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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Sharing with Those in Need 2 Cor 8:7-15

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson examines how God wants us to participate in **Sharing with Those in Need**. The **study's aim** is to remember that we can help others in practical ways as God enables us. The **study's application** is to establish a mind-set of giving from a Christian and godly perspective.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

Our text comes in the midst of a long passage on Christian giving. Paul began this section of Scripture by remarking on the tremendous example of the churches of Macedonia—how they gave generously, willingly, and joyously despite "deep poverty" (2 Cor. 8:2). He then moved along to exhort the Corinthian church to do the very same thing (vss. 8, 11). Their giving was to be directed at meeting the needs of other believers (saints) who were suffering from poverty (cf. 2 Cor. 9:12). So we are not looking at a situation of routine giving, as we might do for our churches or favorite ministries. This addressed giving to urgent needs. Paul viewed it as sharing some of what God had given to come to the aid of other believers. The text lifts up the Lord Jesus as our ultimate example of giving to others. We were needy sinners, and Jesus gave His all for us so that we could be saved. This was grace, which was freely given without requiring any corresponding gift in return. The One who possessed heavenly riches embraced the poverty of this world in order that we, who are poor sinners without hope of salvation, could be made rich. The Lord did not give just so that we would have a little help and relief. He gave so that we are now endowed with all the heavenly riches that He Himself possessed and possesses. An Asian Christian leader once talked to me about "rice Christians." These are people who seem to follow the Lord based on the charity they have received from more prosperous Christians. Once the charity stops, though, these people are less than enthusiastic about Christ. He also warned me that they do not learn the proper way to give. When a person gets in the habit of taking, taking, and taking some more, he seldom learns how to give. Our model for our own giving must be the Lord Jesus Christ. We must not be like those who only take and receive; we must learn how to give and share. If the Lord becomes our model for giving and sharing, relieving the needs of those in want, we will give willingly, as the Lord gave to us without compulsion. We will also do it generously. If our eyes are fixed on how the Lord Jesus gave to us, how will any other response fit? He has been generous to us, and we will receive "all things" (Rom. 8:32). In turn, we should give joyously because we know that it glorifies Him. There are needs to meet all around our country and the world. God has blessed most of us with the means to share with others, both for the sake of the advancement of the gospel and for the sake of relieving human suffering. Can our sharing and giving be characterized as generous? Is it willing? Is it joyous? Or do we do it in miserly fashion and reluctantly? Let us look at the Lord Jesus and learn to give as He has given to us. This is what we learn from the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Wealth is a double blessing when you share it with others

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be:
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.

(James 5:3 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", June 10, 2002)

Series: Justice in the New Testament

UNIT: Paul Teaches about New Life in Christ

NEXT WEEK

Practicing Genuine Love (Romans 12:9-21)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Gracious Giving (2 Cor 8:7-9)

Giving out of love (7-8)

Giving out of love to please God (Phil 4:18)

Giving out of love comes from a pure heart, sincere faith and good conscience (1 Tim 1:5)

Giving out of love should be the only debt we should have (Rom 13:8)

Giving out of love that shows faith working (James 2:15-17)

Giving out of love through actions (1 John 3:18)

Giving out of love and enthusiasm (2 Cor 9:2)

Giving out of humility (9)

Humility by considering others interest before ours (Phil 2:2-4)

Humility that gives in secret (Matt 6:2-4)

Humility that gives what one has even if it is not money (Acts 3:6)

Humility that abides by it is better to give than receive (Acts 20:35)

Humility that gives oneself as a sacrifice to God (Eph 5:1-2)

Challenges In Giving (2 Cor 8:10-15)

Finish what you start (10-11)

Finish by keeping the faith (2 Tim 4:7)

Finish by faith and actions working together to make faith complete (James 2:22)

Finish by throwing off everything that hinders (Heb 12:1)

Finish by being committed to do the will of God (John 4:34)

Finish by being committed to finish the assigned tasks (John 5:36-37)

Finish by being committed to the end of life (John 19:30)

Give willingly (12)

Giving willingly is always recognized by God (Mark 14:4-9)

Giving willingly is the manifestation of a contented spirit (Phil 4:10-14)

Giving willingly to honor God (Prov 3:9)

Giving willingly from what God has given (Deut 26:1-2)

Giving tithes willingly to the Church (Mal 3:10)

Give through equality (13-15)

Equality through sharing and giving with hope (1 Tim 6:17-19)

Equality through good stewardship (Luke 16:10-12)

Equality through giving cheerfully (2 Cor 9:7)

Equality through giving in proportion (Num 35:8)

Equality through giving generously from what God has supplied (2 Cor 9:10-11)

Equality through giving to those in need from own possessions (1 John 3:17-18)