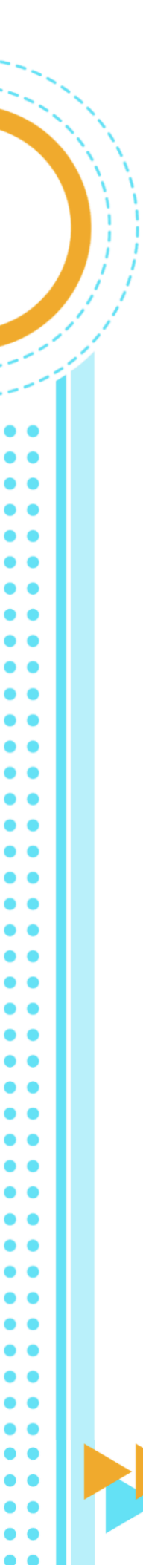
MAIN POINT

Paul shifts attention from trusting leaders, who can fail, to God who will never. The foundation of generosity is not human reliability, but the God who gives all good things. We're shown in this section that giving isn't transactional, but relational. And that relationship is rooted and flows from God.

TEXT

1. In verses 1–5, Paul addresses a gift the Corinthian church had already committed to. How does he encourage them to complete what they started?

(Leader help: As in earlier verses, Paul reminds them that this gift began with their own desire to give. He also broadens the perspective that this isn't just a local matter, but something that affects the broader Church. In that sense, he shares the responsibility for how this gift is carried out.)



2. What does sowing and reaping mean in this context (verses 6-7)? How have you heard this concept used improperly?

(Leader help: Sowing and reaping is not a formula for financial prosperity, but a metaphor for generosity. Since generosity originates with grace, it is a reflection of grace, and should result in grace being received by others.)

3. How does Paul describe the expected result of their generosity in verses 12-15?

(Leader help: The result isn't prosperity, but sufficiency. The result is thanksgiving, glory, and worship to God, while experiencing a real sense of the communion of believers united in Christ.)



APPLICATION

1. What fears prevent you from being generous? (Not having enough, misused, loss of control, uncertainty)
2. Can generosity ever lead to poor stewardship of your own responsibilities? How do we discern between trusting God and irresponsibility?
3. Do we give out of what we have left over or should generosity shape what we keep? Should generosity be spontaneous or planned? Do you have a plan for how you can grow in generosity?

PRAYER

Praise God as the giver of all good things. Thank him for being the ultimate provider, be specific.

Pray that God would cause you to grow in your trust of him in areas of your life where you're hesitant to let go of control.

Confess any areas in which you have not trusted God with your finances or as your provider.