

- WELCOME TO -
MAURICE REFORMED CHURCH

...FOLLOWING GOD, LOVING OTHERS...



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JULY SERMON SERIES



DAILY DEVOTIONALS
Week of July 19-25

Sunday, July 19

2 Corinthians Series | Freedom

"Giving Brings Freedom"

2 Corinthians 8:1-15, 9:6-15

Note: the sermon given by Justin Schrock is separate from this series

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Monday, July 20

[2 Corinthians 8:1-7](#) | Giving Yourself First to God

Welcome to a week on everyone's favorite topic, giving! It is my prayer that by the end of this week that our mindset on giving will change and that we can experience freedom with our time, talents, treasures, and tools. All too often we hold on to our stuff with a tight fist and don't realize how freeing it can be to open up our hands and let God do what He wants to do with them. Let's jump into this week by looking at what Paul shared with the Corinthians.

In this passage Paul uses the people of Macedonia as an example. They are a people who are in extreme poverty. I'm not sure what that exactly means, but that did not stop them from giving to the cause. I would argue the reason that they were willing to give to the cause was because of what Paul says in verse 5. They first gave themselves to God. In this action the people of Macedonia surrendered their thoughts, desires, and things to God as first priority and allowed Him to take the lead with everything they had. When they did this they were able to give even beyond their means with joy in their hearts.

This is a powerful lesson that I want each one of us to learn. We need to first recommit and surrender our entire lives to the Lord. When we do that our mindset switches from what we want to what God wants. Our grip loosens on our stuff and it can be used more as God intended. Take a look at your life, at your time, your tools, your talents and your treasure. Where do you have a tight grip on it for your plans? Would you be willing to take a moment and release that tight grip and surrender those things to the plans of God?

"Take My Life" - Reawaken Hymns

Do you give willingly of your time, talents, and tools?
What does this mean?

What might God be calling you to do as you loosen your grip on the stuff you have?

Lord, we surrender. Take our lives and let them be
consecrated Lord to You!

[illegible]

Tuesday, July 21

[2 Corinthians 8:8-15](#) | Doing Your Part

How do you feel about taxes? I know in our culture today that there are many differing views about how to tax people and who should be taxed the most. Some believe that the wealthiest should be taxed at a higher percent because they have more money above what is needed to comfortably survive and those who have little should be taxed less because they need a higher percent of their money to meet their daily needs. Regardless of how you feel about taxes, it is important for each person to pay a share to help the community.

Paul is not commanding or guiltting the Corinthian people to give. The previous story about Macedonia was not to tell them to give beyond their means. All Paul is asking the Corinth church to do is to give and to remain faithful to the commitment they have already made. It seems that God has blessed the Corinthian church financially and they have the means to be a blessing to the cause. He wanted them to do their part in the ministry.

When we were just married we lived paycheck to paycheck. Our car would often be on E and our cupboards and fridge slim as we waited for the next paycheck. We were never in danger of going hungry, but we didn't have a ton of excess either. Fast forward 20 years and I can honestly say our financial situation is much different. We are able to provide for our kids when they are in need. We are able to give when a need arises for a ministry. Our cupboards are always full

and there is always enough gas in the tank. When we had little we did not lack and when we have much we don't need excess. May we learn to live content with what we have, always with the mindset of using what we have for the ministry of God.

SONG:
“[More Precious Than Silver](#)” - Lynn DeShazo

KIDS QUESTION:
Why is it important to give what you can?

YOUTH /ADULT QUESTION:
What would it look like to gather much and have nothing left over? How can you best be a good steward of what you have?

PRAYER:
Lord, help us to be wise with what we have and not desire excess. Father, teach us what it is like to rely and depend on You for everything we need.

Wednesday, July 22

[2 Corinthians 8:16-24](#) | Being Found Honorable

Have you ever received a phone call from an organization asking for money? There are some people out there that try to scam others out of money by pretending to be someone they are not. They can tell a good story about what seems to be a good cause, but in the end they are thieves who are only out to tug on your heart strings and take advantage of your kindness. These types of people would not be considered honorable in the slightest.

Paul now takes a moment to share who will be a part of the group bringing this offering to Jerusalem to help those in need. He makes sure to share the characteristics and qualities of these upstanding gentlemen and points out that the goal is that they would share this trip together honorably. They are traveling together to keep each other safe against any robbers or thieves that might be along the way. They are also traveling together to make sure nothing inappropriate happens to the funds as they travel. Paul is telling the Corinthian church that they can trust that their gifts will be held in the best hands.

Being taken advantage of can leave a bad taste in your mouth. After experiencing someone deceiving you for gain it can cause you to question everyone and be less generous with what God has given you. I want to encourage you that not everyone is the same. You don't want to miss out on a good opportunity to share what God has given you just because of one bad experience. I want to encourage you to ask good questions and as you find out if they are honorable or not, be willing to give where there is honor.

SONG:

"Give of Your Best to the Master" - Hymn

KIDS QUESTION:

Who can you give to that you know is safe? Does it make you feel happy to give?

YOUTH /ADULT QUESTION:

Who are some people you have given to that you trust?

PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for providing people in my life that are honorable. Help me to give generously when they are in need.

[illegible]

Thursday, July 23

[2 Corinthians 9:1-5](#) | **Be Faithful to Your Promises**

Today we are going to talk about promises. We know that the desire would be that each person would keep the promise that they make to us. Have you ever had a time where someone said they would do something and then when the time came they denied their promise or forgot? I know I have learned to send a reminder to them right before the time so that they can make sure to fulfill what they said they are going to do.

Paul here is sending a quick text reminder to the Corinthian church about the promised gift they said they would give and his arrival. Paul wanted them to remember their commitment and to be prepared to give when he came. He did not want this to feel like taxation or a fee, but more like a gift. As we will see in the upcoming chapter, Paul will continue to encourage the attitude behind the gift and not just the gift itself.

I don't know about you, but I often need that text reminder to help me remember what I am to do and when I am to do it. Being faithful to our word is important, especially when it means serving or helping someone else. I want to encourage each of us to sign up for opportunities to bless others today. I know that in the upcoming month there will be many ways to serve and walk alongside our missionaries. Commit to joining us and blessing them.

SONG:

"Give Thanks" - Don Moen

KIDS QUESTION:

Has anyone ever broken a promise to you? How did you feel? Have you ever broken a promise?

YOUTH /ADULT QUESTION:

Why is it important to be faithful to your promises?

PRAYER:

Lord, help us to be good examples of You and Your word.
May we commit to serving others and follow through with
our commitment.

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Friday, July 24

[2 Corinthians 9:6-9](#) | God Loves a Cheerful Giver

I'm guessing if you have heard any messages about giving that this is a familiar verse for you. While thinking about this verse, a thought came to my mind: would you and I be able to tell a cheerful giver? Some characteristics we may be looking for in a cheerful giver may be a smile, some excitement, or just general willingness to participate. More than an outward appearance, I believe Paul is inviting us to look at our heart as he writes these passages.

Paul says that if we sow sparingly that we will reap sparingly, but if we sow bountifully then we will reap bountifully. Paul encourages that people give what they have decided in their heart and that it should be with joy and not in reluctance. This is the key to being a cheerful giver. If you feel like you have to or you just don't want to, then that is a clear sign that your giving will not be cheerful. Paul wants the people to know that God will give you enough to fulfill the gift that He is calling you to give.

I confess that I am not always a cheerful giver. I also will confess that this week has been highly convicting to my heart and mind. I have been blessed with so much and I have been given these things not for my own desires, but to be a part of the kingdom of God. Another phrase that I love in this passage is to not give because you feel like you have to. This should go for all things in our lives. Trust me, I feel much more alive and free when I do something because I want to rather than because I have to. May our hearts switch today and may we be cheerful givers.

"God I'm Just Grateful" - Elevation Worship

What does it mean to be a “cheerful giver”? Do you do things because you “have to” or because you “want to”?

What are some things you feel like you have to do?
What are some things that you get to or want to do?
Explain the difference of how the two feel.

Lord, change my heart, oh God. May my heart be more like Yours!

[illegible]

Saturday, July 25

2 Corinthians 9:10-15 | God Will Provide

We live in a culture that believes in pulling oneself up by their boots straps, whatever that means. We have a mindset of providing for ourselves, our families and those around us. We work hard, we play hard, and we often spend money hard. Many of the people I am around have never been in want, they have never wondered where their next meal would come from, and they rarely have concerns about the roof over their head. We say we are blessed, which is true, but why are we blessed? Are we blessed because we worked hard? Are we blessed because we made wise investments? Are we blessed because God provided?

Paul finishes out this chapter by being clear that God has provided the greatest gift of all and truly the only thing that we will ever need and that is salvation through Jesus Christ. It is a gift that we could never repay and an amount that we could have never given. In this passage Paul is clear that God is the one who gives us all things so that we can in turn be generous to the needs around us. God will provide the seeds needed to sow and He expects us to sow them and not keep them to ourselves.

I am not asking that we all become “poor” just because, but I do believe that these two chapters have challenged me to be more aware of what I am spending my time, talent, treasure, and tools on. We can never outgive God and so when the opportunity arises, I want to encourage you to give with abundance. Yes, you can give that amount of money, yes,

you can give that amount of time for the ministry, yes, you can share that tool or talent with the church. We have so many amazing opportunities as Christians and the more we treat this life with opened hands rather than clenched fists, we will see a harvest in the kingdom of God.

SONG:

["I Will Follow"](#) - Chris Tomlin

KIDS QUESTION:

As we learned about giving this week, have you changed the way you want to give? What will you do differently going forward?

YOUTH /ADULT QUESTION:

Do you want to see a harvest in the kingdom of God? How is God inviting you to be a part of that?

PRAYER:

Lord, thank you for the opportunity and the ability to bless those in need. Give me eyes to see and a cheerful heart to give.
