

God's Indescribable Gift!- Read 2 Corinthians 9 v 6-15

2009 is full of gloomy headlines. Recession, credit crunch, shop closures, job losses, home repossessions. What once brought people security and peace has died. How should the church be in a time like this? Can we trust God for our future? What principles is God's economy built upon?

Paul says we can choose to either sow sparingly or sow generously.

Sowing Sparingly...

We need to recognise where we have built a life comfortable for ourselves rather than look after the poor and marginalised. Haggai (1 v5) says that people live their lives with holes in their purse... not really sure where the pounds disappear to. Paul says that our greed is idolatry. The people of Israel built a golden calf and placed it in the centre of their community and worshipped it. With the backdrop of easy credit, cheap mortgages and falling prices on goods... have we placed our own golden calves in our lives?

Sowing Generously...

Generosity reveals the grace of God. Money is a way in which we show we belong to God... where our money is there our heart is.

As believers, we should have an eternal perspective, rooted in an eternal relationship with Jesus. Our priorities should be radically different. It is with Jesus that we find love, joy, peace and security not in our homes, jobs and bank accounts.

Paul boasts about the Macedonians who in severe trial and extreme poverty responded with abundant joy and generosity. The only way you can do that is if your God isn't the God of money. We are called to hold on to things lightly- remembering that everything comes from God.

In v13 Paul says that our generosity communicates God's love and that this will lead to people giving their lives to Jesus.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable Gift!!!

For God so loved the world that he GAVE his only son. God is the first giver; he first selflessly gives himself to us in the person of his son, Jesus.

Jesus had all the comfort of heaven but became poor for our sakes. Jesus was tortured, shamed, stripped, whipped and nailed to a cross where he paid our debt and where he gave us the generous gift of life.

Our own generosity is a natural response to the generosity that God first showed us.

Hey, here are some questions. Just tackle one or two to provoke, challenge and encourage one another. Honesty will help!

1. How is the current economic climate affecting you personally?
2. Since Sunday have you recognised holes in your purse or golden calves in your lives?
3. When have you been on the receiving end of someone's generosity? How did this make you feel?
4. How have you known God's joy in tough times?
5. As a cell, plan an act of generosity in the community in which you serve.
6. What does it mean to you to have your debt paid by Jesus?
7. How has God's generosity impacted your life?
8. If you've attempted all 7 of these questions it could be past midnight and time to go home!!