

# 2 Corinthians 8

## Review of 2 Corinthians 1-7

**Why had Paul not returned to Corinth yet?** To give the congregation time to work out the problem with the man who was living with his step-mother (*1.23-24, 2.6 and following*)

**-What did Paul have to command concerning this man?** That the church forgive him (*2.6*)

**-What was the value of the New Testament over the Old Testament?** The New Testament was "living," instead the dead Old Testament (*Ch. 3*)

**-What should be the attitude of the Christian concerning death?** To be absent in the body meant being at home with the Lord (*Ch. 5.6*)

**-What was Paul's advice in *Ch. 6* about making close ties with non-believers?** A dangerous thing to do

**-In *Ch. 7*, what did Paul continue to do?** Defend his preaching at Corinth

## 2 Corinthians 8.1-15

*-Chs. 8-9* are really a "pause" with an emphasis on the subject of giving

Background:

**-When did money first become a problem in the early church?** *Acts 5.1-11* – Ananias and Sapphira had lied about how much they gave to the church

**-Next occasion?** *Acts 6* – the neglect of the Greek-speaking widows

**-Why was Paul collecting money?** A famine, particularly hard in Jerusalem (*Acts 11.27-30* – the prophecy of Agabus)

**-Where did Paul command that we set aside money on the first day of every week?** *1 Cor. 16.1-2*

**V1 – Where is Macedonia?** Northeast Greece

**-What 3 congregations were located there?** Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea

**-In *1-2 Thessalonians* and *Philippians*, there are no scriptures on the subject of giving**

**-Why?** Because those congregations were faithful in their giving

**-What was the source of their giving?** The grace of God

**-They didn't base their giving on personal glory, but on the grace they had received**

**V2 – Was everything peaceful and quiet in Macedonia?** No – While in Philippi, Paul and Silas spent a night in jail

**-In Thessalonica, Jason was beaten, and Paul had to flee in the middle of the night**

**-What caused the 3 congregations to be so liberal in their giving?** Their affliction!

**-Who is more appreciative of God's blessings, a rich man or a poor man?** The poor man

**-The rich man hires a lawyer to help him find loopholes in the tax laws and get richer**

**-Therefore, Macedonians were poor, but had turned their love for the Lord into liberal giving**

**V3 – How did Paul describe their giving?** They gave beyond their ability

**-Does this remind you of any incident in the life of Jesus?** *Mark 12.41-44* – the widow and her two mites (she gave all that she had)

**V4 – They were begging to be allowed to help!**

**-Is this characteristic of the church today?** Not in most places – usually missionaries have to beg for more support

**V 5 – What was the key to their giving?** They gave themselves first! These are amazing words from Paul

-Too many churches are always hitting people over the head to give more, but that is not the right approach

-Rather, the members should be truly converted, and good giving will follow

-At some denominational churches, people get worked up into a frenzy – they mortgage their houses, sell their cars, etc., but that is really not Christian giving either

**V 6 – What had Paul told Titus to do?** Finish collecting the money for the poor saints in Jerusalem

**V 7 –** Paul is complimenting them (remembering their spiritual gifts and talents)

**V 8 – Can the church dictate how much each person is to give?** Not really, although elders might need to encourage people who are giving far below their potential

**-The basis of giving, according to Paul?** The sincerity of their love

**-Who could refuse to give more, after reading this verse?** No-one

**V 9 – How was Christ rich?** He lived in heaven

**-How did he become poor?** He gave it up to come to the earth

**V 10 –** It seems as if the Corinthians were the first to give for this project (a year back)

**V 11 – But what did they need to do now?** Complete their plans and what they had promised

**V 12 –** Very interesting: Regular, systematic giving is what Paul had in mind

-We can't give what we don't have

**V 13 –** It was no use to help others if it would make the Corinthians poor

-But a certain measure of equality should exist in the church (see *1 John 3.17*)

-There should not be one family overflowing with money, while another family is starving

**V 14 – Another reason for good giving?** You yourself may need help some day!

**V 15 – Exodus 16.13-21 –** The manna worked out just fine

## **2 Corinthians 8.16-24**

**V 16 –** Titus was concerned about the Corinthians also

**V 17 –** Titus didn't have to be asked – he had already seen the need to go to Corinth and had gone there

**V 18-22** – The identity of this "brother"

**-Characteristics of this brother?**

-V 18 – Famous among the churches of Asia

-V 19 – Was appointed to travel with Paul to Jerusalem

**Best theories?**

1. Luke – most likely candidate

-Very modest – Remember the 4 "we" passages in *Acts* when Luke did not even want to mention his name

2. Barnabas – But in *Acts 15.39*, they argued about John Mark

3. Silas

4. Timothy, but he was with Paul at this time

5. Aristarchus (*Acts 19.29*)

**V 20** – Paul was always cautious about things

**V 21** – **Why?** To be honorable in the sight of all

**V 22** – Titus and Luke, plus another brother (either Timothy or Silas probably, or Apollos)

**V 23** – The preachers are called "messengers," so they are not to change the message, but to deliver it just as it was delivered to them in the gospel of Christ

**V 24** – **Conclusion?** Give freely

Revised 2013-01-22