

2 Corinthians 8: 1 – 9

'Motivation'

Introduction ...

Motivation ... Motivation is a complex subject, entity, force.

Think of what motivated you to come tonight

Was it:

To have time for prayerful reflection?

To have time to worship God?

Was it

because you didn't want to let the choir down?

To support Liz?

Was it

Because you haven't seen 'so and so' for a while and you thought they might be here tonight?

Because you're on the rota to 'do' something?

Mixed motivations are common ... but our culture is one that has recognised the importance of motivation:

Motivational speakers

trainers

events

or think of those sports events in which a motivational team talk from the manager or coach appears to transform the performance of the team in the second half of a game ...

In Christian circles, we're perhaps more used to the term 'inspirational' ... but let's not forget that – whichever word we use – the effect is meant to be 'change – alteration in our mindset, our priorities, our focus, our attitude, our behaviour.

2 Corinthians 8: 9 ...

In our New Testament reading tonight we had what may well be the ultimate motivational or inspirational verse for Christian discipleship:

For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ,

that though he was rich for your sakes he became poor

so that by his poverty you might become rich.

PTO

St Paul wrote this to give motivation about one particular aspect of discipleship ... money ... he was encouraging the Corinthian Christians to emulate the generosity of Jesus in their financial gifts to other Christians in need.

For us ...

From this verse, I wonder about 2 things for us:

What aspect of the poverty of Jesus inspires/motivates you or I the most?

and

In what ways is God calling each of us to be more generous?

For the first question **Ada Spencer** outlines 6 kinds of poverty that Jesus undertook for us. As I list them – which one especially inspires you?

Jesus became poor

1. **by becoming human – emptying himself**
2. **by being born into a poor family**
3. **by living a life of obedience**
4. **by living for the poor and outcast**
5. **by being rejected**
6. **by dying for us**

Which of those motivate or inspire you the most?

Ask for the grace to keep this or those in your heart and mind to change, to increase your generosity.

Amen.