

“He Became Poor for Your Sake”  
(2 Corinthians 8:9)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. In our passage, Paul points the Corinthians to the example of the churches of Macedonia.
  - a. Specifically to their giving: they were known as givers.
    - (i) There are people who would rather get than give – most people are like this.
    - (ii) But there are those who would rather give – rarer, but there are a few.
    - (iii) The Macedonians were givers:
      - (a) They were afflicted, but overflowing with joy.
      - (b) They were poor, but they gave liberally.
      - (c) They even gave beyond their ability – or what they had to spare.
  - b. Why were they like this?
    - (i) Some people are naturally disposed this way.
    - (ii) The Macedonians were supernaturally disposed this way.
      - (a) Paul says they were like this because of God’s grace (v. 1).
      - (b) First, they gave themselves to God – they were His people.
      - (c) Then they gave themselves to others.
2. Paul encourages the Corinthians to do the same.
  - a. He wants them to prove the sincerity of their faith.
  - b. If they have the same heart/attitude, they show themselves to be true Christians.
  - c. True Christians are like Christ.
  - d. Consider our passage: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).
  - e. Christ’s giving is rivaled only by the Father’s giving of His Son.
  - f. When you see this character in yourself – sacrificing yourself for the wellbeing of others, more, for the glory of God – then you can know that your faith is sincere, that Christ is being formed in you.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, I want us to consider what Christ gave.
  - a. I want us to see how much He sacrificed in order to make us rich.
  - b. At Christmas, we reflect on the significance of Christ’s birth.
  - c. It is the greatest gift by far the Father ever gave to man: His Son.
  - d. But it’s also something Christ gave.
  - e. Paul says He was rich, but He became poor, that through Him we might become rich.
2. What I want us to look at briefly is:
  - a. The riches Christ had.
  - b. How He became poor.
  - c. And how through His poverty we might become rich.

II. Sermon.

- A. First, how rich was Christ? Paul says, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich . . .”

1. Consider who Christ is.
  - a. He is more than a man.
  - b. He is God – the second person of the triune God – who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - c. It is His divinity that Paul refers to as His riches.
  
2. How rich is God?
  - a. Far richer than we can imagine.
  - b. Not in silver, gold, stocks, bonds, real estate – the things we often consider as riches, although He could have as much of these as He desires.
  - c. His riches consisted in something else: in having what He desired.
  - d. What does He desire?
    - (i) Perfection.
    - (ii) Perfect holiness, purity, absence of sin.
    - (iii) Perfect fellowship with His Father and the Spirit.
    - (iv) Perfect happiness, blessedness, joy, peace, friendship, in this bond of love.
    - (v) He has perfect honor, glory, majesty.
    - (vi) He has everything He desires; all His “needs” are perfectly met.
    - (vii) He doesn’t depend on anything, so there is nothing to threaten His perfect situation.
    - (viii) He has infinite power, knowledge, wisdom.
    - (ix) He can’t learn anything. He can’t need anything. He doesn’t lack anything.
    - (x) He has perfect happiness and contentment.
    - (xi) These are the riches He possessed as God.
    - (xii) I think we all envy a situation like this: having all you need or ever will need, perfect happiness, perfect security realizing that nothing could ever take this away from us.
  
- B. But Paul tells us that He became poor for our sake, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor . . .”
  1. He gave this state of perfection up for us.
    - a. We need to understand this in relation to His humanity.
    - b. His deity did not change.
    - c. But as a man, He gave this up and became poor for us.
  
  2. How poor did He become?
    - a. He became a man.
      - (i) The eternally blessed Creator became a creature.
      - (ii) He became the son of a poor man.
      - (iii) He was born in a cattle stall, laid in a manger.
      - (iv) He was the son of a carpenter, who may not have been destitute, but was not living comfortably.
      - (v) He had to work for a living, perhaps went without food sometimes, perhaps ate but not to the full.
      - (vi) When He began His ministry, He had no place to lay His head, a few coins in a money sack, living off the hospitality and charity of others.
      - (vii) He had a cloak and coat – one set of clothes.
      - (viii) He gave up the riches of heaven and those of earth.
  
    - b. He became a servant to His Father and His people.
      - (i) He submitted to His Father’s Law.
      - (ii) He obeyed Him perfectly.

- (iii) He didn't live for Himself, but for others.
  - c. He suffered in this life.
    - (i) He was hungry, thirsty.
    - (ii) He lived among sinners; He was often threatened by others.
    - (iii) He probably became sick – colds, fevers, etc.
  - d. He was rejected, mocked, beaten, flogged.
  - e. He was crucified, suffered the wrath of His Father on the cross.
  - f. He was buried and remained in the grave for three days.
  - g. The One who had all those riches, emptied Himself and became poor for our sakes.
  - h. He didn't cease to be God, but He took to Himself our nature, our humanity.
    - (i) To experience what we experience.
    - (ii) To do what we should have done.
    - (iii) To suffer what we should have suffered.
- C. And remember, He did this that He might make us rich. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.” He now offers riches to all who will trust in His name.
1. What riches?
    - a. Forgiveness of sins.
      - (i) “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).
      - (ii) The wages of sin is death” (6:23).
      - (iii) The penalty is everlasting pain and suffering in hell.
      - (iv) Christ took that all away through His suffering.
    - b. Eternal life:
      - (i) We're all going to exist forever either in heaven or hell.
      - (ii) Christ took our hell and gave us heaven, through His obedience.
    - c. And heaven: What is it like?
      - (i) Perfect peace, happiness, joy, love, fulfillment.
      - (ii) Perfect fellowship with God – the Father, Son and Spirit, the One who made us.
      - (iii) Something of what Christ experienced consistent with what we are.
    - d. These are the things that will make us truly rich.
  2. How can we receive those riches?
    - a. They are not ours automatically. Jesus tells us, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). We must believe.
    - b. We must turn from our sins.
    - c. We must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - d. We must follow Him all the day of our lives.
    - e. This morning, if you would have those riches, come to the Savior; believe on Him, turn from your sins, and He will give you life.
- D. What are we to do in return? What are we to give?
1. This is what we'll look at this evening.
  2. But for now, let's close with a word of prayer. Amen.