



MIND
session page

Too Much? Too Little?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 | Session 10.26

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

Start by asking:

- - What would the people who know well you say you are most passionate about and why?
- - What do you really care about, but keep private?
- - To what degree does our use of money define where our priorities lie?
- - What might our use of our money – both our giving and the ways we spend it – say about our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus?

Content

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- - What is significant about the giving of the Macedonian churches?
- - How have they given, and in what circumstances?
- - When have you ever been so excited to give to something that you would beg for the privilege of giving?
- - In what way can giving to others be a privilege for people of faith?
- - How does Jesus provide an example for us, not just of giving, but of how we relate to the things we have or don't have?
- - Why especially can people of faith give generously when there is a need, according to Paul?
- - To what degree is it as easy to receive when you are in need, as it is to give when someone else is in need and why?

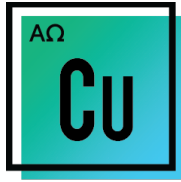
Closure

Continue by asking:

- - When have you seen or heard someone ask for giving in manipulative or exploitative ways?
- - How did their "patter" compare to what Paul said in this passage?
- - What's the difference between their requests and Paul's request here?
- - In what ways does giving, especially in the midst of need, express our faith in God and in God's work in other believers?
- - How can we move beyond a mindset that focuses on requests for funding to one that focuses on giving people the gift of participation in ministry?

Close with prayer.

Writer: Jon Parks



CURRENT

session page

Too Much? Too Little?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 | Session 10.26

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- - Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Thoroughly review all the referenced resources for this session in advance.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

Context

Share the video of a man seeing how people react to his asking for money and ask:

- - What stands out about the people this young man comes in contact with?
- - What characteristics do you notice about those that don't give versus those that offer money or empathy?
- - If this video happened to feature you at some point, what do you think we'd see and why?
- - In what ways do we tend to tie our attitude toward money to faith - for good or bad?

- - What else might people have offered to do for this person and how might he have replied?
- - How do you think this video would have gone if it was filmed at your church on a Sunday morning?

Content

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- - What most stands out to you about the way Paul talks about the Macedonian church here and why?
- - Exactly what are the readers of this passage expected to "excel" at, and how would they know when they did?
- - What does "I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others" mean?
- - Noting that Paul states that "your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means," how do you balance giving with eagerness for ministry? To what degree are the two tied together?
- - It is said that you can tell what a church's priorities are by what their discussions are focused on and there they allocate their budget, which is a direct reflection of Jesus' words in Matthew 6:21. Why do you think that is so?
- - If "it is a gift to be able to give," what could congregations be doing - other than asking for money - in order to better share this gift?

Closure

Share this story of a televangelist who made national headlines asking his followers to donate money so he could purchase a plane and ask:

- - How do you feel when you encounter such stories and why?
 - - In what ways do this man's message and actions compare to the way people read Paul in this passage?
 - - What do you think actions such as this say to people about Christianity?
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- - How might we move beyond focusing on money as a means to encourage people to participate in reaching the world?
 - - Where can we find people who need help in our communities and what should we do when we find them?

Close by listening together to Listen to Give It Away and praying that God can guide us on how to best use our resources.

Writers: Crystal Shepherd and Steve McClain



MYSTIC
session page

Too Much? Too Little?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 | Session 10.26

Before the Session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Materials needed: slips of paper and pens; a whiteboard or butcher paper; and markers.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

Context

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video.

This is a guided group reflection on personal resources and how they are applied.

Reflection

Start by telling the group: *Often we think individualistically in our culture. This reflection is designed to help us discover what our collective resources might be to offer to the world.*

Invite the group to think about and verbalize the things they possess by creating a list of resources on poster paper as people share according to the following areas:

- - TIME – How much free time might you have during a given month to offer someone in need?
- - MONEY – If we were collecting an offering today for a specific important need, what amount would you be able to contribute? Share two amounts: What you would be able to give, without any sacrifice? What you would be able to give if you sacrifice a bit? (NOTE: for this category, have people write their answers anonymously on slips of paper, ask one person to add the numbers, and put the total on the poster.)
- - MATERIAL RESOURCES – What is in your house that you could give to someone who has less than you do?
- - KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS – What do you know and what can you do that can be offered to someone in need?
- - MISC. - Is there anything else that doesn't necessarily go into any of the previous categories that you can share with others?

Invite the group to consider the poster, and make observations or share any insights that come to mind, then ask:

- - What needs you are aware of in our community that our group could consider meeting?

Write these on another poster, inviting individuals to consider answering one or more of the needs. (NOTE: Be careful not to create an atmosphere of "should." If a specific action plan surfaces and it seems like the group wants to engage it, go with it. If not, you do not have to press.) Continue by asking:

- - What does our choice of addressable concerns reveal about our faith?
- - In what ways might the ability to meet someone else's needs be an opportunity?
- - How might we, as individuals, be led by our enthusiasm about what God is doing to want to join in?

Close with group prayer

Writer: Joy Yee



MEDIA
session page

Too Much? Too Little?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 | Session 10.26

Before the Session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

Watch this clip from "[The Price is Right](#)" and ask:

- - How do you feel about this sort of spectacle and why?
- - What is your most or least favorite "get rich on television" show and why?
- - Why do you think the game-show format is so popular that it has been a television staple in multiple countries for a long time?
- - In what ways does a faith-focused life counter the kind of thinking that lies behind game shows?
- - Beyond the obvious, what kinds of "fabulous prizes" would you say God has given you?

Content

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- - What does this passage tell you about the nature of the earliest congregations and why?
- - How do you feel when you see Paul say "I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others" and why?
- - Weighed against the way we "do church," how do you feel about Paul's further statement that "if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have."?
- - In what ways is it "a gift to be able to give," and how might congregations more appropriately give that gift?
- - Given that the opportunity to be involved in a ministry through our various gifts to it is such a precious thing, why do you think congregations seem sometimes either too eager or not eager enough to share it?

Closure

Play Don't Fade, sharing the lyrics are printed below the song, then ask:

- - How do you feel about this song, and why?
- - What images most stuck with you as you heard the tone of the song and considered the words?
- - In what ways do the lyrics reveal a faith challenge that you may have experienced?
- - How might we respond to someone whose ability to grow in faith is restricted by the thought that "it all runs into money?"
- - What can we do to move beyond considering money, possessions, and rewards, and back to the kind of faith a young child might have?

Close in prayer.

Writer: Jon Self

Too Much? Too Little?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 | Session 10.26

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- - You'll need ten pennies for each person in the group (See Context).
- Listen to the FaithElement podcast for this session.

Intro

Play the [Time Bandits clip](#) and use these questions to facilitate your discussion.

- - What did you find funny about this clip and why?
- - Why were the robbers reluctant to give their stolen items to the poor?
- - How do you think they felt about Robin Hood giving it away?
- - Why did they have trouble seeing Robin's point of view?

Context

Give each person ten pennies and tell them that the goal of this activity is to get as many pennies as they can. There are two ways to try to get a penny. You can either "rock, paper, scissors," or have a flipping a coin challenge. The only rules are that if you are challenged, you must accept the challenge. Play for a specified time and see who has the most coins, then ask:

- - How did you go about getting as many coins as possible?
- - How did you feel about taking coins away from others, and how did that affect your approach?
- - At what points did you focus on how many pennies you had instead of how many your neighbors had, and how did that make a difference in your play?
- - How is this game similar to or different from the way we treat money in real life?

Content

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- - What was so great about what the Macedonian churches had done?
- - What do you think would compel someone to give even more than they were able to give?
- - What sacrifices would someone have to make to be able to do that?
- - What do you think Paul is challenging the other people to give?
- - What would Paul challenge you to give and why?
- - Why do you think equality in giving is so important for God's people?
- - Why do you think some Christians resist giving sacrificially to those who do not have as much?

Closure

Use the Global Rich List and input several numbers to show the students how wealthy they really are, then show them the marketing chart showing where teenagers spend their money and ask:

- - What do you seem to spend your money on the most?
- - How do you decide on whether to spend money on others instead of yourself?
- - How do you respond to people talking about passages in scripture about sacrificial giving and equal distribution of wealth and why?
- - If your obedience to God was judged by the way you handled your money and your giving, what would you say about you?
- - For what causes in your community could you could make a difference by being more generous?

Close this session in prayer

Writer: Don Breeden



MIX
session page

Too Much? Too Little?

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Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

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- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context (From the Media Session Page)

Watch this clip from "The Price is Right" and ask:

- - How do you feel about this sort of spectacle and why?
- - What is your most or least favorite "get rich on television" show and why?
- - Why do you think the game-show format is so popular that it has been a television staple in multiple countries for a long time?
- - In what ways does a faith-focused life counter the kind of thinking that lies behind game shows?
- - Beyond the obvious, what kinds of "fabulous prizes" would you say God has given you?

Content (From the Mind Session Page)

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- - What is significant about the giving of the Macedonian churches?
- - How have they given, and in what circumstances?
- - When have you ever been so excited to give to something that you would beg for the privilege of giving?
- - In what way can giving to others be a privilege for people of faith?
- - How does Jesus provide an example for us, not just of giving, but of how we relate to the things we have or don't have?
- - Why especially can people of faith give generously when there is a need, according to Paul?
- - To what degree is it as easy to receive when you are in need, as it is to give when someone else is in need and why?

Closure (From the Current Session Page)

Share this story of a televangelist who made national headlines asking his followers to donate money so he could purchase a plane and ask:

- - How do you feel when you encounter such stories and why?
- - In what ways do this man's message and actions compare to the way people read Paul in this passage?
- - What do you think actions such as this say to people about Christianity?

- - How might we move beyond focusing on money as a means to encourage people to participate in reaching the world?
- - Where can we find people who need help in our communities and what should we do when we find them?

Close by listening together to Listen to Give It Away and praying that God can guide us on how to best use our resources.