

Small Group Notes – Sunday 11th March - Generous Living

Worship

Read Psalm 145 - pick out the different ways in which God shows his generosity

Word

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church he is encouraging them to complete their plans to make a donation to relieve the suffering of the Jerusalem church which was experiencing famine and hardships. In chapters 8 and 9 of 2Corinthians Paul points to the example of the Macedonian churches as an encouragement to the Corinthians.

The Characteristics of generosity

The generosity of the Macedonian churches stemmed from first of all opening their lives to God and His leading, then giving proportionately, and willingly.

What other characteristics of generous living can you find in these verses?

Read also what Paul says in Ch.8: 12

The Rewards of generosity (9:8-11)

Generous giving is all about trusting God to supply all our needs and increase our supply so that we can give even more when the time comes.

What did Jesus teach in Luke 12:6 and Matthew 7:11 about God?

How have we experienced God's rewards in our lives?

The Results of generosity (9-11-13)

What does Paul say are the results of living generously?

In what ways have we already experienced this in the use of our new building and in our lives?

Generous living is based on trust in God.

We live in a world where we are taught and encouraged to maximise our wealth, always try to get the best deals, value for money is a big thing. But in case we should fall into misfortune then we have insurances for virtually anything. The end result is that we build up savings for the future, spend money on insurances that we may never make use of, and are reluctant to give away anything that is not going to give us any return. This makes it very difficult to trust in God! – Discuss!!!

Compare this with the Macedonian churches. They were undergoing extreme trials and poverty, yet they gave generously, of themselves and of what they barely had!

How does Jesus' teaching in Luke 12:32-34 encourage us to live generously?

Generosity of God

Our ability to live generous lives comes from the fact that we are made in God's image....

Read 1 John 4:7-12

What does "God is Love" mean in practice?

God created us in his image to have this loving nature, for him to share his love for us and for us to share with others - Mark 12:29-31 - what are the two most important commandments?

The example of the Macedonian churches was one of financial giving, but generosity applies to every aspect of life – our time, our skills and abilities,

How can we love God and live generously in our church.... at home....at work.... in society?

Prayer

- Pray for guidance on how God wants you to live generously
- Pray that the needs of the church for musicians, projectionists, youth helpers, etc will be fulfilled
- Pray for the Easter services and baptisms
- Pray for individual needs of people in your group and in the church