

BIG IDEA

Together, we encourage and challenge one another to defy gravity and live generously.

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 8:1-9; Philippians 2:1-11

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

1. There are many examples of people living generous lives even when they aren't materially wealthy. Children are often an example of individuals who may learn of someone's trouble and be willing to give their own money to help. Most of us probably know someone who didn't have much material wealth, but would give you the "shirt off his/her back" if you needed help. Think of some personal examples ahead of your meeting and share them with the group.
2. There is a lot to notice in these passages: they pleaded for the opportunity to bless the Jerusalem church; they gave entirely on their own; they gave themselves first to the Lord. There is a healthy "spurring one another along in good deeds" in verse 8. The very nature of Jesus was to become poor so that we might become rich. What might it mean for us to have some of these attitudes? How can we bring ourselves first to the Lord?
3. For more background on the Macedonian Church and the Jerusalem Church, read Romans 15:25-28 to see Paul's words about the collection he was taking up for the poor in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem church, which in the beginning had been the resourced and sending church, had fallen on hard times and were now in need.
4. Generosity is a journey that we never finish. It is a consistent turning ourselves to the Lord. For many of us, the key to being more generous would be to be more intentional with the funds we have. How can we help each other there?
5. Generosity reveals our actual values. We may say we value generosity, but that might only be an aspirational value (a value we want to have). We can only make generosity an actual value by taking small steps on the ladder until we become a more generous person.