

Living in the Zone - Finding Your Sweet Spot
Message #3 "Soft Hands"
1 Corinthians 8:1-12
March 13 & 14, 2010

Big Idea: *I am able to be in the blessed place as I open my hands and heart for God to bless.*

"And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints."

Great "In the Zone" Words

Three Lies that Keep Me Out of the Zone

Lie #1: "But _____!" vs. 5

"And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will."

Key #1- Everything I have _____ Matt. 25:14-30

Key #2- God can be _____ Romans 12:1-2

Lie #2: "But what about _____?" vs. 4-5, 8-9, 13-15

"...they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. ⁵ And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will." vs. 4-5

"I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love..." vs. 8-9

"Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. ¹⁴ At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, ¹⁵ as it is written: 'He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little.'"

Paul Addresses Two Spiritual Issues Here:

A. _____ - battles the spirit that is all about us.

B. _____ - battles the spirit that doesn't look like Christ.

Lie #3: "I just _____." vs. 1, 6, 7, 9, 9:7-8, 13-15

"...we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches." vs. 1

"...bring also to completion this act of grace on your part." vs. 6

"...see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." 2 Cor. 9:7-8

"And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for HIS indescribable gift!" 2 Cor. 9:13-15

Remember: God's _____ are stronger _____

“And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. 11 Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. 12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.” vs. 10-12

Practical Steps

Vs. 10- Pray for a giving spirit.

Vs. 11- Pray for the opportunity to give, and then do it!

“The blessing of God means to be on the receiving end of the tangible and intangible gifts of God.”

Vs. 12- God holds us responsible for what we have...not what we don't have.

Remember: _____

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” 2 Cor. 9:6-8