
It's TELLING that (2) chapters in Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians is on how they were to give, both individually...and as a church.

The focus of what Paul wrote in C8-C9 was about the offerings being collected by the church @ Corinth for the poor saints at Jerusalem.

Romans 15:25-28, 1 Corinthians 16:1-4.

In both chapters, Paul communicated his concern that had not yet finished gathering the offerings, and..that they would not be ready when the brethren arrived to pick up what was gathered.

You get the sense, in both these chapters that Paul was keeping close eye on this process to make sure it got done!

When I was in the military, there were things/tasks that I would assign subordinates that were "fire and forget". But there were other things/tasks, that were critical and important...in those things, I would keep checking with those whom I had assigned those tasks to...TO MAKE SURE they were getting done.

As Christians, we should be diligent and trustworthy in all that we do, people should know us as reliable, that we will DO what we say that we will do, for we represent Christ!

If you recall last time, Paul told the Corinthians that he was sending (2) faithful brothers with Titus to Corinth to receive what was collected... the reason that Paul sent these (2) brethren? 2 Corinthians 8:20-21, 24

With that in mind, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

2 Corinthians 9:1-2: Paul boasted about the Corinthians to the churches of Macedonia, of their readiness/eagerness to participate in this ministry.

In fact, their zeal to help the needy brethren had provoked and excited other brethren and churches to participate in this ministry.

Paul rejoiced in their readiness, but it's ALSO clear in (C9), that he was concerned that they had NOT YET finished what they had begun to do.

I don't know whether they were procrastinators, or they were just busy, and it fell by the wayside... Or, they didn't have someone to lead in this work, and make sure it was getting done, but whatever the case...

They were zealous, eager, and willing to do their part, BUT Paul was not confident that they HAD THEY FINISHED collecting the offerings, and they would be ready when the brethren arrived. 2 Corinthians 8:10-11

The way in which we minister for God both in the church and outside the church will "TELL and REVEAL" how we serve God. How we serve our Lord will be revealed in how seriously and diligently we tend to His business, but also, in how we stay the course and finish what He has assigned to us. Proverbs 22:29, Colossians 3:17,23

It is superfluous (for me to write you about ministering to the saints); for I know that there is a readiness in you to do it, I have boasted of you to the churches of Macedonia. 2 Corinthians 9:3-5

I love your spirit and your zeal in this... But I am CONCERNED that you're not ready; that you've not finished what you started a year ago, that's why I sent Titus and these (2) brethren.

You should notice Paul did a lot of "boasting" about the church @ Corinth to the churches of Macedonia: 8:24, 9:2-3
But now, Paul's concern was that his boasting of them might be "in vain"; and that Paul would be "ashamed" ... IF THE BRETHREN ARRIVED to pick up the offerings, but they "found the Corinthians to unprepared"; the offerings not ready for pick up.

(V4): This will be worse if some of the brethren of Macedonia are with me!

When THEY/WE arrive, WE WANT YOU TO BE WAITING FOR US TO ARRIVE, we want you to be ready with all that you have collected, so that your giving will appear as it should...to be a blessing and not something given as from "tight hands" as if you didn't want to part with it.

How each of us "GIVE" individually will TELL our HEARTS, and how we do the work of God in caring for poor/needy brethren as a church will ALSO TELL OUR HEARTS. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Giving starts (Christian) with your heart, if you're not gladly and cheerfully walking with Christ, you're probably NOT going to purpose to give cheerfully...

Imagine a church full of grudging, tight handed givers, how they are going to react when an opportunity arises for them to GIVE AS A CHURCH to help poor brethren or a poor family! Deuteronomy 15:7-11

As a church, when God calls us to minister to needy brethren, we MUST do it cheerfully, and in such a way honors and pleases God...

AND THEN, we must be diligent and faithful to finish it, because God's Name and Honor is stamped on every work that we do.

GFBC, God knows our hearts... When God calls us as a church to minister and serve the needs of the poor saints or one who is in need, it is for His honor and glory... THIS is one of the prominent characteristics of Christ's Kingdom and it should be of our church.

2 Corinthians 9:8 (9-10) to V11

2 Corinthians 1:11, 4:15

2 Corinthians 9:12-13: This ministry, service, and work was given to the church @ Corinth TO DO, but God was to get all the glory from both the givers and those that would receive.

The offerings would relieve the poor saints @ Jerusalem but would also cause many to give thanks to God! God would be glorified in both the giving of it, and in the receiving of it. And isn't THIS the BOTTOM LINE for all that we do brethren? 1 Corinthians

10:31,33

God's glory was to be at the center of this ministry and undertaking.

The ministering/the giving of the church @ Corinth "would cause (MANY) thanksgivings unto God", and the needy saints would glorify God "for their submission to Christ and for their generosity" ...and cause THEM TO PRAY FOR the Corinthians, and to long for THEM and for the exceeding grace of God, which was in the Corinthians toward them.

Consider this also that this was a Gentile Church ministering to Jewish brethren.

The thought came into my mind... who received the greater gift? The poor saints at Jerusalem? Or the Church @ Corinth? The poor saints received a bountiful offering to minister and relieve their wants, but the saints at Corinth were PRAYED for by the poor saints. In both giving and receiving... God received all the honor and glory!

2 Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable (or for His inexpressible and indescribable) gift"

This unspeakable gift IS, I believe God's grace in these believers, or we might say the Spirit of Christ in them. 2 Corinthians 8:9 😊

The church had been "enriched (TO GIVE) by God's grace in their hearts" ...THIS CAUSED THEM to do things that they would never have done... but for the Spirit of Christ and God's grace in them. And so, again, God deserves all the glory for ALL of what He puts in our hearts TO DO!

2 Corinthians 9:11

Spiritual Applications:

When God puts someone in need before you, eagerness to help them does them no good if you don't "actually help" them. Let us not stop only at good intentions but let us finish what we intend to do for the Lord in ministering to the saints. THIS also as a church!
1 John 3:16-19.

One of the ways in which God will use us as a church is by ministering to the needs of the poor, of both the lost and saved.

Matthew 25:35-36, 42-43, Proverbs 14:31, Hebrews 6:10

God is the One who must get ALL the attention for what we do in our ministering, and for when we are on the receiving end of a blessing from Him. We must certainly be thankful to those who obey Christ in their ministry to us, but God is the one who must get all the honor and glory!