

# ONWORD

A weekly publication of the Enterprise Church of Christ

## Surviving Financial Stress

2/4 - Rock Bottom (Luke 15:11-32)  
 2/11 - That's My Job (Mt. 25:14-30)  
 2/18 - For Richer, For Poorer (Phil. 4:10-19)  
 2/25 - Lean on Me (Matt. 6:19-34)  
 3/4 - Oil in the Cupboard (II Kings 4:1-7)  
**3/18 - Another Macedonian Call (II Cor. 8 & 9)**  
 3/25 - Riches and Glory (I Tim. 6)

### Join us:

#### Sundays

Bible class, 9 am  
 Morning worship, 10 am  
 Evening worship, 5:30 pm

#### Wednesdays

Midweek Bible study, 7 pm

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## Surviving Financial Stress: Another Macedonian Call

*By Jay Tidwell*

During Paul's second missionary journey, while in northwest Turkey, he received a divine vision of a man from Macedonia in Greece saying, "*Come over into Macedonia, and help us*" (Acts 16:9). They changed their preaching itinerary based on that divine call, leading to the first Christians in Europe.

The Christians in Macedonia genuinely appreciated the help they received from the gospel, because Paul later used them as examples of how to help others: "*We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, 4 begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us*" (II Cor. 8:1-5 ESV). Paul went on to praise the Macedonians for their generous spirit even though they were limited in material means. He used their conduct as a way to inspire the church at Corinth

## Extra Credit: Sowing & Reaping

**Prov. 11:24-25:** "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. 25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

**Prov. 22:9:** "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor."

**Luke 6:38:** "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

**Galatians 6:7-9:** "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

to be free-handed in their support of the work of the church and the ministry to the impoverished Christians in Judea.

### First Things First

Paul observed what equipped the Macedonians to be so helpful - "*they gave themselves first to the Lord*" (8:5). Here's something that compels us all to make that commitment: "*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14-15 KJV; see 8:9).*

### Un-limiting God

We should never entertain thoughts that the Lord might be limited in His capacity. As we saw in the prior lesson about the widow and the oil in II Kings 4:1-7, however, there was a limit that was observed once all the empty bowls that she and her sons had borrowed from the neighbors had been filled - "the oil was stayed." It wasn't a limit within God's capability, but within their providing the vessels - the infrastructure - within which the Lord could send the blessings.

In this section, Paul brings this principle into the Christian's connection with God's providence and blessings: "*The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully*" (2 Cor. 9:6-8 ESV). The concept emphasized through Scripture is that if we want greater blessings from God, then we offer greater things to Him - from our time, treasures and talents.