

1/27/13

2Cor. 8

Paul the apostle moves on to the second division of his letter to the Corinthians, the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem church had become impoverished and there may be different reasons for that situation.

1. Many of them had become Christians and there could of been a real backlash against them and the Jewish community could of boycotted them.
2. The early church as you know also attempted to live in a type of communism that pot their finances in a common pot and as the need arose people were helped. Acts 4:34-37
* Remember Ananias and Saphira were struck dead by the Lord, not because they did not give all bur due to the fact that they said they had, the epitome of hypocrisy. Acts 5:1-11
3. Famines had also struck Judea as Agabus the prophet had declared and relief was sent by the hand of Barnabas and Paul. Acts 11:27-30
4. Paul spoke about his concern for the poor as a habit as they went up to the first church council in Jerusalem. Acts 15:1-31; Gal. 2:1-10
5. Then as he wrote to the Romans he told them about this offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem

and the Gentiles tangible evidence of their love.
Rom. 15:26-28

Now Paul related to the Corinthians how the Macedonian churches had committed themselves admirably in order to reprove, as well as exhort them to follow up their long awaited gift of grace.

8:1-7 The example of the Macedonians giving.

- 8:1** The grace of God was responsible for the giving of the Macedonians.
- 1) The opening word marks a transition to the second division.
 -) The word could be translated “but” or “now”.
 - 2) The phrase “make known” is used many times to reveal something of importance. Rom. 16:26; 1Cor. 15:1; Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 5:10; Col. 1:27
 - a) We includes others besides himself as a witness!
 - b) Paul is addressing those who are born into the family of God.
 - 3) The source of what was taking place at Macedonia was due to the grace of God in their hearts.
 - 4) The churches of Macedonia were, Thessalonica, Berea and Philippi.

8:2 The work in contrast to their condition and circumstance.

- 1) They were in a great trial of affliction “thlipsis”, identifying the pressure of persecution as metal tried in the fire.
2Cor. 2:9, 1Pet. 1:6-7
 - a) Paul was referring to the suffering effects on the region by the ravaging of civil war between Caesar and Pompey, between Brutus and Cassius and the trumvirs, and finally between Augustus and Antonius.
- 2) They had abundance of joy, for what God had done in them through salvation.
- 3) They were in deep poverty “bathos ptokia”, is used to describe extreme poverty, to the point of being destitute, on the very bottom.
 - a) The word is used only three times in the New Testament, of our Lord in verse nine.
 - b) The church of Smyrna is also described as such. Rev. 2:9
- 4) They abounded in the riches of their liberality “ploutos haplotetos”, their simplicity and sincerity of giving, without ulterior motives.
 - * The existing contrasts are paradoxical, yet real in the life of the Spirit!

8:3 The manner of their giving described.

- 1) Selflessness, according to their ability.
- 2) Sacrificially, beyond their power
- 3) Self-directed, freely willing, “authairetos”, means voluntary, they initiated.
 - a) They were led by God, but not compelled against their will.
 - b) The widow gave of her living, not her abundance as Pharisees. Lk. 21:1-4
 - c) Our giving should be with simplicity. Rom. 12:8
 - d) The Philippians had done this for Paul for over ten years. Phil. 1:5; 4:10-19

8:4 The mental perspective in their giving was one of servants.

- 1) They pleaded with eagerness for Paul to receive the gift as evidence of two things.
 - a) Their oneness “koinonia” with the Jews.
 - b) Their loving act to serving “diaconia” them in their sufferings.
 - c) The word imploring “deomai”, means to supplicate and beg.
- 2) Paul asked for prayer that the gift would be received by the Jews at Jerusalem. Rom. 15:30-31
 - a) Paul was forbidden to preach in Asia and received a vision of man of Macedonia and Paul went to

Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi and Athens. Acts 16-17

- b) When one suffer, all... 1Cor. 12:26
- c) It is more blessed to give... Acts 20:35

8:5 The maturity of their giving was unexpected.

- 1) First they gave themselves to the Lord. vs. 5a-b
 - a) The word first “proton”, means chief or first in rank.
 - b) This was their priority, so the giving was a worshipful act to God, this is the only thing God honors.
 - c) Their hearts and lives were completely surrendered to God.
 - d) Their lives were a constant dying to self after the example of their Lord.
- 2) Then they gave themselves to Paul and the others by the will of God. vs. 5c
 - a) The giving of themselves to Paul for the collection was that they were prompted by God in their devotion and worship of God.
 - 1)) A joint venture in the work of God is only excepted by God if it comes forth from one’s personal relationship with God and not mere good work.
 - 2)) Their giving of themselves was in contrast to the Corinthians who

had withdrawn from Paul procrastinating in the offering!

- b) The giving of themselves was by the will of God.
 - 1)) The word will “thelema”, means his desired purpose and pleasure.
 - 2)) The will of God is found and revealed clearly in the word of God, not in our emotions or circumstances.
 - 3)) God was directing their participation in this work of love.
 - 4)) Then and only then will it be effective and acceptable by God!
 - 5)) The Thessalonians supplied Paul in Corinth, the only ones. 2Cor. 11: 9, Phil. 4:15-16

8:6 The chosen vessel to receive the offering was Titus.

- 1) He had begun the collection. 2Cor. 10, 9:2
- 2) The gift again is tied to the grace of God, they are inseparable. vs. 4, 6,7

8:7 The Corinthians were to give as God had blessed in them spiritually.

- 1) They had been blessed in every spiritual area. vs. 7a-f
 - a) In faith in Christ to work in and through them.

- b) In speech or utterance perhaps in prophecy.
 - c) In knowledge of Divine revelation and understanding.
 - d) In diligence, earnestness to deal with their present situation and correct it.
 - e) In their love for Paul and the others.
- 2) They were to develop and cultivate this spiritual area as well in order to be balanced. vs. 7g
- a) God had enriched them in everything, coming short in no gift, as they were waiting for Jesus to return. 1Cor. 1:4-7
 - b) We always emphasize our strengths, while ignoring our weaknesses to cover them up!

8:8-15 The example of Christ given to encourage equal participation.

- 8:8** The apostle Paul was not using his apostolic authority to order the Corinthians.
- 1) He was not commanding them. vs. 8a
* Command “epitage”, an order or mandate.
 - 2) He was calling their love to the test, that it be found approved. vs. 8b
 - a) The word sincere “gnesios”, means genuine or true love that made word and deed one. 1Jn. 3:18

- b) Testing “dokimazo”, speaks of the process of examining and scrutinizing to deem true and genuine.
- 3) He would see this by the diligence of others, meaning those who would come to receive it, Titus and the other brothers. vs. 8b
- a) Our love is an extension of God's love. 1Jn. 3:17-18
 - b) James tells us that faith and works go hand in hand after being born again. Ja. 2.14-17
 - c) Pure religion is visiting the widows and orphans. Ja. 1:27

8:9 The greatest example of giving to the poor was Jesus.

- 1) He called attention to the grace of Jesus they had come to know. vs. 9a
 - a) The word know “ginosko”, means by personal experience.
 - b) They had come to be forgiven of all their sins by the grace of Jesus. Jn. 1:17
- 2) He pointed out that though Jesus was rich, but for their benefit He became poor. vs. 9b-c
 - a) The reference to being rich refers to the fact that He was God, poor to the fact that He became man in the Incarnation.

- b) Jesus being God was rich in that He owns everything.
- c) Jesus became poor for our sake by emptying Himself of His glory and limiting Himself for a time and being obedient to the death of the cross.
Phil. 2:6-8
- d) The Father making Jesus sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, as the payment for sin on the cross. 2Cor. 5:21 1Jn. 3:5
- d) The Incarnation itself was the instrument to become poor, the fact of His humiliation of becoming sin, bankrupt for us. 2Cor. 5:21, 1Jn. 3:5
* An incredible paradox!
- e) His mother offered the offering of poverty at His dedication, He borrowed a coin to teach about taxes, he told Peter to go get the coin from the mouth of a fish and He was buried in a borrowed tomb!
- 3) The purpose was that they, the Corinthians sinners, through His poverty might become rich. vs. 9d
 - a) Providing the righteousness of God to be excepted before God, justified.
Rom. 1:16-17
 - b) By being born again by grace through faith. Jn. 3:3-5; Eph. 2:8

- c) Jesus did that in order that all sinners could become rich in salvation as sons and daughters of God.
- d) Now Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God's throne in His glorified body!

8:10-12 The advice of Paul as to the responsibility of the Corinthians.

- 1) Paul declared to give them his well considered judgment. vs. 10a
- 2) Paul told them it would be for their benefit if they finished the collection for the poor they began a year ago by desire and not procrastinate.(negative) vs. 10b
- 3) Paul told them that they must complete it, for the desire is not enough, there must be a follow through out of what they had been blessed with financially. (positive) vs. 11, 9:2
- 4) Paul told them that giving is never based on what one does not have, but rather on what he does have. vs. 12
 - a) Good intentions do not help!
 - b) When word and deed are one, it is truth. 1Jn. 3:18

8:13-15 The clarification of Paul's advice.

8:13-14a The apostle Paul desired equal participation.

- 1) Paul was not intending that some would be at ease and not contribute to the offering or just the Corinthians or any other church alone. vs. 13
 - * Paul was not wanting for a few to carry the burden of the entire need, while other did nothing.
- 2) Paul desired for an equality “isotes”, fairness of sharing. vs. 14a
 - a) By deciding on individually on the amount out of love. 2Cor. 9:7
 - b) The Scriptures do not teach laziness, but rather responsible work.
 - * “I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Acts 20:33-35
 - c) He gave the same principle for the man that refused to work, he should not eat. 2Thess. 3:10
 - d) We are to withdraw from those saying godliness is gain and living for riches, but rather we are to live in

contentment, for the love of money is the root of all evil. 1Tim. 6:5-10

- 8:14b-d** The quality of both the need and the gift are spiritual blessings.
- 1) Most explain verse 14 as the Corinthians meeting the Jews needs now that in the future they might meet their needs if need be in the future.
 - 2) But that would be a carnal motive and contradict the entire imagery of the gift of grace.
 - 3) The abundance of the Corinthians material wealth would supply the poor saints lack financially, that the abundance of the Jews, the gospel and Messiah may supply their lack spiritually. (Linski) Rom. 15:27; 1Cor. 9:11
- 8:15** The illustration is of Manna provided in the Old Testament. Ex. 16:18
- 1) The illustration is that no matter how much or little anyone gathered, God made sufficient for their needs, so with collection those who give a small amount or a greater amount it will be in equality and sufficient for the poor saints in Jerusalem.

- 2) The principle on the negative is against hoarding for it can lead to consumption. Hag. 1:4-6, Mal. 3:10
- 3) The promise is that God will supply all of our needs not our greed's, if the kingdom is our priority. Matt. 6:25-34
- 4) The two examples of giving are the Macedonians and Jesus. 2Cor. 8:2, 9

8:16-24 The men approved and chosen to care for the offering.

8:16 The apostle Paul pointed to God as the One responsible for the care of Titus regarding the Corinthians.

- 1) This is a word of commendation of Titus. 2Cor. 3:1
- 2) The word puts "didonti" means continually given by God, He is the source through His grace on the heart of Titus.

8:17 The combined work in the heart of Titus.

- 1) Titus had excepted the exhortation for the mission. vs. 17a
 - a) Paul had exhorted Titus.
 - b) God had prompted Titus.
- 2) Titus being more diligent "spoudaioteros", zealous and earnest,

went on his own accord or choosing. vs. 17b-c

* He had given himself to the will of God and was diligent in it, even though he was reluctant at first. 2Cor. 8:6

8:18-19 The mission of Titus was to include another brother.

- 1) This brother was respected and honored throughout all the churches. vs. 18
 - a) Some think it is Luke?
 - b) There are others named, "And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia-- also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas. Acts 20:4-5
- 2) He was also chosen by the churches of Macedonia to travel with the gift, with Titus and Paul. vs. 19a-b
 - a) The verb chosen "cheirotoneo", comes from to stretch out the hand, to appoint by vote and have a charge by those who chose him!
 - b) Paul had told the Corinthians, when he came, whoever they approve by letter, he would send them with the other to Jerusalem . 1Cor. 16:3

- 3) All of them would handle and administer the gift in such a way to bring Jesus glory, revealing their ready mind by their ready gift. vs. 19c
- 4) They would reveal the readiness of the Corinthians mind by their read gift.

8:20-21 The apostle Paul gave the purpose for these men.

- 1) That they not be accused or blamed in any regarding the bountiful gift. vs. 20
* The word lavish “hadrotes”, simply means gift was of a great amount!
- 2) That they would show wise accountability honorable “kalos”, excellent in nature and character beforehand, in order to stop any suspicions or false accusations! vs. 21
* LXX,. Prov. 3:4
 - a) Not only in the sight of God, the motive of the heart.
 - b) But also in the sight of men, abstaining from all appearance of evil. 2Cor. 4:1-2; Rom. 12:17b; Phil. 4:8

8:22 The apostle Paul sent another brother to accompany the gift.

- 1) He is not mentioned by name, some think it is Luke, others Barnabas? vs. 22a
- 2) He had been proven in the past to be diligent, earnest. vs. 22a

- 3) He was even more diligent now, hearing of Paul’s confidence now in the Corinthians. vs. 22b-c

8:23 The apostle Paul personal recommendation of Titus and others.

- 1) Titus is his partner and fellow-worker concerning the Corinthians. vs. 23a-b
* 2Cor. 12:16-18
- 2) The others are messenger “apostolos”, apostles of the churches. vs. 23c-d
- 3) The glory of Christ, indicating the churches, not the apostles in the context. vs. 23e

8:24 The apostle Paul pleads that the Corinthians show these men loving hospitality.

- 1) Paul wanted them to demonstrate to them men their love before the churches to be represented.
* The mark of the Christian is love. Jn. 13:35
- 2) Paul wanted these men to experience the, confirming of Paul’s boasting about the Corinthians.