

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

2 Corinthians 8–9

The Generosity of the Macedonians

8:1 Now, brethren, we *wish* to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, 2 that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. 3 For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, 4 begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, 5 and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.

Paul Urges the Corinthians to Give Liberally

7 But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, *see* that you abound in this gracious work also. 8 I am not speaking *this* as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. 10 I give *my* opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do *this*, but also to desire *to do it*. 11 But now finish doing it also, so that just as *there was* the readiness to desire it, so *there may be* also the completion of it by your ability. 12 For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what *a person* has, not according to what he does not have.

Paul's Desire for Equality

13 For *this* is not for the ease of others *and* for your affliction, but by way of equality— 14 at this present time your abundance *being a supply* for their need, so that their abundance also may become *a supply* for your need, that there may be equality; 15 as it is written, "HE WHO *gathered* MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO *gathered* LITTLE HAD NO LACK." [[Exod 16:18](#)]

The Delegates and Their Credentials

16 But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus. 17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord. 18 We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of* the gospel *has spread* through all the churches; 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, 20 taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; 21 for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. [cf. [Prov 3:4](#)] 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. 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. 24 Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

The Need for Readiness

9:1 For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints; 2 for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, *namely*, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3 But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared; 4 otherwise if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to speak of you—will be put to shame by this confidence. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.

Divine Principles of Giving

6 Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

9 as it is written,

“HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR,
HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER.” [\[Ps 112:9\]](#)

10 Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness;

11 you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.

12 For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.

13 Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for *your* obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

14 while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

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