

The Riches of Christ

One of the most profound verses in the Bible is 2 Corinthians 8:9. Paul writes: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.” In context, the verse is upholding an argument for Christians to be generous in their giving. Consider this verse in some detail.

The riches Jesus possessed: “Though He was rich” – Scripture indicates that the glories and pleasures of heaven were Christ’s before He came to earth (John 17:5, 24). Additionally, Jesus existed in the very form of God; there is nothing that one could add to Jesus to give Him “more” of God’s nature than He already possesses (Phil. 2:6). The Lord had every right to stay where He was and to continue to enjoy all the pleasures and privileges that are His. Only His love for us could make Him leave paradise to suffer and die for us (Phil. 2:7-9).

The problem we had: “Yet for your sakes” – As sinners, we had a terrible debt that we could never repay: “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). The Bible says that we were dead in our sins and trespasses, and there was nothing we could do to revive ourselves spiritually (Eph. 2:1-3). Romans 5:8-9 describes us as having been the enemies of God because of sin. Before Jesus condescended to save us, sin had left us poor, blind and utterly destitute.

The sacrifice Jesus made: “He became poor” – Jesus gave up heaven, but not His deity (Phil. 2:6-7). Colossians 2:9 assures us that, “In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Although He did not give up His divine nature, Jesus took on human nature in order to bring us to God (Heb. 2:9-18). The Hebrews writer states that, “He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb. 5:8). Most significantly, Jesus died as the supreme sacrifice for us: “Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18).

The riches Jesus provides: “That you through His poverty might become rich” – The Lord’s sacrifice opens a world of blessings to the penitent believer. First, He has paid the debt to ransom us from sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 6:23; Acts 20:28). Second, He instructs us how to bear fruit unto God (John 15:1-8; Gal. 6:7-8), thereby experiencing the, “abundant life” (John 10:10). Third, Christ gives the believer a genuine hope for the future (1 Pet. 1:3). Those who serve the risen Lord and enjoy a relationship with Him are rich indeed (Eph. 1:3; Rev. 2:9; Matt. 6:19-21).

The decision we must make: “Might become rich” – Although the price has been paid and the way to salvation has been opened to all, not all will accept this marvelous gift (Tit. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9). Those who do not obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ will face God’s wrath (2 Thess. 1:7-9). Those who accept His riches by obedient faith will be

blessed with an eternity in His glorious presence (John 14:1-6). What will you choose?
Eternity hangs in the balance. **--JB**