

Stewardship *and* Mission

- Memory text sets tone = for entire lesson

2 Corinthians 8:9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich”

- Verse = not about **money** = but, about **heart** of God in gospel
 - **Self-giving heart of Messiah/Christ**
 - Heaven’s mission /flowing thru = life of Person of Jesus Christ
- **2 Corinthians 8 and 9** = Paul encourages believers in Corinth
 - to complete = financial offering for = poor saints in Judea
- More than / fundraiser = Christian giving / never merely financial
- Giving / spiritual = giving reveals character
 - That’s why stewardship / mission belong together
- Biblical stewardship = not just about managing resources
 - It’s faithful use of everything = God has entrusted to us
 - for sake of His kingdom
- Mission = purpose toward which stewardship moves
- God blesses His people not merely so we may **possess**
 - but so we may **participate** in His work
- Lesson’s Sabbath intro = reminds us
 - language of heaven = language of giving

John 3:16 God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son

- Love gives = Grace gives = Father gave / Son = Son gave / Himself
- Center of God’s universe = not selfishness / but self-sacrificing love
- That’s why = stewardship cannot be separated from/ gospel
- God’s mission to save humanity = carried out thru giving of Messiah/Christ
- Now = Paul says = **1 Corinthians 4:1** = believers called to be “**stewards of the mysteries of God.**”
- We = caretakers of truth / grace / time / influence / means = placed in our hands to serve mission of God

- During this week = see theological principles related to practice of offering gifts
- Based on Christ's offering of Himself = hope given us thru birth / life / death / resurrection of Jesus

SUNDAY = THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

- **2 Corinthians 8:1-5** Paul tells of God's grace / bestowed thru Macedonians = despite deep poverty
 - overflowed in generosity = offering for poor saints / Judea
- Teaches us generosity = not dependent on abundance
- **2 Cor 8:6-8** Encourages them to abound in this grace also = give
- As beautiful as Macedonians' example was
 - only reflection of much greater generosity = Christ Himself
- Paul now turns from / principle = to perfect model

2 Corinthians 8:9 = "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich."

- One of / clearest summaries of / gospel in all Scripture
- One verse= Paul takes us from glory of heaven/ to sacrifice of Calvary
- First = says Lord Jesus Christ = **"was rich"**
- Points to Christ's pre-existence = His divine glory /His eternal majesty
- John 17:5**, Jesus prayed, **"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."**
- Before Bethlehem = Christ shared / glory of Father
- Yet Paul says = **"for your sakes He became poor"**
 - That is = holy wonder of / incarnation
- Christ/Lord did not cease to be God
 - but willingly laid aside visible privileges of heavenly glory
 - entered /world as servant = in Person of Jesus
- **Philippians 2:6-8** Christ was equal w/ God = He humbled Himself
 - Became Son of Man / Covenant Son of God
 - Became obedient unto death = even death of cross

- Creator entered creation = accepted rejection / suffering / death
- His poverty = born / humble circumstances = lived w/o earthly wealth
- Luke 9:58, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”**
- His poverty had purpose = Paul says / was **“for your sakes.”**
- Became poor redemptively = gave Himself so / we might receive life
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him**
- Great Exchange = goal of everlasting gospel
 - Took our sin = that we might receive His righteousness
 - Entered our sorrow = that we might inherit His joy
 - Embraced death = that we might share eternal life
- Great exchange = He became poor = that we might become rich
- Not rich in worldly sense = but rich in grace / forgiveness
 - hope / promise of everlasting life
- In Christ = bankrupt sinner becomes = heir of heaven
- Paul’s point = all Christian stewardship must be
 - grounded in Christ’s self-giving love
- Offering for Judea = not to be produced by = pressure / guilt
 - Rather = inspired by grace
- When we look at Jesus = generosity becomes
 - Response of / redeemed heart
- As we dwell on birth / life / death / resurrection of Jesus
 - what should our reaction be?
- Should awaken **gratitude** = cannot gaze upon Calvary
 - remain unmoved
- Should lead us to **surrender** = Jesus did not give / portion of Himself
 - He gave Himself
- When we understand that / we stop asking = “How little can I give?”
 - begin asking, “Lord, how can all that I am serve You?”
- Should produce **mission-minded living**
- Christ’s offering / purposeful = He gave Himself to save

- When we give = our time / strength / service / influence / resources
 - Should move in / same direction
 - toward salvation of others / and glory of God
- Stewardship = not first about / money = it's about likeness to Christ
- Mission = not first about / activity
 - about participating in self-giving love of Jesus
- Example of Jesus = stands above = every other example
- He was rich / yet became poor = He gave all/ that we might gain all
- When that grace grips our hearts = stewardship / mission
 - will no longer feel like burdens = but privileges
- Once we know grace of our Lord Jesus Christ =
 - giving becomes an act of love
 - and mission becomes = overflow of / heart transformed by Him