

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

Study Text: 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

I See, I want, I take

Open

1.

A quotation from this week's Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, serves as the starting point for today's discussion:

As our interest in material things increases, it swallows up our love for spiritual things (the Gospel and the truth about God).

The more materially secure we become, interest in heavenly treasure (eternal matters) declines.

The more we possess in this world, the more closely we hug it for ourselves, because we are fearful it will be taken away from us.

The more we possess, the less we give to others. The more we have, the poorer we feel.

(Ellen White, Spiritual Gifts, vol 2. p. 267 adapted)

How real do you think these observations are generally? What's your personal experience?

Dig

2.

In stark contrast to the values of the 'wealthy' church members in Corinth (I see, I want, I take), Paul uses the Macedonia members as an example. They were poor and in trouble, but they gave all they had, far more than anyone could have expected (2 Cor 8:2). Seeing cause and effect, he describes them as having been 'given the grace of God' (2 Cor 8:1). How does God's grace affect the 'I see, I want, I take' value?

3.

Macedonian members gave 'according to their means' and 'beyond their means', without pressure (2 Cor 8:3). Paul says they 'begged' to help give funds for the Church of Jerusalem (the Mother Church), which was also poor (2 Cor 8:4). What on earth possessed them, to 'beg' to give, while experiencing extreme poverty? Were they crazy?

4. How can it be that the Macedonian members, in their extreme poverty are full of joy (2 Cor 8:2)?

Reflect

5. An advertisement on the London Underground once read:

“What blind people need is more tea and less sympathy”.

“Paul stresses the necessity of putting fine feeling into fine action... a feeling which remains only a feeling, a pity which remains a pity only of the heart, a fine desire that never turns into a fine deed, is a sadly truncated and frustrated thing. The tragedy of life so often is, not that we have no high impulses, but that we fail to turn them into actions.

(The Daily Study Bible, Corinthians, by William Barclay. p. 229)

What one thing this coming week, will you plan to do to personally (or your bible study group together), that repels the ‘I want, I see, I take’ culture, but instead ‘begs’ to help the ‘other’?