

# Heart & Hustle

# Sermon Series

We spend a lot of time in Southern Missouri Youth Ministries focusing on the heart. Gospel Fluency reminds us that good behavior isn't enough, we must have the right heart motivations. Spirit Dependency is about having a heart that listens to and follows the Holy Spirit in all areas of life. And Biblical Community is ultimately about hearts gathered around Jesus and his mission. The heart matters most.

## **But is there more to the Christian life than just the heart?**

Take the time to re-read this familiar passage from Philippians 2, written by the Apostle Paul:

12 Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. 13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (NLT)

Paul is challenging the church at Philippi with this thought: When it comes to following Jesus, it takes heart AND hustle. Verse 13 reminds us that the heart and source of all Christian obedience is found in remembering God's work toward us, for us and in us. But verse 12 is Paul's call to "**work hard**." That doesn't sound lazy, easy or unintentional to me. It takes **heart and hustle** to live out God's call on our lives.

Dallas Willard says that grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved for good works. It's **heart and hustle**.

Speed The Light (<http://stl.ag.org>) is about **heart and hustle**. This 4-week sermon series called "Heart & Hustle" is a study from 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. I have heard it said that you can give without loving, but you can't love without giving. At some point, your hustle reveals your heart. And this year in NY, we are going to have **heart and hustle** as we see needs and meet needs through gospel motivated generosity and good old fashion hard work.

Each of these four messages is 80% finished. It needs some of your stories, illustrations, application and personality - be sure to insert YOU in each talk. **The last week of this series, please receive a special "Heart & Hustle" STL offering.**

Thanks for loving students enough to call them to gospel motivated generosity. Thanks for calling them to **heart and hustle**.

Darin Poe  
SMYM Director

\*A special thanks to David Hertweck, DYD, and his team of Youth Pastors in New York for this great resource. We are better Together!

# WEEK ONE

## Heart & Hustle begins with giving yourself to God.

### THE TAKE OFF

Begin this talk by telling a story about a time that you committed yourself fully to something—a time you REALLY gave yourself to something. This could be a funny story about you trying hard and embarrassing yourself in the process. This could be a story about a time you tried to impress a special someone. It could be a story about how dedicated you were to learning something, developing a skill, beating a video game or being great at sports, music, school, etc....

*Transition statement: I think all of us are giving ourselves to something or someone....*

### THE TENSION

- Some teenagers give themselves to working hard in school because they're hoping to get into a great college so they can get a great job and make lots of money.
- Some teenagers give themselves to the practice court because they want to make the NBA or at least win state playoffs.
- Some teenagers put hours into practicing an instrument because they want a scholarship to a music school or they want to be in a famous band.
- You might have a friend who is giving himself or herself to someone else. That relationship consumes them and controls them. Every choice they make is tied to that special person.

- And then others are trying to numb the pain or give themselves confidence or find pleasure that will make them happy and so they give themselves to alcohol and drugs and other forms of escapism.
- Even kids who seem to have no drive are giving themselves to just having fun and not working too hard and making sure they enjoy themselves.

## **Every teenager is giving him or herself to something or someone.**

My question tonight is: Who are you giving yourself to?

For the next 4 weeks, we are in a series called HEART AND HUSTLE. We are going to learn that when it comes to living and giving in a generous manner, it takes heart AND hustle.

During these 4 weeks, we are going to look at a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to a church in a city named Corinth. In his letter, he is asking them to give money to a needy church - a church that has fallen on hard times.

*Transition statement: In the part of the letter that we will look at tonight, Paul is reminding the church in Corinth of another church - a church that not only gave money to a need, they also gave themselves to God.*

## THE TEXT

### 2 Corinthians 8 (NLT)

1 Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. 2 They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. 3 For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. 4 They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. 5 They

even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.

## THE TEACHING

Below is a list of some observations and thoughts that you can share during the teaching time. Feel free to use all or some of them. PLEASE take the time to add some of your own illustrations and stories.

### **Tonight's truth is this: Heart & Hustle begins with giving yourself to God.**

- There seems to be a contradiction in this passage. Paul says that these people were "tested by many troubles" and "very poor." But then he also says they were "filled with abundant joy." How can that be true? Don't we need to have stuff if we are going to be happy? Haven't you heard that "he who dies with the most toys, wins?" There are so many people living their lives for and with money and material possessions, but they aren't happy. (Google Jim Carrey's quote on this topic). These people must be tapped into something that rest of the world doesn't know about...what is it?
- Paul describes their giving as overflowing in "rich generosity." How can someone with no money, give with rich generosity? Paul is teaching us here that giving is not about the dollar amount; it is about two things: 1) Why we give and 2) the level of sacrifice. Someone who is wealthy may give \$100 and someone who is poor may give \$2. Technically the rich person gave more, but it is possible that the poor person is more generous.
- Paul defines for us what true generosity is:
  - They gave not only what they could afford, but far more. This is sacrifice. It cost them something.
  - They gave of their own free will. No one made them. No one manipulated them. They chose. They had the right heart and

when you have the right heart, you hustle - you choose to get involved.

- They begged to share in the opportunity to meet needs. They weren't going to make excuses for why they couldn't help. They probably would have been justified in begging others for help, but instead they begged for the opportunity to help others.
- Finally, Paul that these generous people did even more than they had hoped. Paul says they didn't just give money, they gave themselves to the Lord and to us. In 3 weeks, we will take a special offering for missionaries. I hope you give money, but I hope for something more than that: I hope you give yourself to the God. Your life, your dreams, your hopes, your fears—give them all to God. Remember: everyone is giving themselves to something. Give yourself to God and to his people.

## **Heart & Hustle begins with giving yourself to God.**

*Transition statement: Where do we find the motivation and strength to not only give our stuff away, but to give ourselves to God?*

## THE THREAD

Paul writes in verse one about the kindness of God. What does the kindness of God look like?

It looks like Jesus. Jesus giving himself for us. Jesus didn't just come to earth to give us an example, good teachings, inspiration or advice. He came to give himself. The Bible says that Jesus always did what He saw the Father doing - Jesus gave himself to God. And in doing so, he gave himself for you and for me. The Bible says that he endured the cross for the joy set before him—that joy was doing the will of the Father and rescuing and redeeming his children.

As we see Jesus giving himself for us, it moves and melts our hearts so that we are ready and even “begging” for the chance to give our money, our time, our energy...ourselves to Him and his people.

*Transition statement: What does this all mean for us?*

## THE TAKE AWAY

Heart & Hustle begins with giving yourself to God. That means it doesn't really matter how much money you give if you don't give yourself to God and his people as well. Take some time now to pray about three things:

- 1) What is one new way that I need to start giving myself to God?
- 2) What are some next steps I need to take?
- 3) What might God be asking me to give in 3 weeks when we take out HEART AND HUSTLE Speed The Light offering?

# WEEK TWO

## Heart & Hustle flows out of what God has given you.

### THE TAKE OFF

Begin by sharing a story about receiving a gift that changed your life in some way. It could be a story from your childhood - a new toy or bike or video game that brought you lots of joy and fun. Maybe your first car was a gift. It could be a story about a gift that didn't seem big at the time, but that it ended up shaping the rest of your life. For example: You got an instrument and now you play it all the time or now you make a living teaching music. Maybe you were given a book and it became the catalyst for an interest that has changed the course of your life. It could be a serious story about receiving something meaningful like a wedding ring or a scholarship or something nostalgic from a family member.

*Transition statement: Looking back now, I realize that the gift I received changed me. You could say it changed my life.*

### THE TENSION

We all receive gifts at different times during the year. Usually we give each other gifts on Christmas and on our birthdays. Some people give gifts on other holidays like Easter or special anniversaries. And sometimes we get gifts just because someone thought of us.

Have you ever had to pretend you like a gift even though you hated it or didn't like it? Maybe it was an ugly sweater your aunt gave you at

Christmas. Maybe it was a gift card to store you don't shop at any longer. Some gifts aren't exactly great. Most gifts we enjoy.

But what kind of a gift could change your life?

- What about a full scholarship to the college of your choice? Would that change your life?
- What about a new car? Would that change your life?
- What about a million dollars? Would that change your life?
- What about the person of your dreams? Would that change your life?
- What about happiness for your family?
- Long life for your parents?
- A new life in a new city?

What kind of gift changes someone's life?

*Transition statement: Tonight, we are going to continue in our series, Heart & Hustle and look at some Scripture where we learn that there is a gift that changed our lives. And once we receive that gift - it changes everything about us.*

## THE TEXT

### 2 Corinthians 8 (NLT)

7 Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving. 8 I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches. 9 You know the generous graces of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich.

## THE TEACHING

Below is a list of some observations and thoughts that you can share during the teaching time. Feel free to use all or some of them. PLEASE take the time to add some of your own illustrations and stories.

**Tonight's truth is this: Heart & Hustle flows out of what God has given you.**

- Paul lists some areas in which the church at Corinth were doing great: they had faith, were gifted and talented at teaching and preaching, they had knowledge and were very passionate about their faith. Those are all things that we want too!
  - Having faith helps us trust in God even when life is hard. The Bible tells us that faith comes through hearing God's word and that it is impossible to please God without faith. So, this is one more reason why we need to fill our lives with the Bible - listen to it on your phone, read it on your app, take time to know it. Faith helps us have heart and faith helps us hustle.
  - Being talented and being knowledgeable helps us encourage and strengthen others. But the moment your talent and your smarts are more about you than others, you are not using either of them the way God wants.
  - Passion is something our culture celebrates. Having a bunch of excitement and energy for God is great. But Paul says here that your passion should turn into action.
  - He goes on to say - I want you to ALSO excel in giving. In a way, the selfless act of giving flows out of the combination of faith, gifts, knowledge and passion. We trust God with our money. We use our talents and abilities to earn or raise the money. And our passion turns into the action of giving.
- Paul says in verse 8 that we can know the genuineness of our love by how eager we are to serve and help others. Here is what he saying: Your hustle reveals your heart. We can say we love Jesus and we love his mission, but if our time, energy and resources aren't

directed there then we are just talking. Your hustle reveals your heart. You can give without loving, but you can't love without giving. Yes, we need to have the right heart, but we also need to hustle at times.

- Where do we get the right heart? The type of heart that creates hustle in us??
  - It's the generous grace of Jesus. Grace is when we get a wonderful gift that we don't deserve. Grace is also the power that keeps reminding us of that gift - so that our lives are changed.
  - Paul says that Jesus was rich, but he became poor. That is quite the understatement. Imagine Steph Curry switching places with the worst bench warmer on the junior high basketball team at your school. I'm not talking about switching seats - I mean switching abilities! Curry gives up his super star shooting skills and now he can barely dribble the ball without falling over! In exchange this 7<sup>th</sup> grader is now dropping bombs from all over the basketball court and setting countless scoring records. Jesus had all the riches of heaven. Jesus was eternal and not trapped in time. He wasn't subject to sickness or pain. He was in perfect relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. And he gave it all up for you and me.
  - He swapped places with us. He became poor so that through his poverty we could be made rich. Not financially rich, but spiritually rich.

*Transition statement: Jesus is the gift that changes someone's life.*

## THE THREAD

The Christian faith teaches that God sent his Son, Jesus, from heaven to earth to save us. But what kind of a gift was Jesus?

Sometimes we think Jesus came as an example. He was kind so we should be kind. He loved the outcasts so we should do the same. He walked on water -give it a try! Jesus of course is an example - the greatest example EVER! But the gospel is not that God sent us the gift of an example. The gospel is that God sent us the gift of a substitute.

Jesus lived the life that you owe God. God requires perfection. Jesus provided it. You and I NEVER could. Jesus died the death you should have died. God required the shedding of innocent blood for the forgiveness of sin (Heb. 9:22). You and I don't have innocent blood to shed so we couldn't appease God's holy wrath with our deaths.

What God required - He provided in Jesus. What a gift! And everything we do for God - including being generous and supporting the mission of God - flows out of that gift.

*Transition statement: So, what does this mean in our Heart & Hustle STL focus?*

## THE TAKE AWAY

Paul wrote that Christ made us rich. Not financially rich, but spiritually rich. Christians are far too "rich in Christ" to be stingy and selfish with money and material things. In two weeks, we will take a special HEART AND HUSTLE offering for Speed The Light. As you are deciding what to give remind yourself that you are rich in Christ so you are free to give.

# WEEK THREE

## Heart & Hustle is a cheerful choice.

### THE TAKE OFF

Begin by sharing a story about being forced to do something that you didn't want to do. It could be a funny story from your childhood about having to eat your vegetables, or go to the doctor, or listen to your parents. It could be a story from your teenage years about schoolwork, jobs, sports or music. It could be a recent story about the tasks of being a spouse, home/car owner or parent. It could be any awkward moment from your life: Having to dance at a wedding with someone, having to apologize for a mistake or being forced to speak in front of a crowd.

*Transition statement: Sometimes in life we HAVE to do things we don't want to. Sometimes there is no joy in our choices. Sometimes it seems like there's no good options.*

### THE TENSION

You ever feel like sometimes you do the wrong thing for the right reasons? You ever done the right thing for the wrong reasons?

Is simply doing the right thing good enough? Do our motivations matter?

*Transition statement: Tonight, we are going to continue looking at Paul's letter to the church at Corinth. The passage we are going to read teaches us the WHY matters more than the WHAT. The motivation matters.*

### THE TEXT

## 2 Corinthians 9 (NLT)

6 Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. 7 You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." 8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. 9 As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever." 10 For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.

## THE TEACHING

Below is a list of some observations and thoughts that you can share during the teaching time. Feel free to use all or some of them. PLEASE take the time to add some of your own illustrations and stories.

### **Tonight's truth is this: Heart & Hustle is a cheerful choice.**

- Paul uses the metaphor of farming and planting seed. This may seem obvious: if a farmer doesn't plant much seed then he can't expect much crop. Paul is teaching us here that God uses our generosity to make a difference. This doesn't mean that we are always guaranteed to see immediate results or enormous results. This is more a principle than a promise. But the principle holds true over time - generous living has wonderful results in our lives and the lives of others.
- Paul says that "good deeds will be remembered forever." This is NOT the motivation for giving. We don't give so that we will be remembered and celebrated. If that is why someone gives then, in a sense, they are giving to themselves. That's self-centered giving. But once again Paul is reminding us of an important life truth: What gets

most remembered is what you did for others. At the end of your life, people will stand around and talk about you and share memories. I have learned that at funerals, people talk about what that person did for them - how they impacted their life. We don't give to be remembered, but giving has such power to change someone's life that they will always remember true generosity.

- At the end of this passage, Paul goes back to the metaphor of farming and reminds them that God provides everything. God provides the seed to plant and the bread that comes from the planted seed. On top of that, God provides the sun, water, wind and climate for the seed to grow. He also provides the knowledge and wisdom to farmers to know how best to plant the seed. Then he provides the farmer with the physical and mental ability to plant seeds and reap the harvest. There is nothing you and I will ever give that wasn't first given to us by God! This truth makes us generous and helps us to make a cheerful choice.
- Did you notice that Paul tells them that they each must decide in their heart how much to give? Here is what he is saying: You have to choose. Sometimes we sit back and wait for God to tell us how much to give or we wait to be emotionally moved enough to do something. Paul says - CHOOSE! Make a decision. What will you give? Next week we are taking a special offering for missions. If you haven't decided yet what you want to give, then decide tonight.
- But Paul goes on to say it shouldn't JUST be a choice. It should be a cheerful choice. Heart and hustle is a cheerful choice. But why would we be happy about giving our stuff away? We like to spend money on ourselves. We like to buy things that make us feel happy or important. We like to save our money for a rainy day.

*Transition statement: How can giving be a cheerful choice?*

## THE THREAD

The answer is in verse 8: **And God will generously provide all you need.** Paul is talking about natural needs here, but God also provided everything we need spiritually.

We must remember that Jesus also made a choice. He chose to come from heaven to earth and to lose all the glory and riches of heaven to live as one of us. He was never wealthy; he didn't have much. But he made a cheerful choice to come and live in our place and die in our place—talk about generosity!

Hebrews 12:2 tells us that Jesus endured the cross for the JOY set before him. Joy means it was a cheerful choice. But not an easy one! Look at him in the garden the night before he walked to the cross - this was no easy decision. But he still had joy in his heart and he endured the cross because of that joy.

What was that joy? It was you and me. The joy of bringing you and me home to the Father and glorifying God in doing so. You know what this means? I don't know what each of you thinks about Jesus, but I know what he thinks about you: You were the joy set before him as he chose the cross.

*Transition statement: When we "see" Jesus giving it all up on the cross to have us, it frees our hearts to give. To give cheerfully.*

## THE TAKE AWAY

What will you give next week? But more importantly - will it be a cheerful choice?

Let's take some time tonight to ask the Spirit of God about what you will give next week.

# WEEK FOUR

## Heart & Hustle sees needs and meets needs.

### THE TAKE OFF

Begin by sharing a story about a time you tried to meet a need. It could be a success story or a failure story. It could be a story about a time when you misread a situation and thought a need existed when it didn't. It could be a time you overlooked a need and realized later you had made a mistake. You could also share a story about a time when someone met a need you had.

*Transition statement: Look around this world and you will see needs everywhere. Sometimes we ignore them. Sometimes we blame the person for their own needs. Sometimes we feel powerless to help them.*

### THE TENSION

It is very easy to live for ourselves. The truth is I spend so much time thinking about ME. And you spend so much time thinking about YOU. And it's a hard pattern to break. How do we stop thinking about ourselves so we can think about others?

When we live for ourselves then we pretty much just make one person's life better. We see our needs and we meet our needs. But when we begin living for others, seeing others need and meeting other's needs, we can make other people's lives better.

Here is a question we should all consider: Is my life making anyone else's life better?

*Transition statement: We have spent the last 3 weeks in our Heart and Hustle series talking about giving and generosity - the actions and the motivations. Tonight, we are going to look again at Paul's letter to the church at Corinth to learn what happens when we of seeing needs and meeting needs.*

## THE TEXT

2 Corinthians 9 (NLT)

11 Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. 12 So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. 13 As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. 14 And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. 15 Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

## THE TEACHING

Below is a list of some observations and thoughts that you can share during the teaching time. Feel free to use all or some of them. PLEASE take the time to add some of your own illustrations and stories.

### **Tonight's truth is this: Heart & Hustle sees needs and meets needs.**

- In verse 12, Paul says that our giving will have two results: filled stomachs and filled hearts.
  - First off, needs will be met. Real needs. The believers in Jerusalem were suffering from a famine and they had a need for food. When we give to missionaries and to ministries both

here and around the world, we help to meet real needs. Our giving helps to "FILL STOMACHS." Sometimes the need is literally filling stomachs. Sometimes it meets other needs like housing, clothing, education or opportunities. Some of our missionaries teach others a skill so they can get a job and make money. Some ministries dig wells so that communities have clean water. Others install traps and provide fishing and hunting equipment so people have a sustainable solution to hunger. Some communities need houses that can withstand the climate or a church building that can house the entire church. Our giving through STL makes all those things possible! These are real needs. Giving fills stomachs.

- But giving also "FILLS HEARTS." Paul says that the second result of the giving is that "they will joyfully express their thanks to God...they will give glory to God." There is something about experiencing the generosity of others that God uses to draw our hearts to him. We can trust that God will use our giving tonight to help people worship him all over the world. When other people see strangers being radically generous it causes them to ask, "What is different about them" or "What has changed in their hearts that makes them so willing and eager to give their money away?" And I think that the Spirit of God can use those questions to draw them to the truth of the Gospel.
- Speaking of the gospel - isn't it interesting that Paul says here that generosity is PROOF that we are living in line with the truth of the Gospel? Often, we think that the proof about who really loves Jesus is how much they go to church, how much of the Bible they read today, how long they spend in prayer, how clean their language is, how they they vote, how we dress... And yes - each of those things will be affected by a relationship with Jesus. But real radical generosity is one of the surest proofs that the Gospel is at work in your heart. Why?

- Because as Paul says in verse 14, it's the overflowing grace of God that makes us generous. Once we experience the undeserved blessings of God we realize that everything our heart needs is found in Jesus. Some people spend all their money looking for significance, but in Jesus we are given unimaginable worth and value. Some people save all their money looking for security, but in Jesus we are accepted by God based on his unchanging work. The grace of God makes us both significant and secure. We are now free to open our hearts and open our hands with our money and material possessions. They don't own us any longer. We own them and we use them for God's glory.

*Transition statement: In closing, let's talk one more time about why we will give tonight...*

## THE THREAD

God's gift is why we give. Paul ends this passage by describing God's gift as too wonderful for words. Have you ever had such an amazing experience or feeling that you couldn't find the words? Are you in awe of God's gift? If you aren't that impressed with the grace found in Jesus then you will never have the heart and the hustle it takes to live generously. But when his grace is at work in you then your heart and hustle will fill stomachs and fill hearts.

*Transition statement: Tonight, we are going to make a difference through our giving. We are going to meet needs - real ones. Our giving will help to fill stomachs and fill hearts.*

## THE TAKE AWAY

As we take this offering, I want you to pray for two things:

- 1) Pray that God uses this giving to meet the practical needs of missionaries. Pray also that through this giving people will worship God and turn to him.
- 2) Secondly, pray that this act of giving tonight will not be a one time for you or our youth group. But that this would become normal - the weekly practice. That our group will display heart and hustle every week through giving to God's great mission.