

## **EXPERIENCING the POWER of “ONE ACCORD”**

*“...they lifted up their voice to God with one accord...And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.” Acts 4:24, 31-33 (KJV)*



### ***This Week’s Thought – April 17, 2016***

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*“You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11 (NIV)*

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You can let me know, but I truly do not believe that it is claiming too much, to say that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians are Paul’s most relevant letters to our contemporary culture. Corinth was a major center of commerce and trade. It was multiethnic, pluralistic, technologically advanced, and it was very, very rich. In our modern culture, we talk a lot about money. We spend our days earning it, and our evenings dreaming about and planning how to spend it. It is often the driving force behind our career paths and major life decisions; thus it is believed without question that the accumulation of wealth is directly linked to our happiness and joy.

Yet, what if I said that this is more of a Modern Day World value, and not a Biblical value? Is it possible that we have too quickly accepted a cultural perspective on wealth and money without first stopping to see if it aligns with God’s will for our lives? As I read Paul’s words to the Corinthians, I sense that we, like the church in Corinth, might need to have our perspective reframed in light of the generous love of God shown in Jesus Christ.

Paul’s words begin with the phrase *“you will be made rich in every way...”* Those are words that our Modern Day Cultural ears like to hear! They are words that align with our society and its values. Yet what comes next turns our cultural values upside down, and is a shock to the system. *“...so that you can be generous on every occasion...”* In light of the self-giving love shown on the cross, Paul invites us to reorient our entire lives and worldview so that we too can give our entire lives as an offering of thanksgiving and praise to God. This may seem radical, but it is the way of Jesus that each disciple is invited to embrace.

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*“One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”* (Proverbs 11:24) If God has given you riches and material wealth, it is not a sign that He loves you more than others or that He is especially pleased with you and your hard work. It instead means that He has given you a mission! You and I have the great blessing of receiving Kingdom resources from the Lord that we can then share freely and joyfully with others who are in need. In God’s Kingdom, happiness is found, not in how much we receive, but in how freely we are willing to give. Generosity is God’s way of freeing us from self-love and inviting us into a life of true freedom, happiness, and gratitude.

**Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: “Rejoice and be thankful! As you walk with Me through this day, practice trusting and thanking Me all along the way. Trust is the channel through which My Peace flows into you. Thankfulness lifts you up above your circumstances. I do My greatest works through people with grateful, trusting hearts. Rather than over planning and over evaluating, practice trusting and thanking Me continually. This is a paradigm shift that will revolutionize your life.”** (Philippians 4:4; Psalm 95:1-2; Psalm 9:10; 2 Corinthians 2:14)

*“And then God answered: "Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.”* Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King