



February 2012

## 2 Cor 8 "The Pinch"

### Community Group Notes

#### Introduction

Part 2 of our 'Elephant in the Room' series is all about the 'nitty gritty' of God's expectations on us in relation to our giving. We address questions like: "Should I give 10% like it says in the Old Testament?" "Should I give from my gross or net?" "My spouse is not a Christian what should I give?" "I'm in debt, shouldn't I deal with that first?" "What do I give if I can't afford it?" "Why should I give to the church?"

#### Discussion

- From last week's message, why does God give us money?
- Why did Jesus speak on matters relating to money 25% of the time?

#### Explanation

Read: 2 Cor 8:1-8

#### 1. Generosity begins with Jesus. (2 Cor 8: 8,9)

- From these verses – what is the primary reason we should give from our finances?
- How does the message of the gospel compel us to give?

**Jesus was generous. Jesus was gracious. Jesus was a giver. Jesus is our example**

#### 2. Generosity is all about sacrifice (2 Cor 8:1-4; Mark 12:41-44)

- What impressed Jesus about the widow?
- What does this teach us about Jesus' (and the NT) expectations about giving?

Leviticus 27:30-33; Numbers 18:21-24; Deuteronomy 12:6; 26:12 (refer to the resource links on Missionlogs.com for more important back up material)

- What does the word 'Tithe' mean?
- How many tithes were there in the OT?
- Is tithing mentioned specifically in the NT as a command?
- How does Jesus 'raise the bar' when it comes to giving?
- What amount should we give? (2 Cor 9:6)
- How do you **KNOW** if you are giving sacrificially?

#### 3. Giving to the Church (please refer to supporting documents / links on missionlogs.com to help answer some of the questions that may/will come up)

Note: The majority of biblical scholars agree with the view that the NT ministry of the church succeeded and mirrors that of the OT temple (1Cor 9:13-14; 1Cor 9:9 (quote from Deut 25:4); 2 Cor 11:7; Phil 4:4; 1 Tim 5:17-18)

In Malachi we're told that God wants us to direct our entire offering into the storehouse (temple). It had four functions. It was used to feed:

- a) the Hebrew widows and orphans living within the city
- b) the widows and orphans of the Gentiles who were living in and around the Hebrew city.
- c) the tribe of Levi and the priests of Aaron and
- d) the prophets

- How do points a – d (above) relate to modern church responsibilities?

The church is God's tool for spreading the gospel locally, nationally and internationally.

- Why are people sometimes reluctant to give to the church?
- Why are people willing to give to other places of 'worship' (clubs, sports, music venues etc) but not their church?
- If we don't sacrificially give to the local church what are the inevitable consequences to its work?

**Instead of being a 10% church lets be a church that strives to give sacrificially like the widow and Macedonians.**

## Application

The NT teaches that your gifts should be:

Given Regularly

Given Cheerfully (obedience leads to cheerfulness)

Given Sacrificially

- How does giving remind us of God's love and ability to provide?
- If you are willing, be honest about what God may be saying to you regarding your giving
- What action are you willing to take this week in regard to your giving?
- Pray for the South and it's future – that people would commit to giving so the work can go from strength to strength and that they could experience the freedom of biblical generosity

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## What is a community group?

Community groups are small gatherings of people that meet regularly for friendship, accountability, study and prayer, laughter, and occasionally tears. Community groups are an essential expression of the mission of The South. They're a place where we learn more about Jesus and life together. They're the place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another towards the life that God intends for us.

Each community group is unique, shaped by its neighbourhood and the people who attend. However, you can expect a regular gathering in a residence to involve conversation, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, service in the neighborhood and probably something to eat!

At the heart of each community group is the desire to see an authentic community marked by love for Jesus, one another, and the neighbourhood.