

## THE MACEDONIAN BELIEVERS MODEL GENEROSITY

In II Corinthians 8 Paul expresses how well the believers in Macedonia understood what it means to be generous in ones giving:

*And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us (II Cor. 8:1-5).*

The severe trial that the Macedonian churches experienced was of a sort that left them in a condition of extreme poverty. The phrase is literally "down-to-the-depth poverty," or financially "hitting rock-bottom." In the midst of this hardship the Macedonian believers experienced overflowing joy and they gave generously for the Lord's work. What an example of sacrificial giving! What an example of having an open hand when it comes to ones possessions.

The Macedonian churches are a testimony that it is possible not merely to experience joy but to have it "overflow" in the midst of trials. Even more, just as persecution did not take away from their joyfulness, neither did poverty diminish their willingness to give to those in need. How is this possible? Verses 3-5 provide the explanation.

First, it is because the Macedonians gave not just as much as they were able (literally "according to their ability") but *beyond* (v. 3). How much beyond Paul does not say, but there is no hint that this was a reckless action on their part. The sense is that they determined what they could comfortably contribute and then went beyond this figure.

Second, what they gave, they gave entirely on their own (v. 3). This phrase in the Greek refers to something done of one's own accord or by a free choice. In essence, the Macedonians were not pressured into giving. They gave willingly. In fact, they urgently pleaded to be involved (v. 4).

Finally, the Macedonian generosity was possible because they gave themselves first to the Lord and only then to Paul (v. 5). Their preeminent concern was how best to serve Christ. It is here that they exceeded Paul's expectations. They gave out of their poverty because of the sincerity of their commitment to Christ as Lord. So great was their desire to serve Christ that they would not allow their economic situation to keep them from being involved in the Lord's work. This is why Paul describes the collection as a service (v. 4). It is not just a financial obligation. It is a ministry opportunity to the saints (v. 4)—those set apart to be God's possession.

As we move towards Stewardship Sunday (June 2) and seek to pray about our responsibility towards our church family's needs, we can be inspired by the way the early church responded towards the needs within their churches.

## Worship Schedule

Sundays • 9:30 & 11:00 am

Medina Community Church exists to help people begin and grow in their relationship with God. Our relaxed, contemporary style provides an enjoyable atmosphere where you can investigate the claims of Christ, deepen your faith and meet some great friends along the way.

### SERIES: AGE OF HEROES

June 2—(Stewardship Sunday)  
Almighty Dollar

June 9—(Promotion Sunday)  
Losing is the New Winning

June 16—  
Just Be You

June 23—  
Guest Speaker: Drake Williams

June 30—  
A Hulk-Smashing Life  
Guest Speaker: Brad Keffer

## Contact Us

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# Upcoming Events

- **Student Ministries**

Ontrack (Jr. High) and Satellite (Sr. High) meet on Sunday evenings at MCC (Ontrack, 5-6:45 pm / Satellite, 5-7:00 pm). Kid's Blast (elementary k-5) is off until next fall. They will resume in September.

- **Young Adult Bible Study**

Tuesdays at 6:30 pm all college age students and 20-something adults are invited to attend MCC's Young Adult Bible Study. Currently they are studying the book of Lamentations. Check with Arlen Gerig and see how you can become involved with this dynamic group of young people.

- **Adult Bible Study**

Men's and Women's Bible study meet on Thursday evenings (7:00 pm) at MCC.



## **Congratulations Graduates**

Class of 2019: **Cole Spitzer**, Norwayne High School; **Sam Pittman**, Norwayne High School; **Lucas Kocisko**, Norwayne High School; **Jacob Persic**, Medina High School



## **MISSION TRIPS**

### **SATELLITE (sr. high) . . .**

**June 16-21**

**Beach Evangelism—Myrtle Beach, SC**

### **ONTRACK (jr. high) . . .**

**July 28-August 2**

**Missions Camp—Ridgecrest, NC**