



- ❖ Paul began by sharing about the way the churches of Macedonia had shared generously despite extreme poverty.
- ❖ Their act of service was viewed as a privilege, and their example provided a standard against which the Corinthians could measure their own earnestness.
- ❖ We saw an example of how the grace of God, demonstrated in the Macedonians, helped to persuade the Corinthians to assist. ([2 Cor. 8:1-9](#))
- ❖ But then Paul shows that the Macedonians were not the prime example of the grace of giving: **Jesus is**.
- ❖ Jesus demonstrated this grace in that although He was rich, He gave all ("became poor") that through His poverty we might become rich.
- ❖ Paul brings the Lord's grace to bear on those of Corinth whom he had taught to believe the principle of grace.

Principles of Giving - 2 Cor. 8:10-15

1. God's grace produces the desire to give - 8:11,12
2. Giving (of ourselves and financially) not grudgingly or of necessity - 8:7
3. God's grace produces the readiness of mind to give - 8:11,12
4. The amount of giving is in proportion to what God has given us - 8:12 (e.g. We should not go into debt to give.)
5. The purpose of grace-giving is that there might be equality (supplying each other's needs) - 8:14,15

Equity

#5 The purpose of giving is that there might be **equality** (supplying of each other's needs). We have this responsibility now.

- Note that Paul did not legislate equality. He appealed for it.

¹⁶ But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

Today Paul is going to focus on the Messengers of Generosity.

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Proverbs 3:4 (NASB) ⁴ So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.

Spoudē- earnestness, eagerness to care.

Strong's Dictionary

Paul also expressed thanks to God for working in Titus to give him his great heart.

17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

17 for Titus welcomed our request, and, being thoroughly in earnest, comes to you of his own free will.

Weymouth

Paul had exhorted Titus to take up this service, and Titus on his part did so with willingness and swiftness.

Paul thanked God that the same care that filled his own heart for the people of God, was found also in the heart of Titus.

18 We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches;

This brother was so well-known by this description to the Corinthians that no direct identification was needed.

19 and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,

As the Christian multitude gave the means, they were left free to choose the administrators.

19 and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,

These were the proceedings in the church in Jerusalem; and a like approach was adopted among the Gentile churches.

As the Christian congregations gave the money, they were left free to choose the administrators.

This was as wise as it was gracious.

The apostles kept detached from all appearance of favoritism, and left them to their own work with prayer, the condition of power.

19 and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,

The churches of Macedonia, Asia Minor, and Galatia had chosen this man as a courier. They knew him well, and he had won their respect.

Where the saints gave, they chose according to their best judgment for the presentation of their gifts, whether in one church, or for the special work of many churches. But in no case did they interfere with the ministers of the Word by the apostles.

The ministers of the Word the Lord gave, not the church.

"The brother" un-named was chosen by the churches.

*²⁰ taking **precaution** so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift;*

Paul was very conscious of his need to **guard** his project and the people involved in it from any charge of financial mismanagement.

- Doing what was correct was not enough for Paul.
- He wanted to make sure that everyone perceived that what he did was honest and above board as well.
- Paul had learned to anticipate the suspicions or accusations of those who viewed his ministry critically and to take necessary precautions.

Constable

21 for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

virtually restates.

Proverbs 3:4 (NKJV)

4 And so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man.

We are well served to pay attention to Paul's wise caution in our day when so many professed servants of the Lord have proved deceitful.

22 We have sent with them **our brother**, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you.

The **other brother** was one who, by experience, had been proved diligent in many things and who had "**great confidence**" as to the church **at Corinth**.

Two details fitting him for the work are mentioned:

1. Paul's experience of the brother's proved zeal and his diligence.
2. The exceeding warmth of his own zeal, now by his (not Paul's) great confidence in the Corinthian saints.

23 As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.

If any enquired as to these brothers, let them note that:

- Titus was a partner and fellow helper of Paul in caring for the church at Corinth, and
- the other two brothers were well known as the messengers of the other local churches, and
- they were as such to the glory of Christ.

While the need of the saints is met, the glory of the Lord is maintained, and all occasions for questions avoided.

24 Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and our reason for boasting about you.

Therefore, they can, with full confidence, express their love before these brothers and the churches, by their generous gift to God's needy people, and so justify the Apostle's boasting on their behalf.

Notice what forms the basis for Paul's handling of the offering:

- a. The pivotal point is that God must be the first and the focus before these other things can be developed.
- b. Then, deal with finding favor with God.
- c. How blessed is the man who finds wisdom?
- d. Then, deal with finding favor with men.

24 Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and our reason for boasting about you.

Why this order?

1. Because of the consistency of Scripture. **Vertical relationships are before horizontal relationships.**
2. **Favor with God followed by wisdom results in favor with man.**

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The Corinthians' warm reception of the messengers would confirm the genuineness of their acceptance of Paul and their positive response to his admonition concerning the offering.

