

2 Corinthians 8

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[0 : 00] Back at 2 Corinthians tonight. 2 Corinthians chapter 8. And it's a sermon on giving so it's appropriate that the offering might be still going around.

! Let's just circulate it throughout the sermon. So it's a funny series when you get back in. I preached the first seven chapters before Phoebe was born.

And life has changed somewhat from that, hasn't it? So it's nice to be back in 2 Corinthians chapter 8. It's a remarkable chapter. You've heard, I've preached on it a number of times. I want to take it to my text, verse 9, 2 Corinthians chapter 8 and verse 9.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

When you pick up the New Testament, one of the things you find when you read it for the first time is that there's so many letters out there. Letters written by James and Peter. And lots of letters written by Paul 13 actually.

[1 : 10] And in nearly every one of those letters, I don't know if you've noticed, instead of doing what we would do in letters, which is dear so and so, or hi, or whatever you write on the start of your emails.

They say grace be with you, don't they? That's how they open their letters. That is how they start. And when they wind up their letter, they don't say all the best, or blessings, or whatever highest thing you write on the end of your emails.

Or yours sincerely, or yours faithfully. They say grace be with you. Grace be to you, grace be with you. Grace is the key word that unlocks the New Testament. And unless you've grasped the meaning of that word, you are shut out from the real message of Christianity.

You don't understand the first thing about Christianity unless you understand what grace means. And it is the key that unlocks the whole of the Bible. And that is the word, that is the word in our chapter this evening that may surprise you.

You may have thought grace was something that you said before meals, especially if you're religious. But in fact, grace is the heartbeat of Christianity. And here in these two chapters, chapter 8 and chapter 9, he's talking about that, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[2 : 19] And the context is interesting because he's actually taking up a collection. An offering. Paul is taking up an offering, and that is what these two chapters are about, chapter 8 and chapter 9.

It is an offering for the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. And there's a lot we won't get into, but there's a lot that's very practical. There's advice on how you handle your money. That is very, very necessary for us to understand today.

Because there's a lot of misunderstanding. We're not going to go into all the details. But you might want to read chapters 8 and 9 over the next couple of weeks a few times. Get yourself familiar with it. There's lots of how we should handle our money as churches.

But shot through these two chapters on giving are, well, is the concept of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. So tonight we're going to look at the main players. We're going to look at the Corinthians, the Macedonians, and Christ.

First of all, the Corinthians. Paul is writing to the Corinthians. The Macedonians, he is using them as an example. And the Lord Jesus is the supreme example of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[3 : 21] So let's look at these Corinthians. They are city slickers. They are sophisticated city dwellers. And Paul is coaxing them to give. He's taking up a collection around the churches in Macedonia.

Amongst the churches that he has planted. The churches that are under his authority. Because he is the apostle to the Gentiles. And he's taking up a collection for the Jerusalem church.

For the Jewish church. The Jews in Jerusalem who are suffering from persecution and from famine. And I don't want us to miss the significance of this. Because it's a brilliant illustration, isn't it? It's a brilliant demonstration of what the world needs. It's a brilliant demonstration of what the gospel does. Which Karl Marx said, from each according to his ability. From each according to his need. It's a great idea. But it just doesn't work. Marxism has failed. Communism is in the past. They couldn't make it work. Because of the intrinsic selfishness of the human heart.

[4 : 25] But you see, what communism cannot do. What any political ideology cannot do. The gospel actually does. So here in the first century, the barriers come down. Ethnic, racial barriers come down.

Between the Jews and the Gentiles. Here are these Corinthians who are Greeks. And they are showing their care and their generosity. To Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. And it's a sign, isn't it? The power of the gospel to turn our world upside down. This is the miracle that actually turned the world upside down. So here are these Corinthians then. And Paul is writing to them.

About the collection that he's taking up to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem. And the Corinthians have promised to give. Look at verse 6 and 7. Verse 6. Accordingly, we've urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace.

But as you excel in everything. Faith, speech, knowledge, in all earnestness. And in our love for you. See that you also excel in the act of giving also.

[5 : 33] Can't you read between the lines there? Do you remember this church? This church prides itself on being a good church. I got an email this week from someone in another church who was writing to me.

And at the end of the email he wrote in capital letters. Our church. Not talking about our church we're in. He said, our church is not a good church. It is a great church. As you can imagine he was trying to make a point.

Well, I think if the Corinthians were writing about their church, they would say, our church is not a good church. It is a great church. It's got a reputation for a great Bible teacher.

It's got a reputation for its praise services. For its music. It's got all sorts of things going for it. It's got a terrific website. They are proud of themselves. And they have many, many gifts.

Many, many gifted people. And do you remember, in one Corinthians, they are really proud of the gifts that you have. Paul says to them, tongue in cheek, okay, you are very, very gifted. Why don't you see that you excel in the gift of giving?

[6 : 36] Why don't you get a reputation around the Mediterranean as a giving church? And he says in verses 10 and 11, this is my advice. What is best for you in this matter? This is in your best interest.

Look at verse 10 and 11. And in this matter I give my judgment. This benefits you who a year ago started not only to do this work, but also to desire to do it. So now finish doing it as well.

So that your readiness and desire may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. In other words, Paul says, put your money where your mouth is.

That's what Paul says to them. It's been 12 months and there's no sign of the money. They promised the money being sent and they said they would give. You see, it's not just the thought that counts when it comes to giving.

And I think we've got a modern expression. People who are willing to come to the party. Or people who are not willing to come to the party. And the Corinthians weren't actually willing to come to the party.

[7 : 39] They weren't willing to put their hand in their pockets. They said they would. I think that's the meaning of the little phrase in verse 10. Here is my advice to you in this matter. You don't know what you're missing out on. You don't know what is in your best interest.

He says it's fun to give. He says it's a party. I'm inviting you to. Look at chapter 9 verse 7. So each one must give as he has decided in his heart.

Not reluctantly or under compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. It's a remarkable statement, isn't it? About this collection. God loves the cheerful giver.

Do you know what the word literally is there? It's hilarious. God loves the hilarious giver. And that is how Paul views fundraising. What is fundraising like?

It's hilarious. So why does everybody look so serious and solemn when the Bible is around in a church meeting? When we talk about raising money for a building project or for a church plant. [8 : 38] Oh, I wouldn't like that. It's hilarious. It's meant to be fun. It's meant to be fun. We are to enjoy this next year in seeking to raise funds for the building project.

I really mean it. That's what we've been showing you. There's spontaneity. There's delight. There's a blend of fun and laughter. Let me quote Tony Campolo.

I think Tony Campolo is actually a false teacher. But he is a brilliant storyteller. Right? Tony Campolo tells the story of taking his young son to Coney Island. He says, I wanted him to see something of the faded glory of what used to be the best amusement park in the world. Together, my son and I, we rode every ride that was still in operation. We tried the Ferris wheel and the whip all afternoon. We laughed and screamed until exhausted. I told him that it was time for us to go home.

I want one more ride on the roller coaster, he said. I rejected his plea, but he didn't give up. Look, he said. My son, that is. Look, he said. I think Jesus wants me to go on that ride one more time. [9 : 42] That's a new approach, I thought to myself. Where did he come up with that idea? He said, well, in your sermons, you say whatever we feel, Jesus feels. When we're sad, Jesus is sad.

And I just thought, if Jesus feels what we feel, then when I'm having a good time, so is he. And I think he would like another ride on the roller coaster. I'm not sure about the theology of that, really. But you can't thought the logic of it. And there's a sense in which that is what Paul is saying to the Corinthians. This is his argument. Giving. He's trying to coax someone to giving. He's trying to coax someone to this roller coaster of generosity.

And that is what he's doing. He wants them to give because it's fun to give. It's fun to give because Jesus is a giving person. And Jesus wants his people to be a giving people.

And Paul wants the Corinthians to discover what is best for them in verse 10. He wants them to experience the adrenaline rush of giving more than they can afford to give. He wants them to live generously.

[10 : 42] Like the Macedonians in verse 4. We'll come back to look at them in a minute. But just look at verse 4. It's an extraordinary verse. They were begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints.

You can't stop them. They are junkies when it came to giving. They are grace addicts. So just as a child pleads for one more go on the roller coaster of the Macedonians, they beg Paul for one more opportunity to give even though they can't afford to.

They're hooked. They are addicted. It is bizarre. It is insane in one way. They've discovered the thrill of giving. And Paul wants the Corinthians to find that as well.

Find that as well. He is coaxing them onto God's roller coaster. To come to the party. To join in the hilarity of giving and receiving. And so what is Paul's interest in the Corinthians?

Is it kind of a money interest? No, it's a pastoral interest. He's not after their money. It's interesting. In these two chapters, money isn't actually mentioned once.

[11 : 53] It's all about money. But it's not mentioned once. Because Paul isn't after their money. It's not their wealth he's interested in. It's their spiritual wealth. And he's got a pastoral interest in them.

And he wants them to be grace people. To be generous people. To be blessed people. To be God's people. And so he's leading them along these lines. Now notice how he does that. He does it in two ways.

First of all, he points to the ridiculous, outrageous example of the Macedonians. And then he points to the more outrageous example. An extreme example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And so he preaches the gospel into this situation.

He does not come with a big thermometer outside. He doesn't come with his flowcharts and his graphs. He doesn't lay guilt trips on them.

He preaches the gospel to them. And he points them to the cross, the Lord Jesus. And he gives them an outrageous example of what the cross has done in their lives. In the lives of Christian people in Macedonia.

[12 : 56] So let's look at that. First of all, he points to the example of these Macedonians. Now, every culture has people they make jokes about, don't they? We don't hear very much now. But people would have made Irish jokes.

I would now assume such a thing. But people make jokes about, you know, Four Moment Bar and Paddy and all that sort of stuff. Every culture in the world has got someone that they look down on a little bit.

So I think for some Americans, lots of Americans here today, It's kind of Mississippi, isn't it? It's kind of Alabama. I might be wrong on that. For the Greeks, it was the Macedonians.

And they were the kind of hillbillies up north. And the Macedonians, you really would not choose them as the best example. The impoverished hillbillies of Macedonia. And yet Paul chooses them. These northerners, as an example, Just look at them. They are outrageous. Chapter 8, verses 1-5. We want you to know, brothers, What the grace of God that is being among the churches of Macedonia.

[13:59] For in a severe test of affliction, Their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty Has overflowed in a wealth. Notice that. Their extreme poverty Have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their hearts.

For they gain according to their means, As I can testify, And beyond their means of their own accord. Begging us, earnestly, For the favour of taking part in the relief of the saints.

We want you to know about this, he says, I suppose for us, We would talk about third world Christians, wouldn't we? David Barris, one of the Christian researchers, This is about six years under date, But it's more or less accurate, I think.

At the moment, he says, There are 168,000 Christian martyrs every year. About half of them every year are coming out of the Sudan. In the Sudan Christians are being raped, Sold into slavery, Starved to death, Shot down.

Partly a Christian-Muslim conflict. Also partly that there are oil fields in the south of Sudan. And yet the church in Sudan is spectacularly generous. They are eagerly sending missionaries into the Central African Republic.

[15:07] They have nothing. And yet they are giving of themselves. Giving of their substance. Giving away their best leaders. What an example that is. The average giving in the UK church amongst Christians is 1%.

Tim Chester, in his book, Said that one church did a study, And if they went on the dole, And tithed their dole money, Giving would go up in that congregation by 60%.

Now who are you going to be like? Who are we going to be like? Are we going to be like the Sudanese Christians, Or the British Christians? I want you to know, brothers, About what is happening up there in Macedonia.

I know you make your jokes about the Macedonians, But I want you to know that the gospel has had a huge impact in their lives. I want you to see the grace of God, The generosity of God, There in Macedonia. And that is what he is saying.

There is nothing wrong with a bit of healthy competition amongst churches in this context. And that is what Paul is doing. He is fostering a healthy rivalry. A friendly rivalry between the Macedonians and the Corinthians.

[16:21] He wants the Corinthians to excel in their giving, Because they pride themselves on excelling in everything else. So he says, Look at the Macedonians. They are giving sacrificially, aren't they? Verses 2 and 3.

For in severe test reflection, Their abundance of joy, Their extreme poverty, Have overflowed, And a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, As I can testify, And be on their means of their own accord.

Is that wise? No. Is it godly? Yes. Is it Christ-like?

They gave independently of their circumstances, And out of all proportion of what they could afford. It's that old joke, isn't it?

About the chicken and the pig. Chicken and the pig. Chicken and the pig. And they walk past the greasy spoon. And they talk about the contribution that they make to the English breakfast.

[17:18] And the chicken makes a contribution, She brings along her eggs, But the pig makes a sacrifice. That's the difference between the Macedonians and the Corinthians. The Corinthians had promised, And yet they hadn't actually delivered.

They promised a contribution, To the cause, But they hadn't delivered. But the Macedonians, They'd made a sacrifice. It's a huge difference, isn't it? They gave on to their severe trial, Out of their extreme poverty.

Their extreme poverty. Well, you don't want to give out of that, Do you? They could have made that an excuse. So in those days, You had to belong to a trade guild, In order to work.

And the conditions of membership, Were such that if you were a Christian, You couldn't join a trade guild. And you would face, Grinding poverty. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, Or self-pity, Which had been understandable, And self-preservation, Which you might have expected.

Look at these Macedonians. They gave out of their, Extreme poverty. That's extraordinary. They did not use, Their extreme poverty, As an excuse for not giving.

[18 : 25] On the contrary, They won't take no for an answer. Look at verse 4, They urgently pleaded with us, Not to excuse them. They urgently pleaded, For the privilege of sharing, In this service to the saints.

So the question is like this, What are we most like, The Macedonians, Or the Corinthians? Do we know what it is, To give sacrificially?

It's very challenging, Isn't it? Story of a businessman, Traveling to Korea, South Korea, And one day, He saw by the side of the road, A young man pulling a plough, With an old man, Holding the handles.

The American man looking on, Was amused, And interested, At what was going on, And he asked the missionary, Who was with him, Who was the interpreter, And guide to the party, What is going on?

These two men, Must be very, Very poor. Yes, Said the tour guide, These two men, Happened to be Christians, And when their church, Was being built, They were eager, To give something towards it, But they didn't have any money, So they decided, To sell their, One and only ox, And they give proceeds, To the church, This spring, They are pulling, The plough themselves, Businessman was silent, For a moment, And he said, That must have been, A real sacrifice, Oh, They didn't call it that, They thought it was, Very fortunate, That they had an ox, To sell, Said the mission, The businessman, Was silent, He reached home, However, He took a picture, To his pastor, And he said, I want to double, My giving to the church, And do some plough work, Until now, I've never given God, Anything that cost me, That involves, A real sacrifice, You see, These Macedonians, They are giving, Sacrificially, And they notice, It hurts, And they are giving, Spontaneously, Entirely, On their own, Without their arms, Being twisted,

[20 : 11] And they pleaded with us, For the opportunity, To give, And to give even more, And there's all the difference, Isn't there, In the world, Between, One letter, There's all the difference, In the world, Between, Get to, And got to, Isn't that, I've got to do it, That's not Christianity, Of all, If there's anywhere, In your discipleship, Anywhere in your, Christian life, Where you think, I've really got to do that, I've got to be, In house group this week, I've got to, Put something in your offering, If you're saying, I've got to, Well you haven't actually, Grasped grace yet, It's not about, Having to do something, Out of duty, Or because the law, Is laid down, Or that you're scared, Or that other people, Might think about it, It's that I get, I get to give, I find that, On Sundays, Isn't it, It's not on Sundays, I've got to be there, On a Sunday night, No, You get, The opportunity, To meet with the Lord's people, To hear God's word, To sing, Isn't it, We get to do that,

It's a great privilege, And I get to give, That's how the Macedonians, That is the mentality, Of the Macedonian, Paul please, Can we give, Paul says, No you've got to look after yourself, No Paul says, No no, You've got to look after yourself, And they say, Well Paul please, Give us an opportunity, To give, We want to give more, You can't afford it, Please, Please Paul, It's insane, Is it, It's a million miles, From where we are, And yet it's biblical Christianity, And it is grace, At work in people's lives, And the explanation, Is there in verse 5, Is that somebody, Has said, Theirs was not the calculated, Thriftiness of an accountant, But the almost irrational, Extravagance of the lover, Because it wasn't the money, That they were giving them, Themselves, Giving, Was it, They were giving themselves, It wasn't just the church, In Jerusalem, That they were giving to, But the Lord, Do you see that in verse 2, They didn't do as we expected,

But they gave themselves, They gave themselves, To the Lord, First to the Lord, And then to us, That's what Barnabas did, Isn't it, Barnabas got this great nickname, Of the encourager, Son of encouragement, Barnabas is not his real name, His real name was Joseph, And who I told at the end, Of Acts chapter 4, That he was a Levite, And he was a landowner, Because Levites, Were not normally landowners, And somebody must have left him, A time-share property, In Cyprus or something, And do you know what he did, When he went and sold his land, In Cyprus, And he brought the money, Into the temple, Treasury, Which he should have done, As a Levite, But he

brought the money, And he laid it, At the apostles feet, Why?

Because Barnabas was a Christian, He might have, Had that in his background, That he was a Levite, But he'd come to recognise, That in Jesus Christ, Who was preached by the apostles, This was the Messiah, The God of Israel, And he brought the proceeds, Of that sale, Of that land, And he laid it, At the feet of the apostles, What was he doing?

He was giving himself, First to the Lord, He was devoting, Devoting himself to Christ, And that is what Paul means, Philippians 3, Whatever was to my gain, I count now as loss, And he's been to his accountant, Who's been doing his accounts, For years, And he says, Whatever I thought, Was once of gain, I now regarded as loss, In fact, Everything I once thought of, Was gain, I'm willing to give it up, For the sake of Jesus Christ, And being found in him, And not only a righteousness, My own, Talked about the other week, To me, It's Thomas Chalmers, It's the expulsive power, Of a new affection, So he talked about, Teenager boys, And they start behaving strangely, They couldn't, They wouldn't get in the bathroom, And now they can't get them, Out of the bathroom, And they traded in the skateboard, And fee for, For a girlfriend, There's a new love in their life, And that's what's happened, And Paul is, It's not as if, Suddenly the penny is dropped, And now he understands the doctrines, Now he's been brought into a relationship,

[24 : 20] With the living person, With the Lord Jesus Christ, And he suddenly appreciated, What Jesus did for him on the cross, And he saw opportunities, As another opportunity, To serve the Lord, Here's another person, To meet for the Lord, Here's another person, To encounter Jesus, Here's another person, To greet and make, To feel welcome in the Lord, To give back to him, What we owe him, General Gordon, And was rewarded, By the British government, For his military service, And he declined, All money, And titles, He wouldn't receive a title, They tried to give him, A title for his service, Particularly in China, But he wouldn't accept it, The only thing he agreed to, Was a medal they gave him, After his death, Nobody could find the medal, Until somebody discovered, That he'd sent it to Manchester, During a severe famine, With directions, That it should be melted down, And he used to buy food, For the poor, And then someone, Discovered in his diary, Under the date, When he sent that medal, These words, The last earthly thing,

I had in this world, That I valued, I have given to the Lord, Jesus Christ, To the Lord Jesus Christ, Not to Manchester, Not to the poor, But the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus wants you and I, To see this, There's no such thing, As a financial problem, In a church, There is only a spiritual problem, There is always resources, To do what the Lord wants, And one of the features, Of a growing church, Is that we should always, Be behind budget, We are always trying to do, What the Lord wants us to do, We do not have a financial problem, In this congregation, There is not a financial problem, In the church, There is only ever, A spiritual problem, The Lord has got plenty of money, Lying around in the pockets, Of his people, The question is, How do you, Get to it, How do you get it, Where, Where, Where, How do you get it, Where he wants it to be, So that it can be used for him, And to ensure he, It's not a reason, For us to be responsible, Of course not, That brings me to my last point,

What does Paul do, He points to this, Outrageous example, Of the Macedonians, But he goes further than that, He says, If you think the Macedonians, Are outrageous, Look at Jesus, Verse 9, For you know the grace, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, That though he was rich, Yet for your sake, He became poor, So that by his poverty, You might become rich, He impoverished himself, So that through his poverty, He might become rich, Bill Bryson, In his book, The Lost Continent, Travels in small town America, Tells the story, Of when he came across, Across the Grand Canyon, He says, Nothing prepares you, For the Grand Canyon, No matter how many times, You've read about it, Or seen it pictured, It still takes your breath away, Your mind, Unable to deal with anything, On this scale, Just shuts down, And for many long moments, You're just a human vacuum, Without speech or breath, But just a deep, Inexpressible awe, That anything on this earth, Could be so vast, And so beautiful, And so silent,

Even children are stilled by it, I was a particularly talkative, And obnoxious child, But it stopped me cold, I can remember rounding a corner, And standing there, And gog, While a mouthful of half-formed jabber, Rolls down my throat, Forever and uttered, I was seven years old, And I'm told, It was only the second occasion, In all that time, That I'd stopped talking, Apart from short breaks, For sleeping and watching TV, Forty years later, Then visits the Grand Canyon, It's not a good day, He says, Because the fog is down, And I trudged toward the visitor's centre, Some 200 yards away, But before I get there, I came across a snow-splattered sign, Announcing a lookout point, Half a

mile away, Down a trail through the woods, Impulsively, Impulsively, I went down it, Mostly to get some air, The path was slippery, And it took a long time to traverse, But on the way, The snow stopped falling, And the air felt clean and refreshing, I eventually came to a platform of rocks, Marking the edge of the canyon, There was no fence to keep me back from the edge, I shuffled cautiously over, And looked down, But could see nothing but grey soup and fog, A middle-aged couple came along, And as we stood there chatting, What a dispiriting experience this was, A miraculous thing happened, The fog parted, It just silently drew back, Like a set of theatre curtains being opened, And suddenly we saw that we were on the edge, Of a sheer giddy drop, Of at least a thousand feet, Jesus we said, And jumped back, And all along the canyon edge, You could hear people saying, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Like a message being passed down a long line, And then for a long while, For many moments, All was silent, Except for the tiny, Threatful shiftings of the snow, Because out there in front of us, Was the most awesome, Most silencing sight, That exists on earth, Now do you see the irony of that?

[29 : 18] The one who made the Grand Canyon, To whom it belongs, Becomes a swear word, As the fog lifts, And as the grandness of the Grand Canyon is revealed, People are so blind, That they can only use its owner's name, As a swear word, It is staggering blindness, Isn't it?

How rich, He who was so rich, Became poor, He who is worshipped, By angels, Becomes cursed, By human beings, For our sake, I cannot describe to you, The glory, And the greatness of heaven, But Jesus lives there, And Jesus was enjoying that, Before he ever came into the world, He was rich, Far more than we can ever begin to understand, And yet he became poor, He impoverished himself, He came from the uttermost, To the guttermost, He came from the praises of heaven, To the curses of people, He came from the fellowship, Of the trinity, To the forsakenness of the cross, And it was for us, This American Baptist minister, Called Peter Miller, In the American revolution, And he lived in a town, With a man called Michael Whitman, Who was his enemy, And did all in his power, To make life difficult for him, And one day Whitman, Was arrested for treason, And sentenced to death,

This Baptist pastor, Peter Miller, Walked on foot, 70 miles to Philadelphia, To plead for his life, And he was brought into Washington's presence, The president, And he begged for the life, Of this man who was a traitor, And Washington refused, He said, I can't grant you the life of your friend, Oh he said, You don't understand, He's not my friend, He's my enemy, And Washington changed his mind, To his credit, He says, You've walked 70 miles, To save the life of an enemy, That puts a different light on things, I'll grant him a pardon, And Peter Miller, And Michael Whitman, Walked home, No longer as enemies, But as friends, That's a little story, Isn't it from history, It's very moving, 70 miles, It's quite something, He did it for his enemy, It's quite impressive, From heaven he came, And sought her, Helpless babe, The one who flung stars, Into space, The maker of the starry heaven,

Into a tiny little cluster of cells, No bigger than a pin prick, In the womb of a teenage peasant girl, In a backwater town, Called Nazareth, Think about that, Eternity, Toddling around, On rubbery baby legs, And falling over, Into the shavings, Of the carpenter shop, Borrowing a boat, To preach from, Borrowing a room, To have his last suffering, His body placed, In a borrowed tomb, He was rich, And yet he became, Poor for our sake, Without ceasing, To be what he eternally was, He became what he eternally was not, He was God with God, That is what John 1 tells us, That's how rich he was, In the beginning was God, And he was with God, Literally, The word means face to face, Face to face with God, That is how rich he was, He was God, Face to face with God, And he became God, Forsaken by God, My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?

And the answer is, Because of you and I, Not because we were his friends, But because we were his enemies, And he's done it for us, Not that we might be forsaken, But that we might be taken, Into a relationship with God ourselves, So that we might be, Enriched with the greatest blessing of all, To know God, And have him as our father, And once you've seen that, It melts your heart, Doesn't it?

[33 : 03] There's some people today, That are very welcome, Very worried about, Global warming, And melting in the ice cap, Sea levels rising, But how do you raise the level, Of people's generosity, How do you do that?

How do you make people more generous? How do you raise the level, Of giving amongst believers, But you can try chipping away, Can you? You're not giving enough, You lazy lot, Could I chip it away to Glacier, But you'll be chipping away forever, Wouldn't you?

With little or no result, That is hard work, Look at what Paul says, Paul says, I'm not commanding you, I'm not laying down a new law, That's just like chipping away to Glacier, That's not going to produce anything, But ah, When the sun shines, When the sun shines, The water flows, The ice melts, That's what's happened in Macedonia, And Paul wants to see it happening, In Corinth, And don't we want to see it in healing, In our church, In our lives, Hearts, Which are often very hard, Melted by the gospel, What motivates greedy people, To give, To be generous, Well it's the gospel, It's grace, For you know the grace, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, You know the grace, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, That though he was rich, He became poor, For your sake, So that through his poverty, You might become rich, So let me ask you, Are you a giver, And if you're not a giver, You're probably not a Christian, That's a really challenging thing, Isn't it, It seems to me, That it's impossible, To grasp the grace, To stand, By the cross, And not want to give, Because if you're not a giver, Then maybe you're not a Christian, And let me say this, When you come to the party, Can I coax you, Onto the roller coaster, Or do you become a grace giver, For it is by giving, That we receive, That's fine,