

## **“FINDING JOY IN A STRANGE PLACE”**

**(2Corinthians 8:1-24)**

*July 2, 2017*

**How many times does the Bible talk about belief/faith: 272?**

**Prayer: 371 Love:714 Giving:2162**

**God wants us to be more like him and God is GENEROUS.**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son... John 3:16*

**Paul unpacks how we can find joy in an UNEXPECTED place:**

### **I. Godly giving ILLUSTRATIONS**

#### **1) The MACEDONIAN Christians**

– **Surrendered their WILL to the Savior**

**This is crucial. Godly giving CANNOT come from an ungodly heart.**

– **Sacrificially SHARED with the saints**

**There are times when we will be asked, by our church, our pastor or our God to give sacrificially so that what HE wants of us will be done.**

#### **2) The LORD JESUS CHRIST**

– **What he was: RICH**

**Jesus had it all! Nevertheless, we know:**

– **What he became: POOR**

*... but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Philippians 2:7*

– **Why he did it: to make SPIRITUALLY poor people rich**

**Jesus gave up everything for you and I.**

**How can we honor his sacrifice for us? By becoming more LIKE him.**

### **II. Godly giving INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **1) Give KNOWINGLY**

**Paul reminds us that it is best for Christians to excel in certain areas: faith, speech, knowledge & love for one another. Then he adds: “... see that you ALSO excel in this grace of giving.”**

**Did you ever think of giving that way – as a God – given grace?**

**It is! Knowing that makes giving exciting and fulfilling.**

## **2) Give WILLINGLY**

**Eager willingness!**

## **3) Give REALISTICALLY**

**God does not measure our gifts by the AMOUNT we give, but by our EAGERNESS to give it.**

**God's grace is seen in his clear instruction for TITHING. If every Christian followed his instruction to tithe 10% of their income, we could change the WORLD overnight.**

**Unfortunately, studies have proven that the MORE income a person has, the LESS of a percentage they give. They assume an attitude of OWNERSHIP.**

**But God said:** *But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...* *Deuteronomy 8:18*

**Instead of gripping onto money out of fear, we should:**

## **4) Give CONFIDENTLY**

**Paul reminds the church of how God took care of his people as they wandered through the desert by the miraculous giving of the manna. If you TRUST the Lord, he blesses you. Not always with abundance, but always with ENOUGH.**

### **III. Godly giving INDIVIDUALS**

#### **1) The NAMING of the three**

**Paul names a delegation to carry their offering to Jerusalem to meet the needs of the people of Israel.**

#### **2) The NEED for the three**

**Why doesn't Paul just send Titus? Transparency and TRUST.**

**Converge Worldwide is part of ECFA, which stands for Evangelical Council For Financial Accountability.**

**We comply with their standards, so that we can all trust that the dollars we give will be properly handled and put to work as the LORD would have us do.**

**It might seem a strange place to find joy, but I encourage you to trust God's Word in this area of GENEROUS giving. It is one of the most IMPACTFUL things you can do to help your spiritual growth and become more like Christ!**