

## 2Corinthians – Week 32

### I. Review

#### A. 2Cor. 8:10-15

- i. Paul tells the Corinthians to finish the work they started.
  1. He is not telling them to give beyond their means as the Macedonians did but only to give according to their means.
  2. He does not wish for them to become burdened (cf. vs. 13).
- ii. God accepts any amount that is given in a willing spirit.
- iii. Under the Old Testament, a person was instructed to give 10% of what he has while under the New Testament, a person gives according to what he has.
  1. A person can give beyond 10% and still have his or her basic needs met.
- iv. Four points regarding Christian giving:
  1. Christian giving should come out of recognition of genuine need.
  2. Christian giving should not put the recipient on easy street.
  3. Christian giving should not put the giver into harm's way.
  4. Those who help others in their time of need will be helped in their time of need.
- v. The divine principle of equity
  1. The whole goal of giving is to make sure everyone is cared for and that each has enough to survive.
- vi. Now Paul informs the Corinthians about his plans to send a delegation of brothers responsible for collecting the funds. They include:
  1. Titus: Paul's faithful co-worker in the Lord, whom they personally know.
  2. A famous brother known by the churches for his service to the Lord.
  3. A brother tested by Paul and his companions to be a trustworthy and diligent individual.

### II. Continuation

A. 2Cor. 8:16-17 (ESV), *“But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you.<sup>17</sup> For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord.”*

- i. Titus cares for the Corinthians as much as Paul does.
  1. It is good to note that this *“earnest care”* was put there by God.
    - a. It is good for us to ask God to put into our hearts an earnest care for our fellow brothers and sisters; and for the lost!
    - b. Having an earnest care for others prompts us to act.
  2. Earlier:
    - a. Paul mentioned the earnestness of the Corinthians (2Cor. 8:7)
    - b. He also mentioned the earnestness of others (cf. 2Cor. 8:8), like the Macedonians, who gave above and beyond.
    - c. Now, he mentions Titus' earnestness as an example to them:
      - i. Titus, on his own accord, accepted Paul's appeal to return to the Corinthians.
      - ii. In the like manner, the Corinthians, on their own accord, should accept Paul's appeal to give.

- B. 2Cor. 8:18 (ESV), *“With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel.”*
- i. Literally, this verse says that among the churches, this brother is praised *“in the gospel”*
    1. KJV leaves it literal, *“in the gospel”*
    2. NIV interprets the phrase as *“service in the gospel.”*
      - a. This phrase can be understood this way since Paul refers to Euodia and Syntyche as two Christian women laboring side-by-side with him *“in the gospel”* (Phil. 4:3).
    3. ESV interprets the phrase as *“preaching of the gospel”*
      - a. This phrase can also be understood as preaching the gospel since it is used in association to the preaching of the gospel (cf. 1Cor. 9:18)
    4. Most likely, Paul is using *“in the gospel”* to mean that this brother is praised or highly esteemed and well-known for his preaching.
      - a. Note
        - i. We should not understand this to mean that churches were elevating this brother over other gospel workers, for that would violate Paul’s warning not to elevate teachers (1Cor. 1-2).
        - ii. Paul is merely stating the fact that this brother was famous for the cause of Christ.
        - iii. A current example would be our brother, Larry West, who is well-known by many for his love for the gospel and seeing souls saved.
- C. 2Cor. 8:19-20 (ESV), *“And not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will. <sup>20</sup> We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, ”*
- i. Money is a sensitive issue and frequently sparks controversy.
    1. He reminds the Corinthians that this fund is an *“act of grace”* that is to be *“ministered”* or as the KJV puts it, *“administered”* by Paul and his co-workers for the glory of the Lord and to help those in dire need.
    2. By having this famous brother – a brother who is appointed by the churches to travel with him to administer the funds in Jerusalem – go with Titus to Corinth, Paul makes it clear that he does not intend to line his pockets with this *“generous gift,”* that is, large sum of money!
    3. He wants to be above reproach in the sight of God and man. That’s why he says in the next verse...
- D. 2Cor. 8:21 (ESV), *“for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.”*
- i. Paul’s alludes to a concept in Proverb...
    1. *“Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. <sup>4</sup> So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.”* Proverbs 3:3-4 (ESV)
  - ii. He shares the same sentiment in Romans...
  1. *“...give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all”* Romans 12:17b (ESV)
  - iii. Paul seeks for his motives and actions to be an open book to God, who scrutinizes him.
  - iv. He also wants to be transparent to people, so that no one would accuse him of fraud.
  - v. Remember what Paul said earlier in the epistle:
    1. He commended himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God (cf. 2Cor. 4:2) and...
    2. He placed no obstacle in any one’s way so that no fault may be found with his ministry (cf. 2Cor. 6:3)