

2 Corinthians 18 - 8:16 - 9:5

Bruce Pike

June 8, 2025

Today: Administration of the offering 8:16 - 9:5

The delegation 8:16-24

Being prepared 9:1-5

Administration of the offering 8:16 - 9:5

The delegation 8:16-24

Titus 8:16-17

2 Corinthians 8:16–17 (LSB)

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 plea, but being himself very earnest, he has gone out to you of his own accord.

- v16 His earnestness
 - But thanks be to God
 - All due to God. 8:1 the grace of God. 8:5 the will of God.
 - who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.
 - the same earnestness
 - Another manifestation of the grace of God for the collection. (2 Cor 8:1)
 - As in the Macedonians (2 Cor 8:8) and in the Corinthians (7:12; 8:7).
 - As in Paul. Had no rest for my spirit (2 Cor 2:13)
 - on your behalf
 - Godly and worldly earnestness
 - Godly. For the glory of God and/or the good of others.
 - Paul: For we do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5)
 - Worldly. For the glory of self.
 - Opponents: For we are not like many, peddling the word of God... (2 Cor 2:17)
 - Titus' earnestness is godly. He is earnest not for himself but for the Corinthians.
 - In the heart of Titus
 - God is sovereign over our inner thoughts and feelings without interfering with our liberty or responsibility.
 - Pr 21:1 The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of Yahweh; He turns it wherever He pleases.
 - God uses circumstances to accomplish His purpose.
 - When the Corinthians repented, Titus was refreshed by them and his affection abounded towards them (2 Cor 7:13, 15). Now he wants to help them.
 - We are dependent on God (the Holy Spirit in us) for our spiritual life and maturity.

- v17 His action
 - For he not only accepted our plea
 - Paul encouraged Titus (2 Cor 8:6) as his partner and fellow worker with the Corinthians (2 Cor 8:23). He was earnest himself but saw that Titus was the Lord's choice for the work.
 - but being himself very earnest, he has gone out to you of his own accord
 - Commending Titus to the Corinthians.
 - Has gone out. From the perspective of the reader. Titus is with Paul as he writes and likely delivered the epistle when he went to Corinth with the brothers.
 - Because of his earnestness Titus is eager to take on the difficult work of helping the Corinthians complete their offering. Much travel, working with difficult people, under the scrutiny of the churches.

The appointed brother 8:18-19

2 Corinthians 8:18–19 (LSB)

18And we have sent along with him the brother whose praise in the things of the gospel is throughout all the churches.

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

- We have sent along with him. Titus is the designated head of the delegation.
- The brother. Not named. Much discussion among the commentators but no agreement. Name not important for us to know.
- Two characteristics of the brother
 - Praise in the things of the gospel is throughout all the churches
 - Appointed by the churches to participate in the collection
- In this gracious work
 - Lit "this grace". Paul always has in view the grace of God being manifested in various ways in the collection.
- Two characteristics of the work
 - for the glory of the Lord Himself. Showing that in Christ He had indeed reconciled Jew and Gentile (Eph 2:13-16).
 - to show our readiness.
 - Plural: Paul and the Gentile churches.
 - After fourteen years of ministry Paul went to Jerusalem and was recognized by Peter and James and John as having the true gospel (Gal 2:9). At the Jerusalem Council he won freedom from the law for Gentile believers (Acts 15). The letter from the Council to the churches directed them to avoid blood and things strangled to avoid offending Jewish believers who still kept the customs of the law (Acts 15:29). By showing readiness to help the Jerusalem church, Paul is attempting to prevent a split between Jewish and Gentile believers.

Precautions 8:20-21

2 Corinthians 8:20–21 (LSB)

20taking precaution lest anyone discredits us in our ministering of this generous gift,

21for we respect what is good, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

- v20 Precautions
 - taking precaution.
 - Taking care that something does not happen.
 - Paul refuses to accept money from the Corinthians (1) to not hinder the gospel (1 Cor 9:12) (2) to cut off false apostles who did take money (2 Cor 11:12.
 - discredits us. Find fault with. Paul's opponents were alert to find accusations against him (2:17; 11:7-11)
- v12 Respecting good
 - Loosely quoting Pr 3:4 So you will find favor and good insight In the eyes of God and man.
 - Respect. Take thought for.
- Taking precautions to avoid the appearance of evil in matters of money
 - 2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ, and manifests through us the aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.
 - 2 Cor 2:17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, in the sight of God, we speak in Christ.
 - In procession to manifest Christ
 - Not for money but in sincerity.

The tested brother 8:22-23

2 Corinthians 8:22–23 (LSB)

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

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

- v22 Tested brother
 - Also not named
 - Characteristics
 - Tested often and found earnest in many things
 - More earnest because of his great confidence in you.
 - Paul's description of the Corinthians
 - What the ministry was to accomplish
- v23 Summary
 - As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you
 - Partner. Lit "having in common". Titus the only one called partner.
 - Working alongside Paul in the ministry to the Corinthians.
 - Designated as the leader in the work.
 - as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.
 - Messengers of the churches.
 - One appointed.
 - One works with Paul; will likely visit multiple churches
 - Will tell the churches about the collection and its outcome
 - a glory to Christ
 - Bringing honor to Christ with their character and behavior.

Show the proof 8:24

2 Corinthians 8:24 (LSB)

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

- Therefore. Because the opportunity is before them.
- openly before the churches. Witnessed by the brothers who will report to the churches
- show them the proof. Cause to be made known the truth of
- your love and of our reason for boasting about you.
 - These will be shown by
 - Reception of the brothers
 - Response to the collection
 - Concrete actions demonstrating God's grace in them

Being prepared 9:1-5

2 Corinthians 9:1–5 (LSB)

1For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints;

2for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal stirred up most of them.

3But I have sent the brothers, 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;

4lest if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to speak of you—be put to shame in this certainty of ours.

5So I regarded it necessary to encourage the brothers that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised blessing, so that the same would be ready as a blessing and not as a begrudging obligation.

- v1 Resuming
 - It is superfluous. Emphasizing a subject by minimizing it.
- v2 Paul's boasting
 - I know your readiness.
 - Prepared and zealous since last year (during the last calendar year)
 - Also now zealous in their repentance
 - Of which I boast
 - Paul started boasting about the Corinthians last year. His boasting stirred up the Macedonians, who have now completed their collection.
 - He has continued boasting about the Corinthians through the sorrowful visit & severe letter, and now in their repentance.
 - Now is the time for them to validate his boasting about them

- Three reasons for sending the delegation
- v3 that you may be prepared
 - But I have sent the brothers.
 - Titus and the brothers went first to help arrange the collection.
 - Paul would follow later to receive the funds for transport to Jerusalem.
 - so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared
 - Paul has been boasting since last year that Achaia is prepared (v2)
 - Now he sees that they need help to show their preparedness.
 - They do not have the stability of mature believers.
 - Eph 4:13 ... the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ
 - Ps 1:3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.
 - Rather they are like children
 - Eph 4:14 ... tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming,
 - Tossed by waves. Like the episode of the sorrowful visit.
 - Carried about by every wind of doctrine. By false teachers.
 - (Carried about) by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming. By Paul's opponents
 - Paul hopes the delegation can help them stay on track and complete their collection.
- v4 That we may avoid shame
 - if any Macedonians come with me.
 - Likely since Paul was coming from Macedonia.
 - Seven men accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. Three were from Macedonia. (Acts 20:4)
 - we—not to speak of you—be put to shame in this certainty of ours.
 - Paul puts himself first as the primary recipient of shame. From the beginning he had intentionally spoken of the Corinthians as new creations in Christ in whom God was manifesting His grace.
 - The Corinthians would also be shamed if they did not complete their collection because they would be showing their early zeal to be hypocrisy and their recent professed repentance to be just worldly regret leading to death.

- v5 That your offering may be a blessing
 - so that the same would be ready.
 - Not rushed at the last minute. Haste will encourage sin.
 - Pr 19:2 ...he who hurries his footsteps sins
 - as a blessing and not as a begrudging obligation.
 - Paul is concerned with the spirit behind the giving.
 - The right spirit: Blessing.
 - As the grace of God in the Macedonians: abundant joy, rich generosity, of their own accord, begging for the privilege of taking part, giving themselves to the Lord and to His apostle. (2 Cor 8:1-5)
 - Following the example of Jesus Christ
 - 2 Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though being rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.
 - With this spirit, the collection would be a blessing
 - to the Corinthian church (joy, fellowship with the churches, growth in the Lord, eternal rewards)
 - to the Jerusalem church (joy, fellowship with the churches, material needs met)
 - The wrong spirit: Begrudging obligation
 - Extortion through compulsion
 - Not manifesting the grace of God as demonstrated in the Macedonians
 - Not following the example of Jesus Christ
 - Manifesting a spirit of covetousness, which is idolatry. (Col 3:5)
 - Little blessing here. Material needs might be met but no joy, no fellowship among the churches, no growth in the Lord, no eternal rewards.
 - Their recent repentance would be shown to be worldly regret.

Application: The grace of God manifested

2 Cor 8:16 But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

- God prepared Titus for this service of helping the Corinthians complete their collection
 - By his shared experience with the Corinthians: their sincere repentance and fear and trembling; his refreshment and affection for them.
 - By putting in his heart earnestness for them to complete the collection.
- His service will involve time, travel, dealing with immature believers.
- Titus goes willingly because of his heart for them.
- Here is God's grace manifested as in the Macedonians.

Application: Maintaining fellowship

2 Cor 8:19 ...and to show our readiness

- With the collection, Paul sought to prevent a rift between Jewish and Gentile believers.
- How do we work to remain in fellowship with believers who are culturally different?

Application: Love never fails

2 Cor 9:2 ...for I know your readiness, of which I boast...

1 Cor 13: 7-8 (Love) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...

- Paul continued to show love to the Corinthians even after the sorrowful visit.
- How can we continue to show love when our fellow believer stumbles?

Application: Helping each other

2 Cor 9:5 So I regarded it necessary to encourage the brothers that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised blessing, so that the same would be ready as a blessing and not as a begrudging obligation.

- Here are mature believers helping immature believers to live up to their profession.
- Ph 4:2-3 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to think the same way in the Lord. Indeed, I ask you also, genuine companion, help these women who have contended together alongside of me in the gospel, with also Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life

References

Scripture quotations are from The Legacy Standard Bible, Copyright © 2021 by the Lockman Foundation A Corporation Not For Profit, La Habra, California, all rights reserved.

_____, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* edited by Gerhard Kittel, Eerdmans, 1964

Calvin, John, *The Commentaries of John Calvin on the Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* translated by the Rev. John Pringle, Baker Books, 2009

Garland, David E., *2 Corinthians* in *Christian Standard Commentaries*, Holman, 2021

Harris, Murray J., *2 Corinthians* in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Zondervan, 1976

Harris, W. Hall, III. *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear New Testament: SBL Edition*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010.

Henry, Matthew, *2 Corinthians* in *Matthew Henry Complete Commentary*, Blue Letter Bible, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/mhc/>

Hodge, Charles, *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Eerdmans, 1994

Kistemaker, Simon J., *2 Corinthians* in *New Testament Commentaries*, Baker Academic, 1997

Kruse, Colin, *2 Corinthians* in *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, Revised Edition, 1998

MacArthur, John, *2 Corinthians* in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, Moody Publishers, 2003

Rogers Jr., Cleon L & Rogers III, Cleon L., *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*, Zondervan, 1998

Vine, W. E., Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson, 1996.

Wuest, Kenneth S., *Wuest's Word Studies in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*, Eerdmans, 1973

Zodhiates, Spiros, Editor, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament*, AMG International, 1993