**20 – Giving of the Macedonians**

*2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Romans 6:13*

**Instruments of Righteousness**

* **Romans 6:1-4** – When we are baptized we put to death the old man of sin.
  + Because we were baptized we are no longer to sin. (**v. 1-2**) (cf. **Colossians 3:5** – Described as putting to death our members on the earth)
    - Members – sinful actions; our body is the medium through which sin takes place; we are to put to death that sin, i.e. no longer use our members for that purpose.
  + When we are raised we are a new creature. **(v. 4)**
    - This new creature is created for good works **(cf. Ephesians 2:8-10)**.
* **Romans 6:12-13** – Instead of using our body, abilities, and mind for sin, we are to use them for righteousness unto God.

**Giving of the Corinthians**

* Paul had commanded them to lay by in store – **1 Corinthians 16:1-4**
  + For the poor saints in Jerusalem.
* Paul wished to encourage them further by telling them about the Macedonians **(2 Corinthians 8:1; 9:1-4)**.
  + Some assume the Corinthians had stopped collecting, or were not as willing. This is a possibility, but more speculative than anything.
* **What we read of the Macedonians shows why Paul was so impressed with them, and he thought it would be a motivation to the Corinthians. 🡪**

**Giving of the Macedonians** – giving is a good work done to God.

* Possible by God’s grace **(v. 1)** – **Philippians 2:12-13**
  + God’s word provides us with motivation (desire; will) and ability (**cf. Luke 17:5** – increase our faith) to do that which is His will.
    - ***“It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35)***.
    - **Matthew 5:3-12** – Beatitudes show somewhat how God does this. He provides a Joy that is only found in spiritual things.
      * **All of these things, and GIVING, provide us with this joy, and we are blessed in doing them**. (This goes against worldly wisdom.)
  + **2 Corinthians 9:8** – by God’s grace
* **(v. 2)** – They were not only poor, but afflicted (perhaps persecution, but at least some hardships).
  + Even in this state that were not only willing to give, but overfilled with JOY to have the opportunity!
    - Paul expressed his thanks for the gift of the Philippians, but recognized, and was happy for the fruit to their account (**cf. Philippians 4:14-17)**.
  + ***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4)***
* **How did they give?** (We ask this sometimes. How much do we give? We would do well to look to the Macedonians.)
  + ***“Beyond their ability”***
    - **Luke 21:1-4** (Poor widow) – gave less monetarily than the rest, but more because it was everything she owned.
    - As prospered – **1 Corinthians 16:2** (We know what our ability is. We know what is beyond our ability.)
      * **Jews were to tithe 10%, but that’s not all that they gave. (Animal sacrifices, corners of field.)**
  + ***“Freely willing”***
    - **Cf. 9:5** – not grudgingly.
    - We are supposed to want to give to help others.
    - This is why Paul in the Spirit says to purpose in your heart (**cf. 2 Corinthians 9:7**).
      * We worship in spirit and Truth (i.e. sincerely). And we must give with the same disposition.
  + **Begging Paul and companions (v. 4)**
    - **This expressed their desire to give.**
    - Not as hoped **(v. 5)** – Paul didn’t expect them to give much, and did not wish to trouble them, knowing their poverty, but they BEGGED.
  + **Gave themselves** (work of righteousness to God, and to God’s ministers in the situation – Paul and others)
    - **When we give, if we give in the proper manner, we are truly giving ourselves.**
    - **Romans 12:1 – a living sacrifice.**
    - **We are willing to depend wholly upon God. This is manifest in giving (in the Macedonians case, even what they didn’t have to give.)**
    - The widow gave more, not because the monetary value was more, but because she gave herself!

**Reason to give**

* Compassion and love for needy brethren – **cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26**
  + Not enough to just say (cf. James 2:14-17).
* Love for God (cf. **1 John 4:20-21** – can’t love God without love brother. When love brother we love God – cf. **Matthew 25:37-40**).
  + God commands us to give. Our giving is His will.
  + It is His will that the money further the work of the church.
  + Part of that work is benevolence to needy saints.