

## Be kind to one another

We are now learning how the NOT I BUT CHRIST life is the foundation for the NOT I BUT ONE ANOTHER life.

We will continue in 2 Cor 8 this morning on the principles of Christian giving.

2 Cor 8:1-15

*Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, 2 that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.*

*2 Cor 8:3 For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, 4 begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,*

They gave beyond their ability to give. Sacrificial love, to be sure.  
/They gave money that they needed for their daily bread.\

Therefore, they had to rely on the one who gives seed for the sower and bread for food. The one who promised to meet all their needs, and beyond their needs.

*2 Cor 9:8*

*8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;*

/The decision to do it – the willingness, the desire, the resolve to give - is ours.\

/The power and ability do not come from us. They come from the LORD.\

SO the NOT I BUT CHRIST can only be lived by faith in the Son of God who gave Himself up for us. Let's go back to 2 Cor 8 and pick up with verse 5.

*2 Cor 8:5 and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.*

/They learned the right order!! \ We live no longer for ourselves, but for Him.

/Christ first – then others.\ Christ is the source of this life. He loved us first. He showed us what real love is.

First, they looked to Christ. He gave them the power, the motivation, the strength, the confidence, the hope, and the joy, to freely give to others.

/NOT I BUT CHRIST must come first. NOT I BUT OTHERS will follow.\

*2 Cor 8:7 But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also. 8 I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also.*

*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 you through His poverty might become rich.*

Though He was rich – you can't be any richer than being God the Son in heaven –  
For your sake He became poor – not I but others

You can't get any poorer than being naked, penniless, and dying the death of a common criminal.

So that you through His poverty might become rich.

/Death worked in Him so that life could work in us.\

/We are so rich! We have every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies [Eph 1:3].\

/The riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints [Eph 1:18].\

/The surpassing riches of His grace [Eph 2:7].\

/The unfathomable riches of Christ [Eph 3:8].\

And we have Christ **in us!**, the hope (certain expectation) of glory. [Col 1:27]

/All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Him [Col 2:2-3]!\

And we are in Him! RICHES. We are SO wealthy.

It's all through Jesus Christ. His death brought us life.

/Truly, through His poverty, we have been made exceedingly RICH!!!\

Let's head back now to 2 Corinthians 8, as we pick up in verse 10.

*2 Cor 8:10 I give my opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do this, but also to desire to do it.*

*11 But now finish doing it also, so that just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability. 12 For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. 13 For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality — 14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality; 15 as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."*

At the present time, your abundance being a supply for their need,  
So that their abundance also may become a supply for your need.

/Here we have the principle of NOT I BUT ONE ANOTHER. One another. We bless others - and in turn and in time, we are blessed by them.\

Lean on me

When you're not strong

And I'll be your friend  
I'll help you carry on...  
For it won't be long

Till I'm gonna need  
somebody to lean on

/And this is certainly the case in the Spirit's design for our spiritual gifts.\

*1 Cor 12:24-26*

*But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

/Here, NOT I BUT CHRIST leads to NOT I BUT ONE ANOTHER.\

We find this principle again and again in the New Testament scriptures.

*Eph 4:32-5:2*

*32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

*5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

/When we put our eyes off ourselves and onto Christ, we see once again how magnificent He is. \

Magnificent that Christ loved us. /It's magnificent that He gave Himself up for us.\

And since He did, we ought to walk in love. /We ought to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another.\

After all, God in Christ has already forgiven you.

See how it works? It's really simple when He puts it that way, isn't it?!

We will wrap up our series in the book of Romans chapter 12.

This chapter contains one of the four major passages on the subject of spiritual gifts. It appears on Romans 12:4-8. Today we will also read what follows after that.

*Rom 12:4-16*

*4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

*9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.*



*14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation*

Not I but sin. Not I but Christ. Not I but one another. A life of humility and forgiveness and love.