

2 Corinthians 8-9

2 Cor. 1:3-11 – Paul’s confidence in God and the Corinthians expressed as Paul reveals his difficult situation.

2 Cor. 1:12-2:4 – Due to an accuser in the Corinthian church Paul explains why his travel plans changed

2 Cor. 2:5-11 – Paul’s accuser is to be forgiven and restored

2 Cor. 2:12-13 – Paul had gone to Troas to look for Titus...but, Titus was not there...Paul confused, persecuted, and has “no peace of mind.”

2 Cor. 2:14-7:1 – Power is in the message and the ministry of reconciliation. The reward is in the future. Today we are ambassadors, we are clay vessels, we are suffering servants. The glory is in the process of being transformed into the image of the Son of God. There is a problem with some ministers in Corinth (and, in the early church) with trying to make the Gospel and the Word of God relevant for today’s current age. They are seeking victory today instead of serving today and anticipating victory in the future kingdom

2 Cor. 7:2-16 - Paul returns to talking about looking for Titus in Troas (7:5-15) and the Corinthian man who caused the division/problem (7:12). Titus reports that the Corinthians are in agreement with Paul again. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 7:16, “I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.”

Chapter 8 and 9

In chapter eight and nine Paul gives instructions about money that will be collected from the Corinthians and taken by a selected and responsible delegation to believers living in Jerusalem. Paul begins by using the Macedonians as an example of grace giving. Paul gives scriptures best description of financial giving and ties it to the principle of grace, human will along with a promise based on the principle of an appropriate return on the giving. Giving is clearly compared to sowing seeds. These verses are a prosperity teacher’s dream, if they were not preceded by seven chapters of Paul describing his ministry as a state of suffering and then followed by four chapters of the apostle’s most fevered description of false teachers as self-promoting and condemned servants of Satan. The irresponsibly wealthy name-it-claim-it claim it preachers can only hope their listeners are too lazy to read these verses in context.

Giving Guidelines:

1. Giving above your means is the exception (8:3-4)
2. God wants you first, not your money (8:5)
3. Just as you increase in other areas of spiritual growth, you should increase in the amount of giving (8:7)
4. Giving is an outward manifestation of your inner love for God (8:8)
5. Important to complete oaths and vows (8:11)
6. Willingness is the beginning of giving, not the possession of the money (8:12)
7. Give of what we have, not of what we do not have (8:13-15)
8. Equal responsibility, not equal amounts (8:15)
9. Giving begins with God’s Grace. God gave manna (8:15)
10. You need to increase your capacity with the Word (8:15)
11. The distribution as well as giving glorifies God (8:16-21)
12. Give from cheerfulness, not guilt or gimmick (9:7)