

**“Sacrifice versus Privilege” - 2 Corinthians 8:1-7**  
**Pastor Burt Garwood – October 22, 2017**

READ: Matthew 19:16-22

- This young man was very religious and dedicated. He had, in his eyes, kept all the commandments.
- But his heart wasn't in the right place. Jesus points this out to him. Jesus was asking a materialist to give up his way of life and give away all his stuff.
- He loved his money and material possessions too much. He couldn't give his stuff away. His heart wasn't in it to give.
- This rich young man saw it as a sacrifice...a burden...rather than a privilege. READ: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

There is a difference between sacrifice and privilege. It's a mindset and it's a heart thing.

- It's an honor to give back to God even just 10% from all that God has given us.
- Especially when we stop to let it sink in that Jesus gave up his life to save us from sin and satan and separation from God. READ: Matthew 20:26-28
- Did Jesus sacrifice his life in the literal sense on the cross for us as the ultimate sacrifice, replacing the Old Testament sacrificial system? Yes. But he also saw it as a privilege. READ: Philippians 2:5-11
- When you stop to think about where God has forgiven you, provided for you or come through for you or protected you or healed you, how has it transformed you into a giver?

Are we called to sacrifice? Yes.

- Romans 12:1 *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**”*
- But also notice the word, “offer” and the word “worship”. That's the privilege part of sacrifice. It's an honor to offer yourself up as an act of worship to the Lord.

Let's look at how this plays out in our lives...

- When called upon to do your duty, do you drag your feet and complain? And maybe say something like, “I didn't sign up for this.”
- When people ask a favor, do you see it as a sacrifice? It's pulling you away from your schedule and routine. And you see yourself sacrificing...giving up something. And you might even feel a bit of resentment toward them.
- When it comes to money, do you find yourself freely and joyfully spending money on things that you're most passionate about. But when it comes to giving money to God, it feels like such a sacrifice and a burden? Do you find yourself feeling strapped for cash when you think about giving back to God?

Privilege is different.

- 2 Corinthians 8:1-3 *“And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. <sup>2</sup> Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup> For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own...”*

- Was it sacrificial? Yes. But more so, it was an honor...as their hearts were in the right place.
- 2 Corinthians 8:4 *“they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.*” They saw giving as a privilege.

Have you ever eaten at Chick-fil-A? When you ask one of their employees for help, they quickly and politely and with a big smile say, “My Pleasure.” They've been trained to do this. These employees actually mean it too.

- How about you use that phrase this week? When you help someone out, graciously say, “My pleasure.” And see if it doesn't warm your heart to say it.
- When you give money to the Lord, why not say to him, “My pleasure.”

Living out a privilege mindset means that when someone needs help, you jump at the opportunity.

- You find yourself saying, “I was born for this!” You don't see it as a bother at all, but rather an honor and a joy to help that person.
- If you see it as sacrifice...you might pass on it. And you will miss out on God's calling in your life to love others and serve the world around you.

2 Corinthians 8:7 *“But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”*

- “God is love. Not just loving, but love. The practical demonstration of love is giving, and to say that God loves is to say that he gives.” [Steve Fry, “I am” page 64]
- Romans 8:31 *“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”*
- And from this mindset, you ask God what the Psalmist asked, *“What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me?”* [Psalm 116:12]

Truly living is giving yourself away in compassion to others that brings them to Christ.

- When you give, you get to be part of God's bigger picture to rescue the world around you.
- It doesn't matter how much money you have or don't have. It's not about how much you give, but that you give from your heart from what you have.
- You see it as an honor to give back to the Lord and to share with others because of the great gifts of eternal life and forgiveness of sins you have received through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a generous spirit that allows the gifts of God and the blessings of his abundance to flow through you and overflow into the lives others.