

19 November 2022
2 Corinthians 8:16

1. If you were here this morning, we ended in 2 Corinthians 8:15.

Paul exhorted the Corinthians to finish what they had begun in gathering up their offerings for the needy saints at Jerusalem/Judea.

And we also learned, this morning, in what Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth in HOW we are to give to the Lord and to the ministry of the saints!

In tonight's text, Paul commended Titus to the church at Corinth, for the work of receiving the offerings and dispersing them to the needy saints.

But before I read our text, I would like to read a passage from:
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, now: 2 Corinthians 8:16-24

So now, there was the task of getting the offerings that were collected from Corinth to the needy saints, honestly and blamelessly. When it comes to money, we must see to it with great care for the honor and glory of Christ's Name!

2 Corinthians 6:3, 1 Corinthians 10:31-32.

Titus wouldn't be given this task to do alone! Not because he was not trustworthy, but because it would not be blameless for him to do it alone!

Paul opened this passage by commanding Titus to the saints at Corinth, and by telling them about how greatly Titus cared for them in the Lord.

"But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care (that I have for you) into the heart of Titus for you"

Titus cared for and loved the saints @ Corinth just as Paul loved and cared for this church....2 Corinthians 2:4, 7:12-16

But not only did Paul commend Titus, HE GAVE GOD THE GLORY for "putting THE SAME earnest care FOR THEM into Titus' heart. I pray that God would PUT that SAME EARNEST CARE in my heart for you, and in your hearts for each other as brethren! Philippians 2:19-23

I thought of Philippians 2:13 regarding the earnest care that God put into Titus' heart: "For it is God WHICH WORKETH IN YOU (God did His work in Titus' heart) both to will and to do of His good pleasure"

Once God had done His work in Titus' heart, there was no stopping him in his zeal to serve the Lord in this assignment, for the needy saints!

2 Corinthians 8:17: "For indeed he accepted the exhortation (or our appeal and summons to go); but being more forward, OF HIS OWN ACCORD he went unto you". (He was ready before we asked him)

And then, Paul wrote of another trusted brother who would be sent with Titus, to help with the offerings, and to disperse them to the poor and suffering brethren. A 2nd brother assigned... (2) are better than (1).

We don't know who this "additional brother" was, but WHAT WE DO KNOW speaks to His trustworthiness, His character and faithfulness, and His godly reputation:

"And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; and not THAT only, (That's not his only commendation), but (this brother) was also chosen of the churches to travel with us...with THIS GRACE, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and (it is ALSO the) declaration of your ready mind"

What a way to be identified? What a testimony that this brother had from all the churches.... O that we might be MORE KNOWN, AS THIS BROTHER WAS, NOT BY OUR NAMES, but by our gospel reputation and love to Christ! His praise was in the gospel! And then, it is worthy of note that he was ALSO chosen by all the churches to be sent with Titus.

And then, don't miss this, God was to get all the glory for how they administered the offerings to the poor brethren. They were to be very careful and diligent to make sure this was so.

2 Corinthians 8:20-21

"Provide things honest in the sight of all men", "Let not then your good be evil spoken of", "Abstain from all appearance of evil"

2 Corinthians 8:22: "And we have sent with THEM, (with Titus and this additional brother), our brother, (THIS 3rd brother) whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you."

This 3rd brother was SKILLED in the ways of the gospel and Kingdom of Christ, he was faithful and diligent as one of Paul's helpers in the ministry.

So, there was (1), and then there was (2) to this task, now there was (3) to the mission at hand.

"And a threefold cord is not quickly broken"

In (V23): If there were any questions about Titus, or these other (2) faithful brethren, Paul spoke for them as messengers of the church, and that Christ was glorified in their lives and in their service to Him. They were faithful image-bearers of Christ and His Kingdom! 2

Corinthians 8:24

Let these brethren see the proof of your love and how we boasted of you, LIKE we boasted to you about the churches of Macedonia.

This task assigned to these (3) faithful men had to be done honestly, blamelessly, and in a way in which Christ alone would receive the glory!

But isn't that the way we want to do everything in our lives?