

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR SMALL GROUPS 28 & 29 AUGUST 2021

TO TITHE OR NOT TO TITHE?

Scripture: Leviticus 27:30-34 & Malachi 3:8-10

- **Begin by reading the Scripture passage together. Review the video of the sermon if needed (see <http://www.brmc.org.sg/category/resources/sermons>).**
 - **Use the following questions as a guide for your group discussion. Feel free to discuss as few or as many as best fits your group's current context and present stage in life.**
 - **Remember to budget some time (15-20 min) to pray with and for one another, before ending your group session.**
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- 1) Based on your reading of the Scripture passages and on the sermon, summarise the principle of Tithing.
 - a) How does the thought of tithing impact you mentally and emotionally?
 - b) Have you ever had a sense or conviction that the Lord has been speaking to you about serving Him regularly with your time, resources, and money? How have you acted on that conviction?

- 2) Read 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 & 9. The sidebox may also provide additional background information.
 - a) What motivated the Macedonian church to give so generously to other Christian communities?
 - b) Is this something that you desire our BRMC community to be known for? If so, who would you desire to bless these gifts with, financial or otherwise?

2 Corinthians 8:1–7

The Example of Macedonia

Having heard from Titus about the Corinthian generosity, Paul begins his appeal by telling them what the Macedonians have done. There were at least three Christian communities at that time in Macedonia: Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. These, despite being desperately poor and suffering persecution, have given most generously. [...]

The persecution and poverty of the Macedonian Christians had not, however, closed off their generosity. Paul, aware of their poverty, had apparently not at first asked them to contribute, but when they heard of the collection, they had begged him to be allowed to participate (v. 4). Once included they gave not merely what might have been reasonably expected, but beyond their means (v. 3). They had not been either compelled or exhorted to give, but had contributed of their own free will. [...]

In the final issue Paul, however, does not trace the generosity of the Macedonian Christians simply to an awareness of the need of others. He sees it as the work of God's grace (v. 1). [...] We note now that the word rendered "relief" (v.4) is the one which usually appears as "ministry." It refers regularly in Greek to menial personal service, for example, waiting at table, and is so used in Mark 1:31; 15:41. In Mark 10:45 it is applied to the way Jesus served us. What, then, the Macedonians have done in sending money to Jerusalem can be put on the same plane as what Jesus did in living and dying for us. **Our appeals for charity are often based on humanitarian considerations; Paul derives his from the personal dedication of believers to God.**

- Ernest Best, *Second Corinthians*, Interpretation Commentary, 77–78.

- 3) Take some time to consider how you regard God.
 - a) Is it difficult for you to accept that He is your partner in every aspect of the term? Why is this the case?
 - b) Does the level of regard that you have for God impact your ability to be able to trust Him when He promises you that He will take care of your needs?