

Preaching about Giving Workshop - Some notes
Kensington Area Saturday 19 October

Why is it hard to preach about giving?

Which passages in the bible have you heard used on the topic of giving?

Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church teaches about giving: 2 Cor 8:1-9 (NIV)

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you — see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Christian giving is ;

- **an act of worship**, a response to the grace and love that we receive from God. (2 Cor 8:1-8).
- **marked by generosity**, it is a privilege to give to God and enable God's work (2 Cor 8:4)
- part of a mind set that **offers our whole selves including our money** to God (2 Cor 8:5). Doing this it helps us to **keep money in its rightful place**.

- a **test of the sincerity of our love for God and one another.** (2 Cor 8:8)

Some practical applications from 2 Cor 8 and 9:

Christian giving benefits everyone, the giver, the church and brings joy to the Lord.

- 2 Cor 9:7 says that our giving should be **personal and planned** (v7). In general the Bible calls us to give first what we have prayerfully to give and not from what is left.
- 2 Cor 8 speaks of giving being **proportionate or in keeping with income/circumstances** (v12). We are not asked to give in excess of our means. Everyone is in a different situation with respect to both financial and family situation.
- 2 Cor 9:6 we are called to give **generously**. The New Testament does not speak of giving a percentage (tithing), but rather calls us to give in response to God, in worship and in sacrifice. One of the strong biblical values is of sacrificial generosity in response to God's great generous love for us. We are generous because God is.
- Paul teaches that **giving brings joy and thanksgiving to the giver** (2 Cor 9:11). It is a counter intuitive truth that giving away brings us joy through making a difference to others and enables us to be more thankful for all that God has given us.

Further Notes

Don't Forget preaching is only a part of the process of encouraging giving.

Process must include:

- **Communication**
 - Thank you
 - Where giving goes and what it enables (inc common fund)
 - Encouragement to review giving (up or down)
 - Encouragement to Gift Aid and/or use Parish Giving Scheme
- **Make it easy.** 'Strike whilst the iron is hot' around the time of the sermon.
- **Keep it regular / Annual**
 - Plan when dependant on your context