

The Glory of Jesus' Generosity

Intro:

*** 2 Cor 8:9 reveals the _____ glory of the infinite
_____ of Jesus advent. Jesus advent:

I. ... stuns us _____ the glory of _____ Jesus is.

II. ... stuns us _____ the glory of _____ Jesus has done.

III. ... stuns us _____ the glory of a new life overflowing in practical
generosity.

Concl:

Digging Deeper into today's Bible verses & themes Dec 6, 2009

Here are a few questions to help "Life groups" &/or families spend more time reflecting on this Sunday's Bible passage & theme. Adapt them as you like.

Opener: As Christmas approaches what are you most looking forward to about Christmas? (or) Is there anything you are not looking forward to & if so what? As a follow up: how can we pray for you this Advent season?

Prayer/Application #1: A suggestion: pray for one another as a group after you share tonight's opener question & before you discuss the sermon theme. Before you pray also ask if there is anyone else in New Hope or beyond for whom we should pray.

Dig #1: Read 2 Cor 8:9. What does "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" who "though he was rich yet for your sakes become poor" mean to you? Pick a portion of this verse & not only explain it but share what there is about it that "stuns" you.

Dig #2: What additional insights about Jesus incarnation & ministry do you see in Philippians 2:5-11? How does this teaching encourage &/or challenge you?

Dig #3: Has God's grace in Jesus made you more generous than you were before following Him? If so, in what ways? How are the Macedonian & Corinthian believers different in their generosity? Are you more like the Macedonians or the Corinthians?

Application #2: Who is going to receive the gift of 2 Cor 8-9? Should we be doing that today? Is God calling us (New Hope) to be more generous with those beyond our local body? What might happen if we heeded this call to generous financial giving to people beyond our body?

Prayer/Application #3: If you are willing ... spend some time in prayer again – but this time focused on giving praise to God for Jesus. Take 5-10 minutes or more & worship the one who though He was rich yet for our sakes become poor ...

Other Questions for personal study or to discuss with a friend:

1. Ask 1 or more of these questions in order to reflect on Sunday's worship service:
 - How did God speak to you or reveal Himself to you in Sunday's service?
 - How did God use you at our worship gathering (to speak through you or use you to touch someone else)?
 - During the worship service was there anyone God seemed to be laying on your heart for whom to pray? Is there anyone God is calling you to write, phone or meet with soon?
2. "Grace" is central is central to Paul's teaching in 2 Cor 8-9. Please note the following (material borrowed from Paul Barnett's commentary, p. 389) – namely that the word "grace" (greek/ charis) is used 10x in chapter 8-9 (8:1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 16, 19; 9:8, 14 & 15). It is used with different nuances & so most English versions translate using multiple English words, but clearly "grace" is one of Paul's main themes in this passage. Notice also that Paul uses a cluster of words that further emphasize this concept of "grace":
 - "overflowing," in 2 Cor 8:3, 7 & in 9:8, 12; & 8:14
 - "generosity," in 2 Cor 8:2; 9:11 & 13/ "voluntariness," in 8:3, 17
 - "willingness," in 8:11, 12, 19; 9:2 / "eagerness," in 8:7, 8, & 16; and see also 8:17-22
 - and please note that Paul refuses to "command" the Corinthians but only encourages & gives "advice" (8:8, 10) – He wants "not an exaction but a willing gift" (9:5); & calls them to give "not reluctantly nor under compulsion but . . . cheerfully" (9:7).
 - Finally Paul ends his exposition in keeping with "grace": "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift [lit – "grace"]!"