

***How Jesus Was Rich***  
***International Bible Lesson***  
**2 Corinthians 8:1-15**  
**Sunday, August 31, 2014**  
**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

*“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9—KJV).*

*“For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9—NRSV).*

Why do Christians give generously to the needy? They give because the grace of God has been granted to them (2 Corinthians 8:1). But how did God grant grace to them? God granted grace through the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, since the Bible teaches that Jesus was a carpenter’s son, how could Jesus have once been rich? From where did Jesus come? Was He only from Bethlehem and Nazareth? Nathaniel wondered if anything good could come from Nazareth, and His hometown of Nazareth rejected Him (John 1:46; Mark 6:1-6). The Bible answers these questions: before Jesus was born, “All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being” (John 1:3). “It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture” (Psalm 100:3). Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Jesus was rich in heaven, but for our sakes He became a poor shepherd on Earth. Jesus did not die sacrificially in poverty in order to make believers on Earth financially rich; however, He did go back to heaven to prepare a place for all who follow Him. Knowing these facts, the grace of God moves Christians to give generously to help those with real needs, even when they themselves may be living in poverty. For example, though in poverty themselves, the Macedonian Christians begged Paul for the opportunity to help the impoverished church in Jerusalem. – L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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## **Thinking Further**

1. Why did Paul write about the Macedonians in his letter to the Corinthians?
2. Why did the Macedonians give?
3. What did the Macedonians give?
4. What did Paul want Titus to do when he visited the church in Corinth?
5. What did Paul say Jesus Christ had done for them? Why did he remind them of what Jesus Christ had done for them?