**Sermon Notes – Sunday 28th May**

**Stewardship Sunday - Generosity encouraged**

Read 2 Corinthians 8 v1-5. Paul writing to the church in Corinth uses as an example the gifts given by the Macedonian churches (Philippi, Thessalonica and Beroea). What do you find inspiring within these first 5 verses?

* We do not know how much they gave, but we do learn about their attitude in giving. What was important about the way they responded to this opportunity to give?
* Can you recall a time when giving has brought you immense joy?
* In v.5 what was their first gift? How do you think this affected their financial generosity?
* Does poverty or hardship excuse us from giving? (Luke 21 v1-4). Explain!
* Read 2 Corinthians 8 v.7,8. Giving is a natural response of love. Paul did not order the Corinthians to give but he encouraged them to prove that their love was real. In what ways does God prove his love for us? How do we prove our love for God?
* V10-15 Paul challenged the Corinthian Church to share with the Jerusalem Christians just as the Macedonian churches had done. When we share the resources we have that have been entrusted to us by God, what does that do to our attitude to these things?
* In Stephen’s recent letter (Stewardship Sunday) he mentions the principles of Sacrifice and Generosity in giving (‘Equal sacrifice not equal gifts’). How can we apply that to the principle of regular planned and committed giving?
* V10-15 What principles does Paul give the Corinthian church in deciding how generous to be? (See also 2 Cor 9:6-11)
* What concerns or questions play on your mind as we think and pray through what God may be asking us to give in order to invest in the mission and ministry of our church?

**Pray for each other**, that we might see an outpouring of sacrificial generosity that will enable us to release the resources entrusted to us and see God’s Kingdom.

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