

TAKING THE "STEW" OUT OF STEWARDSHIP.

Text: 2 Cor. 8:1-9

INTRODUCTION: This subject is too serious and deep to be a mere pun. Nothing better expresses how many people feel toward stewardship than the word "stew" used in its colloquial sense.

The most sensitive nerve in the human body is the one leading to the pocket-book--it is congested-- *osteopath*

A pastor as Shepherd must tend and feed the sheep, but he must also sheer the sheep.

Paul ^{from} asking for a collection for Corinth, calls attention to the example of the Macedonians and their giving. They gave with an abundance of joy--vs4--much entreaty--they begged Paul to take the money. They had taken the "stew" out of stewardship.

waiting in line for a bargain
You take the "stew" out of stewardship when you:

what makes the difference?

I. GIVE IN THE RIGHT MANNER. 1-4

1. The Spirit in which they gave--"with joy, liberality" vs. 3--"beyond their power."

It is those who suffer for the gospel, who are most liberal

Strange mathematic equation: MUCH AFFLICTION plus ABUNDANT JOY plus DEEP POVERTY equals RICHES OF LIBERALITY.

Comfort makes men selfish.

Gave out of deep poverty. Many would suppose that poverty prevents people from giving. It never does unless it is spiritual poverty.

(3) Abundant Joy--willfully = *It was their idea*

Milch cow --"squeeze 11 quarts out of her."

2. The Source of their giving--Grace of God. vs. 1, 7

vs 8 not by commandment, prove your love.

(1) Their giving was not yielding to the pressure of Paul or pride, but was the outworking of the grace of God in their hearts.

Liberality is not the native growth of the soul, but is a Divine gift for which God is to be thanked.

(2) Grace is giving--John 3:16

(3) Christian giving is a manifestation of the grace of God in us. God so loved that He gave--we so love that we give. Grace is giving and giving is grace.

(4) It is the response of a loving heart--"not grudgingly--of pain." Ill Give gift to wife with pain.

Putting self at G's disposal

II. GIVE BY THE RIGHT METHOD. Verse 5

1. Self first.

(1) There is something God wants before your money--YOU. Their giving was the result of a yielded life, not the substitute of a yielded life.

(2) Self first, all else will follow.

2. Substance second. It is inconsistent to say that we trust Christ with the most valuable possession, immortal soul, yet not trust Him with the perishable possessions..

III. GIVE FOR THE RIGHT MOTIVE. Vs. 9

Paul bases his whole appeal on this--the giving of Jesus, for our sakes.

The GRACE--grace of giving--keep this in mind and you will do right in the matter of stewardship...

I. The Right Attitude God needs in every heart

1. Three kinds of heart of I...

- (1) Appreciation...
- (2) Gratitude...
- (3) Willingness...