

Sabbath School Lesson #11 – Stewardship and Mission – 5-11 September 2026

Christ gave Himself for us. Stewardship and Mission entails sharing, or rather, giving. Paul wrote, “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Mark the words quoted: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” These are the words of the Lord Jesus, who speaks with authority in this matter, for He “gave Himself for us,” and giving Himself, He gave all things. In the memory text, Paul says, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). The eighth chapter of 2 Corinthians really covers the whole matter of giving as a way of sharing. In the second of Corinthians, Paul presents the case of the churches in Macedonia, “in a great trial of affliction,” yet “the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” We too may give as the Macedonians.

Sunday: The Example of Jesus – Read again 2 Corinthians 8:9; what does this passage tell us about the example of Jesus? Christ is our example, for He gave Himself for us. That there is profit in giving is seen from the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:3: “If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” There is no blessing to be received if one gives without love; but if love prompts the gift, there is profit to the giver. Love therefore is the soil out of which all good grows. It was Christ’s love that led Him to give Himself for us. Love is the priceless gift; money cannot be compared with it, and all the wealth of the world cannot buy it. Therefore he who gives love, gives everything, the bestowal of his goods must necessarily accompany the gift. And even though he has no goods to bestow, in giving love he bestows infinitely more than the one who gives millions of money without love. If giving as a way of sharing, we need Christ’s love. The blessing, therefore, of giving is the rich blessing of love.

In His example, Christ tells us, “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40). “He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord” (Proverbs 19:17). The grace of Christ, of which we are made stewards, is the grace of giving (see 2 Corinthians 8:9). As He showed His love for us by giving Himself for us, so we show our love for Him by giving ourselves to others. This we may do, even if we have no money. Strength is that by which money is earned, and therefore he who gives his strength for the welfare of others gives more than the one who gives thousands in money, but withholds himself.

Monday: Motivation – Read 2 Corinthians 8:1, 5 and 2 Corinthians 9:7, 9, 13, 15; what is the central message of these passages? In other words, when you give for mission, what is your motivation? Is it fear of hell or desire of reward of eternal life, or is the love of Christ that motivates you to give, to do His good pleasure and not your own selfish calculations of the reward you will get from giving? We must be delivered from egocentric motivation based on fear of punishment or desire for reward. We need genuine Christocentric motivation. It was to save others that Christ consented to die at the cross. At the cross, there was no egocentric motivation in Christ. Only the love for others motivated Christ – that was agape! It is the agape of Christ that delivers us from egocentric motivation, for “the love of Christ constraineth us” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15) when we behold His matchless agape at the cross.

Let us be motivated by Christ’s love. He gave all the wealth of heaven for the redemption of the world. He became poor, that He might make others rich. He was under no obligation to do this; but we who have received the gift, and who have nothing that we have not received (John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 4:7), owe all we have to Christ; and since He has given Himself and all that He possessed to the world, it follows that what we owe to Christ we owe to the world. We give to Christ by giving to carry the message of His grace to the world. That we owe all that we have is evident from Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: “Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price;” that price being “the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19). If we are not our own, then of course nothing that we have is our own.

Tuesday: Planning – Read 2 Corinthians 9:7; what does this passage say about the act of offering? The matter of raising money for religious work is one of the greatest perplexities

connected with such work in these days. In almost every church the question of raising the minister's salary and meeting other incidental expenses, takes more consultation and planning than the salvation of the people. Most churches have fundraisers – men who have great power of persuasion – and the successful pleader for money is considered the most useful man in the cause. And then there are the other methods for coaxing a few shillings out of people, such drama fundraising devices that ought not ever to be named as becoming Christians. Now there cannot be any question about the necessity for money and the work of the Gospel. “The labourer is worthy of his hire,” and the Lord has “ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:14). The only question is, how shall the means be raised? This question is answered in the statement last quoted. “They which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.” God Himself has ordained this. It arises from the very nature of the Gospel, which begins and ends in giving. If sufficient attention were given to the Gospel, the money question would settle itself. Consider how the love of the brethren in Galatia showed itself. Paul wrote, “I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, he would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me” (Galatians 4:15). Nothing that they could give was withheld. What was the cause of this? – Jesus Christ had been set forth evidently crucified among them (Galatians 3:1). Let the Gospel be preached with the power of the Spirit, so that it becomes a living reality to the hearers, and there will be no trouble in regard to gifts. All that is necessary, therefore, in order to raise money for the support of the Gospel, is to preach the Gospel of free grace of God. Men in whose hearts the love of God finds a place, will give without urging, and the Lord does not desire offerings from any others. It what Paul says, “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, nor of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthian 9:7). God desires gifts from people who give without urging.

Wednesday: Attitude – Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; what possible reason could have been behind the Macedonians' willingness to give their offerings with such generosity? The attitude the Macedonians had was that they and everything they owned belonged to Christ.

All that we have in life, we owe, in Christ, to the world, that they may learn of the riches of His grace. There was a time in the history of the church when not one of the members said or thought of the things which he possessed was his own (see Acts 4:31-33); and that was a time of great power in proclaiming the message, and of wonderful growth in the church, because “great grace was upon them all.” If every one who professes to be Christ's in these last days would consider that neither he nor his property is his own, but that he owes all to Christ and to His last message to the world, might we not expect that the message would be given with great power? We may be poor in this world's goods, yet this does not relieve us from responsibility. We have on record for our example the churches in Macedonia, “How that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” Even beyond their power they were willing of themselves; and this they did because they “first gave their own selves to the Lord” (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Let it not be overlooked that this was the result of the grace of God bestowed on them (see verse 1). We too may be counted “good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Thursday: Unity – The unity in giving shown by the Macedonians came because they first gave themselves to Christ as their Shepherd. Unity comes by accepting to be under one-fold and one Shepherd. It comes by partaking the same Spiritual things as the Jews partook when Christ led them through the wilderness. Paul, speaking of his desire to visit the Romans, said that he hoped to see them when he took his journey into Spain. “But now,” said he, “I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.” A very simple statement, but it shows that the gentiles received nothing spiritual except that which came from the Jews. The spiritual things of which the Gentiles had been made partakers came from the Jews, and were ministered to them by Jews. Both partook of the same spiritual meat, and therefore the gentiles showed their gratitude by ministering to the temporal necessities of the Jews. Jews and Gentiles under one-fold and one Shepherd.