



Today's Sermons
 Morning: Caleb's Sermon
 Evening: "To Timothy, My Beloved Son"

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FOR THE RECORD

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Offering	\$1747



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Times of Services:
Sunday
 Bible Study:... 10:00am
 AM Worship:...11:00am
 PM Worship:...6:00pm
 2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday
 Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program
 Sunday:.....7:30am
 "Back to the Bible"
 AM 580 WSKK
 93.5 FM

**We Extend A
 Warm & Cordial
 Welcome
 To All Our
 Visitors!**

RICH THROUGH THE POVERTY OF JESUS
 Roger D. Campbell

The heart-stirring message of 2 Corinthians 8:9 reads, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." What a compelling message! This verse tells us that Jesus was rich, and at the same time it points out that those who follow Him are truly rich through Him. Let's take a closer look.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" – This statement is in a context that deals with the apostle Paul exhorting the saints in Corinth to get with it and get their promised contribution ready. The churches of Macedonia, which were made up of brethren in "deep poverty" (8:2), had given liberally (8:1-5). Now Paul by the Holy Spirit uses another wonderful example to spur the Corinthian Christians on to action: the example of Jesus. By His grace – His kindness or favor that humanity did not deserve and could never earn, Jesus made an amazing sacrifice so that all men could become rich. While we may often think of the grace of our heavenly Father, the New Testament also speaks of the grace of the Christ, as we read in 2 Corinthians 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

"He was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor" – Do you see the two facts contained in this statement? Fact #1: Jesus "was rich." When was that? Not when He lived in the home of Joseph and Mary. Every indication is that they were not people of great wealth in terms of material riches.

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When they dedicated Jesus to the Lord, they offered birds instead of a lamb (Luke 2:22-24; Leviticus 12:6-8). Those that could afford it would offer a lamb. Those that could not, offered fowl like Joseph and Mary did. When was the Christ rich? Not during the years of His preaching. Jesus Himself said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). Before His public ministry He worked as a carpenter (Mark 6:3), and during His short ministry He was dependant upon those that loved Him and "ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke 8:3). So, when was our Lord rich? He was wealthy in terms of His relationship with the Father before the foundation of the world.

Fact #2: "He became poor." When? When He came to this world of sorrow and sin, humbling Himself and taking on the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7,8). By coming to this earth He willingly took a position in the flesh that made Him temporarily lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:9). In the flesh He went through every form of temptation (Hebrews 4:14,15) and, as all humans must, passed through physical death (Hebrews 9:27). Did Jesus do all of this for Self? Did He come to earth for His own personal glory? Absolutely not. Our text declares that He did it for someone else. He had others in mind when He temporarily forfeited the glory and riches of heaven and intentionally became poor instead. Just for whom would He take such a great step? Answer: For you and me, but not for us only. Yea, "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

Why did the Savior heaven leave And come to earth below, Where men His grace would not receive? Because He loved me so.

"That ye through his poverty might be rich" – Here again we see the motivation for our Lord's coming to earth and His sacrifice. All that He did, He did for us. Why? Because He wants us to be rich! The Rich One became the Poor One in order that poor ones might become rich ones. Let that thought sink down in your heart: the Rich One became the Poor One, that poor ones (spiritually bankrupt ones – that's you and me without Jesus!) might be blessed in a spiritual sense. And, what blessings we have in and through our Redeemer! Every one of us should count him/herself rich in Jesus because:

- (1) Through Him we receive the benefits of God's rich love (Ephesians 2:4).
- (2) In Him we are part of the wonderful family of God (1 Timothy 3:15), the great brotherhood of God's people (1 Peter 2:17). Through Him we are rewarded in this life with fathers, mothers, brethren, houses, lands, etc. hundred fold (Mark 10:29).
- (3) In Him we have all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3).
- (4) Through Him we are people of hope that anticipate an inheritance that is out of this world, reserved in heaven for us (1 Peter 1:3,4).

In the first century the church in Smyrna faced some tough times. However, Jesus' words of comfort must have meant a lot to them: "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich) . . ." (Revelation 2:9). So, what were the saints in Smyrna, poor or wealthy? From a financial standpoint, they were poor, but from a spiritual point of

view they were wealthy beyond measure. Why? Because they had all spiritual blessings in the Lord! Brothers and sisters, from time to time we may wonder how we are going to have enough money to pay our bills and provide for our loved ones. There may never come a time in our whole lives that we will count ourselves as being rich in this world's goods. But if we walk faithfully with the Lord and have Him as our advocate before the Father (1 John 2:1), we are rich indeed!

Thanks be to the Godhead for the wonderful scheme of redemption. Thanks be to the Father for sending His Son to die for our sins. Thanks be to the Son for His willingness to give up His wealthy state in order to make us rich. Thanks be to the Spirit for revealing the gospel of our salvation (Ephesians 1:13). We are so blessed! And not because we deserve it or because God is in debt to us. By God's grace we are rich through the poverty of Jesus. May we never take for granted all that had to be done and sacrificed in order to make our spiritual wealth in the Christ a reality.

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:9-15)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- May 14 – **No** Preach-N-Eat or 1:30 Worship (regular 6:00 pm service)
- May 21 - Preach-N-Eat & 1:30 Worship
- May 21-25 – Our Gospel Meeting with John Daniels
- May 28 – Song Service
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell