Give more, receive more  
May 24-25, 2012

I. WELCOME, 15 mins.
Plan one to two icebreakers for the purpose of mixing around and getting group participation or getting acquainted.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead people into God’s presence. During this time, cell leaders will encourage cell members to listen to the Holy Spirit and release the words of **strengthening, encouragement, and comfort** they have received for the **cell group, the church and nations**. Upon each word shared, the cell leader will lead members by thanking and praising God for His promise and/or praying aloud together for the needs, etc.

During this time, the cell leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for: (1) the mission organization or daughter church that the cell group adopts (2) the church ministry needs (3) blessings for new comers, the sick.

**MISSION ORGANIZATION:** _______________, their needs: _______________

(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

**CHURCH MINISTRY:**
6/3  Cry Out for America Prayer Meeting, @ 4-6pm at ROLCC
6/22-24  Ling Leung Conference, online registration: [www.rolcc.net/lle](http://www.rolcc.net/lle)
7/21  Combine Cell Group meeting, detail: TBD

III. WORD, 45 mins.
A. Sharing from last Sunday’s message.
   1. **What is the main message from last Sunday sermon?** What did God say to you from the message?
   2. **How would you respond to the message?** What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Discussion Topic: “Give more, receive more”

**Scriptures:** 2 Corinthians 9: 1-15

**Memory Verse:** And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV)

I. Foreword
Paul’s message about offerings that starts in 2 Corinthians Chapter 8 will be concluded here in Chapter 9. There is a critical main character besides two groups of supporting characters in the whole process of offerings. These two groups of supporting characters are those who make the offerings and those who collect the offerings. Surely, the main character here is God. Those who make the offerings need to learn two lessons. First, they need to trust those who collect the offerings. In the second half of Chapter 8, Paul specifically mentioned that he would send Titus and two other brothers to the Corinthian church. Titus was like Paul’s son. His credibility was undisputable. One of the other two brothers was also praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. He was chosen by the churches as well. The third brother had proven in many ways that he was zealous. Paul regarded them as the representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. More importantly, they all walked in the light, not only before God, but also before other people. That is the reason there was no hindrance or attack from the enemies in collecting the offerings. Those who make the offerings must learn to trust those who collect the offerings. Let’s move on to Paul’s further teaching on offering in Chapter 9.

II. Those who don’t give much will be ashamed (2 Corinthians 9:1-4)
We need to understand the spiritual status of the Corinthian church at that time when we study these verses. Paul made it very clear in his first letter to them: “Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly —mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. (1 Corinthians 3:1-2)” Even in that kind of spiritual status, the Corinthian church (those in Achaia) still promised to Paul that they were willing to give to the church in Jerusalem. Since Paul represented those who would collect the offerings, it was his duty to continue to provide sound teaching on making offerings here:

1. **Keep your promise:** James, one of the younger brothers of Jesus, once said: “All you need to say is a simple ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ Otherwise you will be condemned. (James 5:12b)” Actually James was simply repeating what his older brother had said before, for Jesus also said the same thing himself (Matthew 5:37).

2. **Fulfilling your promise stir others to action** (2 Corinthians 9:2). Otherwise the boasting about you might prove hollow (2 Corinthians 9:3).

3. **Breaking the promise would bring you the shame** (2 Corinthians 9:4)
   Most of us would think it is a private matter to make offerings. However, Paul told that how you make your own offering may not only change the
whole situation, but also expose your spiritual immaturity.

III. Three attitudes towards offering that don’t please God and three attitudes towards offering that please God (2 Corinthians 9:5-7):

1. Three attitudes towards offering that don’t please God:
   a) Grudgingly (2 Corinthians 9:5): It means greed in the original language, as in “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. (Colossians 3:5-6) ” It also means to keep behind for one’s own benefit.
   b) Sparingly (2 Corinthians 9:6): “Sparingly” means “surplus” in the original language, for someone would only give when there is surplus.
   c) Reluctantly or under compulsion (2 Corinthians 9:7): not cheerfully Therefore, the offerings that don’t please God are those that are made after one’s needs are met, or when there is surplus, or when one is in the mood of giving at the moment.

2. Three attitudes towards offering that please God:
   a) Generous (2 Corinthians 9:5): “Generous” means “blessful” in the original language.
   b) Sow generously (2 Corinthians 9:6): “Generously” comes from the word “generous” in the prior verse, meaning “blissfully”
   c) Cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7): “Cheerful” here finally means “happy”.

Therefore, the offerings that please God are those made by cheerful and happy Christians that want to share God’s blessings with others.

IV. Give more, receive more (2 Corinthians 9:8-15), voluntary offerings bring enrichment:

1. Our harvest of righteousness will increase and last forever (2 Corinthians 9:8-10): Micah the prophet said: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)” Remember Paul once wrote: “As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.’ (Romans 3:10-12)” Well, that was how we were like before we were saved. But these verses Paul wrote in Chapter 9 tell us that whenever we humbly seek God, God is able to bless us abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that we need, we will abound in every good work (such as giving money to the poor). Paul also said that our harvest of righteousness from our good work before God would last forever (Psalm 112: 9). This is to keep our treasure in heaven, isn’t it? Moreover, God cannot wait to increase our harvest of righteousness greatly, just like what Jesus once said: “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. (Luke 6:38)” We should always “remember the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ (Acts 20:35b)”

2. The thanksgiving and glory to God that He deserves will also increase (2 Corinthians 9:11-13): Keep in mind that God is the main character in the whole process of offering, for He is the source of everything beautiful. He provides everything to us. That is why in this passage “we the representatives that collect the offerings”, “you the giving believers from the Corinthian church” and “they the receiving believers in Jerusalem” would like to stand together before God and give all the thanksgiving, praise, and glory to Him.

3. The blessings in God’s house will increase out of a benign cycle (2 Corinthians 9:14-15): The secret to release the unlimited power of God’s kingdom is kept in the last two verses. The most common complaint heard in God’s house is about being always told to “give, give, and give more.” But when we study these two verses, we find instead that God is always the one that really “gives”. “The surpassing grace” in verse 14 can be interpreted as “the grace thrown at you in great volume”, not by shovel after shovel, but in truckloads! More specifically, “they (the receiving believers in Jerusalem)” would not be jealous. Instead, “in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you (the believers at the Corinthian church)”. What would they pray for? “Thanks be to God” in verse 15 is “Grace be to God” in the original text, meaning to re-apply God’s grace to the needs in God’s house, thus creating a benign cycle of grace there. When God finds out about our correct feedback for His grace, He has to use even more and bigger trucks, for “He has indescribable gift” or “He has gift that cannot be described in words”. If you link that gift to the wealth right away, you are limiting God, for the wealth is describable.

Discussion Questions:

1. What attitudes towards offering did Paul remind us of that don’t please God?
2. What attitudes towards offering please God?
3. Why did Paul keep reminding the Corinthian church to get the promised offerings ready?
3. From today's passage, what results do you realize the voluntary offering would bring?

4. Are you willing to get your attitude towards offering renewed so as to give more thanksgiving and praise to God?

5. Are you willing to participate in creating a benign cycle of God’s grace?

6. We can not only offer our money, but also our time and talents. Please use 2 Corinthians 9:8 to encourage one another, and make new breakthroughs in our offering!

Prayer:

Dear heavenly Father, we thank you for blessing our church over the years. We would also offer our thanksgiving to you by making offerings to meet the building needs in our church, for we believe that through this event you will greatly increase our capacity in offering. May you open our eyes every day, so that we can see your limitless abundance. Don’t let us take back what we offer, or you might be forced to bless us in toy shovel. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen!

II. WORK (Pray for each other), 10 mins.

Please break into group of 2 or 3 to pray for each other’s needs.