

11/11/12

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND
HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD, WEEK 37

TITLE: INTEGRITY AND GIVING

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 8:16-24

INTRODUCTION: (1) THE WORD INTEGRITY IS A GREAT WORD IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, BUT ONE IN ITS MEANING IS LACKING IN PRACTICE IN AMERICAN CULTURE.

* IT IS TO SAY THAT IN 2012 AMERICA, A PERSON OF INTEGRITY APPEARS TO BE THE EXCEPTION AND NOT THE NORM.

** AND THE WAY I CAN ILLUSTRATE THAT IS TO DEFINE WHAT INTEGRITY MEANS.

*** **INTEGRITY IN WEBSTER'S** DICTIONARY IS **"UNCOMPROMISING** ADHERENCE TO MORAL AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES; SOUNDNESS OF MORAL CHARACTER; HONESTY; INCORRUPTIBILITY."

**** SOME SYNONYMS OF INTEGRITY WILL FURTHER HELP US IN UNDERSTANDING ITS MEANING.

(2) SOME SYNONYMS ARE: CHARACTER, DECENCY, GOODNESS, HONESTY, MORALITY, RECTITUDE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, RIGHTNESS, UPRIGHTNESS AND VIRTUE.

* NOW WITH THOSE DEFINITIONS AND SYNONYMS BEFORE US.

** LET ME ASK YOU ABOUT SOME PROFESSIONS AND GROUPS IN GENERAL AND HOW YOU WOULD GRADE THEM ON THE WHOLE BY THEIR WORD AND INTEGRITY.

*** POLITICIANS? IN GENERAL - WHAT IS THE NORM?

**** USED CAR SALESPEOPLE?

(3) LAWYERS?

* AUTO MECHANICS?

** PASTORS, MISSIONARIES, AND MINISTRY
PEOPLE IN PARACHURCH ORGANIZATIONS?

*** HOLLYWOOD MOVIE ACTORS?

**** CHRISTIANS?

***** NOW I REALIZE, THERE ARE PEOPLE THAT
HAVE INTEGRITY IN ABOUT EVERY AREA OF LIFE
BUT MY QUESTION IS WHAT IS THE NORM?

(4) WELL, THERE ARE TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE
THAT I HAVE MENTIONED THAT MUST HAVE
INTEGRITY. PASTORS, MISSIONARIES, MINISTRY
PEOPLE AND CHRISTIANS IN GENERAL.

* WE NEED TO BE MORAL, HONEST, UPRIGHT
AND ABOVE REPROACH, PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY
AS THE NORM, THE PATTERN OF OUR LIVES.

** THERE NEEDS TO BE A CONSISTENCY OF ACTIONS THAT ARE IN LINE WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND TEACHINGS OF THE WORD OF GOD, FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND BECAUSE OTHERS ARE WATCHING US ALL THE TIME AND ARE READY TO POUNCE ON INCONSISTENCIES IN OUR LIVES AND TO CALL US HYPOCRITES.

*** FOR INTEGRITY CAN BE REGARDED AS THE OPPOSITE OF HYPOCRISY. INTEGRITY IS A CONSISTENCY OF LIFE, IT IS NOT PERFECTION BUT A DIRECTION OF LIFE, AND REPENTING WHEN WE SIN AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS WHEN WE HAVE AFFECTED THEM BY INCONSISTENCY AND SINFUL BEHAVIOR.

(5) NOW ONE AREA THAT WE ARE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE IN WHEN IT COMES TO INTEGRITY, IS HOW WE HANDLE THE MONEY GOD GIVES US IN STEWARDSHIP TO HIM.

* DO WE HAVE INTEGRITY IN THE AREA OF **MONEY, IN FINANCE, HANDLING GOD'S MONEY, GIVING GOD'S MONEY, SPENDING GOD'S MONEY, HANDLING OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY, LIKE OUR PARENTS IN THEIR CARE, OR SPENDING THE LORD'S MONEY THROUGH THE CHURCH?**

** WELL, BEING ABOVE REPROACH IN HANDLING **GOD'S MONEY THROUGH THE CHURCHES,** THROUGH THE COLLECTION OF MONEY FOR THE POOR SAINTS OF JERUSALEM IS THE THEME OF **OUR STUDY IN GOD'S WORD TODAY.**

*** FOR PAUL WILL TAKE PROPER PRECAUTIONS AND HAVE ACCOUNTABILITY SO THAT HE WILL NOT BRING SCANDAL TO HIS MINISTRY, HIS MINISTRY FOR CHRIST.

**** FOR THE KEY VERSE IN OUR STUDY TODAY **IS VERSE 20 WHERE PAUL SAID: "TAKING PRECAUTION SO THAT NO ONE WILL DISCREDIT US IN OUR ADMINISTRATION OF THIS GENEROUS GIFT."**

(6) AND PAUL DID NOT WANT ANY APPEARANCE OR ACTION OF IMPROPRIETY WHEN IT CAME TO HANDLING AND DISTRIBUTING THIS LARGE OFFERING FOR THE POOR SAINTS IN JERUSALEM.

*** PAUL WANTED GOD'S MONEY TO BE HANDLED WITH PERFECT INTEGRITY, TO HANDLE GOD'S MONEY HONESTLY IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD AND IN THE SIGHT OF MEN.**

**** THUS THE TITLE OF OUR MESSAGE TODAY IS "INTEGRITY AND GIVING."**

***** AND PAUL WILL MENTION 4 PEOPLE, 4 MEN, 4 BROTHERS, INCLUDING HIMSELF, THAT WILL BE INVOLVED IN HANDLING GOD'S MONEY AND SEEING TO IT THAT ALL OF IT GETS TO THE POOR SAINTS IN JERUSALEM.**

**** NO. 1 THE EARNEST BROTHER, SPEAKING OF TITUS, IN VV. 16&17; NO. 2 THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER WHO IS NAMED IN VV. 18&19; THE EXEMPLARY BROTHER WHOM IS SO CONCERNED OF HANDLING WITH INTEGRITY THE GIVING AND DELIVERING OF THIS OFFERING, PAUL HIMSELF, VV 20&21; AND NO. 4 THE EXAMINED BROTHER WHO HAS BEEN TESTED, BUT IS UNIDENTIFIED, VV. 22-24.

(6) AND WITH THAT OUTLINE AS OUR GUIDE, LOOK AT V. 16 PLEASE **SE WHERE WE'LL START TO** LOOK AT OUR FIRST BROTHER TODAY TO GUARANTEE INTEGRITY IN GIVING, TITUS, THE EARNEST BROTHER.

I. THE EARNEST BROTHER, (READ V. 16)

A. NOW TITUS IS THE EARNEST BROTHER HERE AND WE TALKED ABOUT HIM IN II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 7. AND ALSO HERE IN CHAPTER 8 VERSE 6.

*** AND HE WAS ACCORDING TO TITUS 1:4, PAUL'S**
SON IN THEIR COMMON FAITH, HIS SPIRITUAL
SON, AN APPRENTICE OF PAUL LIKE TIMOTHY
AND A TRUSTED BROTHER AND FELLOW
WORKER IN THE GOSPEL, WHOM AT A LATER
TIME WOULD BE DISPATCHED TO THE ISLAND OF
CRETE FOR A DIFFICULT WORK, WHICH THE
BOOK OF TITUS TALKS ABOUT.

* NOW PAUL BEGINS IN V. 16 THANKING THE
LORD FOR TITUS AND SPECIFICALLY THAT GOD
PUT AN EARNESTNESS IN THE HEART OF TITUS
FOR THE CORINTHIANS.

**** AND THE WORD "EARNESTNESS" TRANSLATED
"EARNEST CARE" IN SOME TRANSLATIONS LIT.**
MEANS A DILIGENT CARE, A DILIGENT CONCERN.

*** AND THAT PASSIONATE CONCERN OR CARE
THAT CAME FROM THE LORD WAS THE SAME
CONCERN AND LOVE THAT PAUL HAD FOR THE
CORINTHIANS.

**** TITUS WAS A KINDRED SPIRIT OF PAUL, A SOUL BROTHER IN THAT HE HAD A HEART FOR THE SAME EARNEST CARE FOR THE CORINTHIANS THAT PAUL HAD.

- AND THIS IS FURTHER ILLUSTRATED IN V. 17. LOOK AT V. 17 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 17. NOW TITUS WAS EAGER, HE WAS EARNEST, HE REALLY WANTED TO GO BACK TO CORINTH TO ENCOURAGE THE CORINTHIANS TO COMPLETE, TO FINISH THEIR OFFERING THAT THEY STARTED A YEAR AGO FOR THE POOR BELIEVERS AT JERUSALEM.

* AND IF YOU RECALL, TITUS HAD JUST RECENTLY RETURNED FROM CORINTH TO MACEDONIA, HAVING DELIVERED THE SEVERE TEARFUL LETTER OF PAUL, WHICH BROUGHT REPENTANCE TO THE CORINTHIANS AND LED TO A RESTORATION OF RELATIONSHIP WITH PAUL.

** NOW THEY WERE READY TO FINISH WHAT THEY STARTED, CONCERNING THE OFFERING.

*** BUT PAUL WOULD NOT GO TO CORINTH AND PICK UP THE OFFERING, HE DID NOT WANT TO BE ACCUSED OF MISMANAGING FUNDS OR PUTTING HIS HAND IN THE TILL FOR HIS OWN BENEFIT, WHICH I AM SURE HIS ENEMIES, THE FALSE TEACHERS AT CORINTH, WOULD BE READY TO ACCUSE HIM OF.

**** SO PAUL SENDS TITUS BACK TO CORINTH TO DELIVER II CORINTHIANS TO THEM AND ALSO AS II CORINTHIANS 8:6 SAYS: **"SO WE URGED TITUS THAT AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE A BEGINNING, SO HE WOULD ALSO COMPLETE IN YOU THIS GRACIOUS WORK AS WELL."**

1. NOW TITUS WOULD LEAD A GROUP OF 3 MEN TOTAL TO CORINTH FOR **INTEGRITY'S SAKE TO** PICK UP THIS OFFERING FOR THE JERUSALEM SAINTS.

* AND GOING BACK TO CORINTH WAS NOT A THING THAT TITUS HAD TO BE PRESSURED INTO DOING, HE WANTED TO GO, FOR IN HIS EARNEST **HEART HE WANTED TO GO BACK, "HE HAS GONE TO YOU OF HIS OWN ACCORD, FREELY, OF HIS OWN CHOICE."**

**** AND THE VERB, "GONE" IN THE NAU IS IN THE PAST TENSE IN ENGLISH, THE EPISTOLARY AORIST TENSE IN THE GREEK, WHICH VIEWS THE ACTION NOT AT THAT TIME WHEN PAUL WROTE THE LETTER OF II CORINTHIANS, BUT WHEN THE CORINTHIANS READ IT.**

***** AND TITUS DIDN'T LEAVE FOR CORINTH UNTIL PAUL FINISHED THE LETTER.**

**** TO SAY IT ANOTHER WAY FOR CLARIFICATION, THINGS WILL HAVE BEEN PAST BY THE TIME THAT THE CORINTHIANS RECEIVE THIS LETTER. SO PAUL USES THAT TENSE TO TALK ABOUT WHEN THEY RECEIVE IT.

2. WITH THAT SAID, TITUS WAS BURDENED AND WANTED TO DELIVER II CORINTHIANS AND FINISH THE OFFERING. HE WAS AN EARNEST BROTHER.

* BUT TITUS WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE GOING TO COLLECT THIS OFFERING, PAUL WOULD SEND TWO MORE BROTHERS FOR INTEGRITY.

** AND THE SECOND BROTHER HE SENDS, I AM CALLING THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER. LOOK AT V. 18 PLEASE.

II. THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER, (READ V. 18)

A. NOW NOT ONLY WAS TITUS, WHOM THE CORINTHIANS KNEW WELL AND HIGHLY RESPECTED, INVOLVED IN THE COLLECTION OF THE OFFERING FROM THE CORINTHIANS, BUT SO ALSO WAS THE UNNAMED BROTHER, WHICH THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT GIVE HIS NAME, SO I WILL NOT SPECULATE, FOR IF THE LORD WANTED US TO KNOW, WE WOULD KNOW.

* BUT ONE THING WE KNOW ABOUT HIM IN V. **18, THIS BROTHER'S FAME**, HIS PRAISE, HIS COMMENDATION IN "THE THINGS OF THE GOSPEL WAS WELL KNOWN THROUGH THE CHURCHES."

** AND BELOVED, HE WAS WELL KNOWN IN THE THINGS OF THE GOSPEL, MOST LIKELY IN PREACHING THE GOSPEL, IN PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL, IN HIS WORK IN THE GOSPEL, POSSIBLY AS AN EVANGELIST, THUS I HAVE CALLED HIM THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER.

*** SO HE WAS WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE CHURCHES FOR HIS MINISTRY IN THE GOSPEL.

**** AND THE INCLUSION OF THIS HIGHLY **REGARDED BROTHER SIGNALLED PAUL'S** INTENTION TO HANDLE MATTERS WITH ABSOLUTE INTEGRITY AND HONESTY. IT WOULD FURTHER DEFLECT POSSIBLE CRITICISM FROM PAUL ABOUT MISUSING CHURCH FUNDS.

1. THIS WAS A WELL KNOWN RESPECTED BROTHER AND V. 19 ADDS TO HIS RESUME. LOOK AT V. 19 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 19. NOW NOT ONLY HAD PAUL CHOSEN THE UNKNOWN EVANGELISTIC BROTHER TO HELP OVERSEE THE COLLECTION, BUT HE HAD ALSO BEEN APPOINTED BY THE CHURCHES TO TRAVEL WITH THEM IN THIS GRACIOUS WORK.

* THEREFORE SINCE HE WAS APPOINTED BY THE CHURCHES, POSSIBLY THE MACEDONIAN CHURCHES OF PHILIPPI, THESSALONICA AND **BEREA, HE WAS NOT JUST ANOTHER OF PAUL'S** PROTÉGÉS WHOM WOULD BE UNDER HIS THUMB, A YES MAN OF PAUL.

** FOR HIS APPOINTMENT BY THE CHURCHES PROTECTED PAUL AND TITUS FROM ANY FALSE ACCUSATION THAT THEY WERE IN COLLUSION, IN PARTNERSHIP TO MISHANDLE THE MONEY.

***** AND THE REASON FOR PAUL'S CONCERN WAS NOT THAT TITUS AND HE COULD NOT BE TRUSTED, BUT RATHER THAT PAUL'S ENEMIES AT CORINTH COULD NOT BE TRUSTED.**

**** PAUL DID NOT WANT TO OPEN A DOOR FOR ACCUSATION THAT WOULD FURTHER CONFUSE THE ALREADY UNSETTLED AND EASILY SWAYED CORINTHIANS, PAUL DID NOT WANT TO BE A STUMBLING BLOCK.

1. FOR PAUL'S MOTIVE AT THE END OF V. 19 IN ADMINISTERING THIS COLLECTION WAS FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD HIMSELF. PAUL WANTED TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT NO REPROACH FALL ON THE NAME OF CHRIST.

* AND THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER WOULD ACT AS AN OBJECTIVE OUTSIDE AUDITOR IN A SENSE, ENSURING THAT NO VALID CRITICISM ABOUT HANDLING THE MONEY COULD BE MADE.

** THEN LASTLY IN V. 19 AT THE END, PAUL WANTED TO SHOW **THEIR (PAUL'S AND TITUS')** READINESS TO HELP THE POOR, SOMETHING THEY HAD ALWAYS BEEN EAGER TO DO.

*** NOW IN SUMMARY WE HAVE LOOKED AT THE EARNEST BROTHER, THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER AND THIRDLY, THE EXEMPLARY BROTHER. LOOK AT V. 20 PLEASE.

III. THE EXEMPLARY BROTHER, (READ V. 20)

A. NOW PAUL WAS THE EXEMPLARY, EXAMPLE, MODEL BROTHER OF INTEGRITY, BEING ABOVE REPROACH WHEN IT CAME TO CHURCH FINANCES, THAT I AM TALKING ABOUT HERE.

* AND BECAUSE OF THAT, ANTICIPATING HIS **ENEMIES' ATTACK OF HIS CREDIBILITY**, PAUL TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF INVOLVING THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER, APPOINTED BY THE CHURCHES WHOM WOULD ACCOMPANY TITUS.

** FOR THE PURPOSE THAT NO ONE WOULD DISCREDIT TITUS AND HIMSELF IN OUR ADMINISTRATION OF THIS GENEROUS GIFT.

*** AND THE WORD GENEROUS HERE IN DESCRIBING THE GIFT OR OFFERING THEY WERE ADMINISTERING REFERS TO A GIFT OF ABUNDANCE, A GREAT GIFT IN AMOUNT, A LARGE GIFT.

**** THE CHURCHES OF MACEDONIA AND OTHERS HAD REALLY RESPONDED GENEROUSLY TO THEIR JEWISH BROTHERS AND SISTERS NEEDS.

1. AND WITH A LARGE GIFT, BIG TIME ACCUSATIONS CAN FOLLOW OF EMBEZZLEMENT. SO PAUL WAS HANDLING THE LARGE GIFT IN AN EXEMPLARY WAY.

* AND THIS IS FURTHER ILLUSTRATED IN V. 21. LOOK AT V. 21 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 21. NOW PAUL HAD REGARD FOR WHAT IS HONORABLE WHEN IT CAME TO THIS GENEROUS GIFT.

* AND THE WORD HONORABLE LIT. MEANS HONEST, WHAT IS GOOD, WHAT IS RIGHT, WHAT IS COMMENDABLE, NOT ONLY IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.

** BUT GET THIS, BUT ALSO IN THE SIGHT OF MAN!

*** NOW PAUL WAS NO MAN PLEASER, GALATIANS 1:10, SO WHY WOULD HE BE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS?

**** WELL, ALTHOUGH ULTIMATELY IT MATTERED WHAT GOD THOUGHT WHEN IT CAME TO PAUL, BUT NEITHER WAS HE UNCONCERNED ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THOUGHT; FOR AFTER ALL, THEY WERE THE ONES HE WAS TRYING TO REACH OUT TO WITH THE GOSPEL. QUOTE COLOSSIANS 4:5, PHILIPPIANS 2:15.

1. AND PAUL DID NOT WANT TO ALLOW HIS ENEMIES TO MAKE ANY FALSE ACCUSATIONS THAT MIGHT DISCREDIT AND BRING SUSPICION ON HIM BEFORE THE WATCHING WORLD AND HINDER THE PREACHING OF CHRIST.

* AND OCCASIONALLY **WE HEAR PEOPLE SAY, "I AM A SERVANT OF THE LORD AND I DO NOT NEED TO BE CONCERNED WITH WHAT PEOPLE **THINK ABOUT ME.**"**

** WELL, THAT WAS NOT THE THINKING OF PAUL HERE.

*** TO PAUL, IT MATTERED MUCH OF WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT. FOR IF HIS MINISTRY IN THIS COLLECTION WERE MISUNDERSTOOD, THE WHOLE PROJECT COULD BE WRECKED.

**** **SO GOD'S SERVANT MUST GIVE ATTENTION BOTH TO THE DOING OF GOD'S WILL AND TO MAKING SURE THAT REASONABLE PEOPLE DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND.**

2. AND WE KNOW SOME PEOPLE WILL MISUNDERSTAND REGARDLESS AND A RIGHTEOUS LIFE IS OFFENSIVE TO A LOT OF UNSAVED PEOPLE, WE KNOW THAT.

* HOWEVER, AS ROMANS 12:17 SAYS WE MUST DO EVERYTHING ON OUR PART TO LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN. AND WE WANT **GOD'S APPROVAL FIRST, BUT ALSO AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE** IN THE SIGHT OF MEN. QUOTE ROMANS 12:17 AND PROVERBS 3:4.

** AND PAUL WAS COMMITTED TO LIVING THAT KIND OF LIFE FOR HIS LORD. IT DOES MATTER TO SOME DEGREE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK FOR THEY ARE ALWAYS WATCHING US.

*** SO PAUL WAS AN EXEMPLARY BROTHER. WHICH LEADS US TO OUR LAST BROTHER TO TALK ABOUT TODAY, AN EXAMINED BROTHER. LOOK AT V. 22 PLEASE.

IV. THE EXAMINED BROTHER, (READ V. 22)

A. NOW TO FURTHER PAUL'S DESIRE TO BE ABOVE REPROACH, PAUL SENT WITH TITUS AND THE EVANGELISTIC BROTHER, ANOTHER BROTHER WHICH I AM CALLING, THE EXAMINED BROTHER.

* AND ALTHOUGH HE IS ALSO UNNAMED PAUL SAYS THIS BROTHER HAS BEEN OFTEN TESTED AND FOUND DILIGENT IN MANY THINGS.

** AND THE WORD TESTED IN THE GREEK IS THE WORD DOKIMAZO WHICH MEANS, TO TEST, TO EXAMINE TO PROVE, TO SCRUTINIZE, TO RECOGNIZE AS GENUINE AFTER TESTING, LIKE SOMEONE WHOM WOULD TEST METALS TO THAT DAY TO SEE IF THEY WERE GENUINE, LEGIT, PURE.

*** SO THIS BROTHER WAS THE REAL DEAL, HE HAD BEEN EXAMINED AND FOUND PURE AND WAS DILIGENT IN MANY THINGS FOR THE LORD.

**** AND ON TOP OF THAT HIS DILIGENCE OR ZEAL WAS MANIFESTED BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THE CORINTHIANS.

1. AND MOST LIKELY HE HAD HEARD OF THEIR REPENTANCE AND RENEWED LOVE AND LOYALTY FOR PAUL, WHICH MADE HIM ALL THE MORE EAGER TO BE INVOLVED.

* AND THIS EXAMINED DILIGENT BROTHER WHO LOVED THE CORINTHIANS WOULD BE THE THIRD BROTHER INVOLVED IN COMING TO CORINTH TO RECEIVE THE COLLECTION FOR POOR BROTHERS AND SISTERS AT JERUSALEM.

** AND YOU WOULD THINK PAUL HAD SAID ENOUGH ABOUT THESE 3 BROTHERS TO GUARANTEE HIS INTEGRITY TO THE CORINTHIANS, BUT HE SUMMARIZES BY SAYING SOMETHING ELSE ABOUT THESE 3 MEN IN V. 23. LOOK AT V. 23 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 23. NOW THESE 3 MEN WERE WHAT **WE MIGHT CALL PAUL'S ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM**, HIS INTEGRITY TEAM OR FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

* AND HE REEMPHASIZES THEIR INTEGRITY, THEIR NOBLE CHARACTER.

** SO HE SAYS ABOUT TITUS, "HE IS MY PARTNER AND FELLOW WORKER AMONG YOU."

*** AND THIS PHRASE OR EXPRESSION IMPLIES THAT TITUS COMPLETELY SHARED **PAUL'S LIFE** AND MISSION.

**** HIS LIFE WAS THE SAME AS THAT OF PAUL, BEING A SERVANT, A SLAVE OF CHRIST FOR THE **BENEFIT OF CHRIST'S CHURCH. HE WAS PAUL'S** EARNEST ASSOCIATE FOR THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

1. AND THEN FOR THE TWO OTHER BROTHERS, THEY WERE MESSENGERS OF THE CHURCHES, LIT. SMALL APOSTLES OF THE CHURCHES, NOT IN THE OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS ONE OF THE 12, BUT SPECIAL SENT ONES, SPECIAL SERVANTS OF THE CHURCH, A GLORY TO CHRIST.

* AND SHOWING THAT THESE BROTHERS ARE HIGH CALIBER MEN OF WHICH THE CHURCH TRUSTED, THEY LIVED TO BRING GLORY TO CHRIST, OUR PURPOSE OF BEING ON PLANET EARTH AS BELIEVERS.

** THERE COULD BE NO HIGHER COMMENDATION FOR THEM OR US. THEY LIVE, WE LIVE FOR THE GLORY OF CHRIST, THAT IS OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT. OH MAY THAT BE SO.

*** AND THEN LASTLY, A FINAL WORD FROM PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS IN THIS PARAGRAPH OF THOUGHT. LOOK AT V. 24 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 24. NOW UP TO THIS POINT IN II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 8, PAUL TAUGHT THE CORINTHIANS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF HOW THEY SHOULD GIVE IN FINISHING UP THEIR COLLECTION FOR THE POOR SAINTS AT JERUSALEM.

* AND PAUL HAD EVERY REASONABLE PRECAUTION TO BE ABOVE REPROACH AND AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF MISHANDLING **GOD'S MONEY.**

** SO NOW IT WAS TIME FOR THE CORINTHIANS TO FOLLOW THROUGH, TO GIVE OPENLY BEFORE THE OTHER CHURCHES, LIT. BEFORE THE FACES OF OTHER CHURCHES LIKE THE MACEDONIANS AND DO THEIR PART IN THIS COLLECTION.

*** AND BY SO DOING, THEY WOULD DISPLAY, SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN BY MEETING THIS NEED, AND THEIR GENEROSITY **WOULD VALIDATE PAUL'S BOASTING ABOUT THE** WORK OF CHRIST IN THEM.

IN WRAP UP AND APPLICATION: (1) THE REALITY OR SINCERITY OF LOVE IS ALWAYS DISPLAYED BY ACTION. LOVE IS NOT LOVE WITHOUT ACTION. LOVE IS NOT REAL LOVE UNTIL IT ACTS.

* TO SAY IT ANOTHER WAY, IF THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN THE TASTING, THE PROOF OF PROFESSED LOVE IS IN THE LIVING OUT OF IT.

** AND WE PROVE OUR LOVE WHEN WE FIND TANGIBLE WAYS TO GIVE IT AWAY EACH DAY.

*** WHETHER MEETING A SPIRITUAL NEED, A PHYSICAL NEED, OUR GIVING, OR OUR OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD, JOHN 14:15, I JOHN 3:18, I JOHN 5:3.

**** AND WE CANNOT SAY WE LOVE GOD IF WE **DON'T GIVE AND PUT SELF FIRST.**

(2) BUT ALSO IN APPLICATION. INTEGRITY IS ALWAYS OUR GOAL BEFORE OTHERS. AND WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK IS IMPORTANT, FROM THE STANDPOINT WE DO ALL WE CAN TO BE ABOVE REPROACH AND PLEASE THE LORD FIRST.

*** BUT LAST OF ALL, HOW WE HANDLE GOD'S MONEY IS VERY IMPORTANT. HOW WE SPEND, GIVE AND LOOK AT MONEY. IT TRULY IS AN INDICATOR OF OUR STEWARDSHIP TO THE LORD.**

**** AND NOT ONLY INDIVIDUALLY BUT CORPORATELY IN HOW WE SPEND THE LORD'S MONEY. AND WE NEED TO HAVE INTEGRITY IN THE CHURCH AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**

***** AND WE DO THAT BY HAVING 2 MEN COUNT THE MONEY EACH WEEK WITH ONE SIGNING OFF ON THE AMOUNT. ALSO WHEN THE SAFE IS OPENED, 2 AUTHORIZED PEOPLE HAVE TO DO IT TOGETHER.**

**** WE HAVE 2 AUTHORIZED PEOPLE SIGN CHECKS, AND NONE OF THE ELDERS ARE AUTHORIZED TO DO THAT.

**** WE HAVE REGULAR FINANCIAL SHEETS AVAILABLE ON THE TABLE IN THE FOYER AND ANNUALLY GO OVER THE BUDGET AND HAVE THE EXACT AMOUNT OF WHAT HAS BEEN SPENT THAT YEAR.

(3) BEYOND THAT, THE ELDERS DO NOT KNOW WHAT ANYONE GIVES, BUT OURSELVES IN WHAT **WE GIVE. I DON'T COLLECT MONEY OR HANDLE PEOPLE'S OFFERING OR CHURCH MONEY EXCEPT MY PAY AND REIMBURSEMENT.**

* AND THEN FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS, WE HAVE HAD THE M. J. MILLER COMPANY ACCOUNTANTS DO A FINANCIAL REVIEW OF OUR PROCEDURES, WHICH COSTS US ABOUT \$1200 - \$1300 A YEAR, AS WE TRY TO HAVE INTEGRITY **IN HANDLING GOD'S MONEY.**

** AND MAY WE ALL BE GOOD STEWARDS OF
GOD'S MONEY. IT IS HIS. WE ARE
ACCOUNTABLE TO HIM FOR IT. MAY WE BE
PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY!! **(LET'S PRAY)**