

Paul's Fourth Letter to the Corinthians – Part 3 (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 8–9

The Generosity of the Macedonians

8:1 Now we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 that with a great ordeal of affliction, the abundance of their joy and the extreme depth of their poverty have overflowed to the wealth of their generosity.

3 I testify that *they gave* according to *their* ability, and beyond *their* ability, by their own choice, 4 requesting of us with much exhortation the favor and the fellowship of the ministry to the saints, 5 and not just as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and *then* to us, by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus that, just as he had previously begun *it*, thus he would also complete for you this *act of grace*.

Paul Urges the Corinthians to Give Liberally

7 But just as you excel in everything—in faith and in speaking and in knowledge and with all diligence and in the love from us *that is* in you—so may you excel in this grace also.

8 I am not saying *this* as a command, but proving the genuineness of your love by means of the diligence of others.

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *although he* was rich, for your sake he became poor, in order that you, by his poverty, may become rich.

10 And I am giving an opinion in this *matter*, because this is profitable for you who not only began previously, a year ago, to do *something*, but also to want *to do it*.

11 So now also complete the doing *of it*, in order that just as *you have* the eagerness to want *to do it*, thus also *you may* complete *it* from *what you* have.

12 For if the eagerness is present according to what one has, *it is* acceptable not according to what one does not have.

Paul's Desire for Equality

13 For *this is* not that for others *there may be* relief, and for you difficult circumstances, but *as a matter* of equality.

14 At the present time your abundance *will be* for their need, in order that their abundance may also be for your need, so that there may be equality,

15 just as it is written, “The *one* who *gathered* much did not have too much, and the *one* who *gathered* little did not have too little.” [Exod 16:18]

The Delegates and Their Credentials

16 But thanks *be* to God, who has put in the heart of Titus the same devotion on your behalf,

17 because he not only welcomed our request, but being very earnest, by his own choice he went out to you.

18 And we have sent at the same time with him the brother whose praise in the gospel *has become known* throughout all the churches.

19 And not only *this*, but he was also chosen by the churches *as* our traveling companion together with this gift that is being administered by us to the glory of the Lord himself and *to show* our readiness *to help*.

20 *We are* trying to avoid this, lest anyone should find fault with us in this abundant gift that is being administered by us.

21 For we are taking into consideration what is honorable not only before the Lord, but also before people. [cf. Prov 3:4]

22 And we are sending with them our brother whom we have tested many times in many *things* that he is diligent, but now much more diligent *because of his* great confidence in you.

23 If *there is a question* concerning Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker for you. If *there is a question concerning* our brothers, *they are* messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

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

The Need for Readiness

9:1 For it is unnecessary for me to write to you concerning the ministry to the saints,

2 because I know your readiness *to help*, *concerning* which I keep on boasting to the Macedonians about you, that Achaia has been ready *to help* since last year, and your zeal has stirred up the majority *of them*.

3 But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you would not prove to be empty in this case, so that you may be prepared just as I was saying,

4 lest somehow if Macedonians should come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to speak of you—would be humiliated in connection with this project.

5 Therefore I considered *it* necessary to urge the brothers that they should go on ahead to you and make arrangements in advance for your generous gift that was promised previously, so this would be prepared as a generous gift and not as grudgingly granted.

Divine Principles of Giving

6 Now *the point is* this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap

bountifully.

7 Each one *should give* as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or from compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to cause all grace to abound to you, so that in everything at all times, *because you* have enough of everything, you may overflow in every good work.

9 Just as it is written, “He scattered widely, he gave to the poor; his righteousness remains forever.” [\[Ps 112:9\]](#)

10 Now the one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your seed, and will cause the harvest of your righteousness to grow,

11 being made rich in every way for all generosity, which is producing through us thanksgiving to God,

12 because the service of this ministry is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but also is overflowing through many *expressions of* thanksgiving to God.

13 Through the proven character of this service *they will* glorify God because of the submission of your confession to the gospel of Christ and the generosity of *your* participation toward them and toward everyone,

14 and *they are* longing for you in their prayers for you, because of the surpassing grace of God to you.

15 Thanks *be* to God for his indescribable gift!

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