

Review: 2 Corinthians 8 Paul explains and teaches about offerings.

1) Generosity is expected of us in times of trouble and in good times.

v. 1 And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the **Macedonian** churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that **they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability**. Entirely on their own, 4 **they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people**.

1 Cor 16:1 Now **about the collection for the Lord's people**: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, **each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income**, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Romans 15:25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were **pleased to make a contribution for the poor** among the Lord's people in Jerusalem.

2) We should excel in grace for our Godly giving.

v. 5 And **they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord**, and then by the will of God also to us. 6 So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7 But **since you excel in everything**—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—**see that you also excel in this grace of giving**.

3) We should be generous because Jesus was generous to us.

v. 9 For you know the grace of **our Lord Jesus Christ**, that though **he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor**, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

4) Paul gives them a further exhortation to give as they are able.

v. 10 And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. **Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so**. 11 **Now finish the work**, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, **according to your means**.

5) Rich or poor, it's your heart that matters in giving.

v. 12 For **if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have**.

2 Corinthians 9 God Loves a Cheerful Giver (15 verses)

1) The Corinthians were eager to give \$ to the Lord.

v. 1 There is no need for me to write to you about this service to **the Lord's people**. 2 For **I know your eagerness to help**, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that **since last year you in Achaia were ready to give**; and **your enthusiasm** has stirred most of them to action.

2) Paul knew their offering for poor believers would be generous.

v. 3 But I am sending the brothers in order that **our boasting about you in this matter** should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. 4 For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for **the generous gift** you had promised. Then it will be ready as **a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given**.

3) Sowing and reaping applied to giving.

v. 6 Remember this: **Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously**.

4) Giving is an act of love, not compulsion; a fact we must always remember.

v. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, **not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver**.

v. 7 **Let giving flow from your heart**, not from a sense of religious duty. TPT

5) Our generous God has given us the seeds for our giving.

v. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." 10 **Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed** and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

6) Your gifts are greatly appreciated on earth and in Heaven.

v. 11 You will be enriched in every way **so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity** will result in thanksgiving to God. 12 This service that you perform is **not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God**. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and **for your generosity in sharing** with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

v. 11 You will be abundantly enriched in every way **as you give generously on every occasion**, for when we take your gifts to those in need, it causes many to give thanks to God. 12 The priestly ministry you are providing through **your offering** not only supplies what is lacking for God's people, **it inspires an outpouring of praises and thanksgiving to God himself**. 13 For as your extremely generous offering meets the approval *of those in Jerusalem*, **it will cause them to give glory to God**—all because of your loyal support and allegiance to the gospel of Christ, as well as your generous-hearted partnership with them toward those in need. 14 Because of this extraordinary grace, which God has lavished on you, they will affectionately remember you in their prayers. TPT

Note: Giving to the Lord should be voluntary, proportionate to income and systematic.

7) We give because we are thankful to God for Jesus, His indescribable gift.

v. 15 Thanks be to God for **his indescribable gift!**

2 Corinthians 10 Paul's Ministry Defense. (18 verses)

1) Paul's apostolic authority to the Corinthians.

v. 1 By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am "**timid**" **when face to face with you, but "bold" toward you when away!** 2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world.

2) Spiritual weapons are real and very important.

v. 3 For though we live in the world, **we do not wage war as the world does.** 4 **The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.**

3) Our words, attitudes and even our thoughts must submit to our faith.

v. 5 **We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.** 6 **And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience**, once your obedience is complete.

4) Paul belongs to Jesus, no matter what anyone says.

v. 7 **You are judging by appearances.** If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that **we belong to Christ** just as much as they do. 8 **So even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it.**

5) **Paul is the same in person as he is in his letters.**

v. 9 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. 10 For some say, **"His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing."** 11 Such people should realize that **what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.** 12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When **they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.**

6) **Boast only in what the Lord has done and what He can do in your life.**

v. 13 **We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you.** 14 We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. 15 Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand, 16 so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. **For we do not want to boast about work already done in someone else's territory.**

7) **We should only be concerned with the Lord's opinion of us.**

v. 17 But, **"Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."** 18 **For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.**

2 Corinthians 11 The Bride of Christ (33 verses)

1) **Paul is recruiting and preparing the Church as the Bride of Christ.**

v.1 I hope you will put up with me in a little foolishness. Yes, please put up with me! **2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.**

2) **Some harsh words for self proclaimed Super-Apostles.**

v. 3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if **someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.** 5 **I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles."**

3) **The culture admired great oratory skill and technique.**

v. 6 **I may indeed be untrained as a speaker, but I do have knowledge.** We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way.

- 4) **He refused financial support from them, but he accepted it from others.**
v. 7 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? 8 **I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you.** 9 And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for **the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.** 10 As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. 11 **Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!** 12 **And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about.**
- 5) **The so called “super-apostles” are not who they claim to be.**
v. 13 For **such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ.** 14 And no wonder, for **Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.** 15 It is not surprising, then, if **his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.**
- 6) **Paul’s “foolish” but legitimate boasting about his personal credentials.**
v. 16 I repeat: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you do, then **tolerate me just as you would a fool, so that I may do a little boasting.** 17 In this self-confident boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool. 18 **Since many are boasting in the way the world does, I too will boast.** 19 **You gladly put up with fools** since you are so wise! 20 In fact, **you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or puts on airs or slaps you in the face.** 21 To my shame I admit that we were too weak for that! Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about.
- 7) **Paul’s genuine Apostolic qualifications certainly exceed those of his critics.**
v. 22 **Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I.** 23 **Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.** 24 **Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.** 25 **Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,** 26 **I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers.** 27 **I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.**

- 8) **Authentic Apostles are filled with love and God knows those who are His.**
v. 28 Besides everything else, **I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.** 29 Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? 30 **If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.** 31 **The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.**
- 9) **Once again he points to persecution as a form of endorsement.**
v. 32 In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me. 33 But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

2 Corinthians 12 More of Paul's Qualifications (21 verses)

- 1) **Caught "up to" the third Heaven and "into" Paradise. Two locations?**
v. 1 **I must go on boasting.** Although there is nothing to be gained, **I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.** 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was **caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.** 3 And I know that this man—**whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—** 4 was caught up to **paradise** and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. 5 I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses.

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- 2) **What was Paul's thorn in the flesh?**
v. 6 Even **if I should choose to boast,** I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. **But I refrain,** so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, 7 or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given **a thorn in my flesh, a messenger (ang'-el-os) of Satan,** to torment me.

Numbers 33:55 "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land, those you allow to remain will become barbs in **your eyes** and **thorns in your sides.** **They will give you trouble** in the land where you will live.

Galatians 4:13 As you know, **it was because of an illness** that I first preached the gospel to you, 14 and even though **my illness was a trial to you,** you did not treat me with contempt or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself. 15 Where, then, is your blessing of me now? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have **torn out your eyes** and given them to me...
6:11 See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!

3) God's grace is sufficient for each of us.

v. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** 10 Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

4) True Apostolic credentials.

v. 11b...I am not in the least inferior to the **"super-apostles,"** even though I am nothing. 12 I persevered in demonstrating among you **the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles.** 13 How were you inferior to the other churches, except that I was never a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

5) Paul provided for the Corinthians as a spiritual father.

v. 14 Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, **children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.** 15 **So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well.** If I love you more, will you love me less? 16 Be that as it may, I have not been a burden to you. Yet, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you by trickery! 17 **Did I exploit you through any of the men I sent to you?** 18 I urged Titus to go to you and I sent our brother with him. Titus did not exploit you, did he? Did we not walk in the same footsteps by the same Spirit? 19 **Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you?** We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening.

6) He was concerned that he might come and find more problems in the church.

v. 20 For I am afraid that when I come **I may not find you as I want you to be,** and you may not find me as you want me to be. **I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.** 21 **I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.**

2 Corinthians 13 Final Thoughts and Blessings (18 verses)

1) Paul promised a 3rd ministry trip to the Corinthians.

v. 1 **This will be my third visit to you.** "Every matter must be established by **the testimony of two or three witnesses.**"

Deuteronomy 19:15 One witness is not enough to convict anyone accused of any crime or offense they may have committed. **A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.**

2) **We are not weak, but we are crucified with Jesus.**

v. 2 I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: **On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others, 3 since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me.** He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. 4 For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet **by God's power we will live with him in our dealing with you.**

3) **We must examine ourselves by Godly standards.**

v. 5 **Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.** Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? 6 And I trust that you will discover that **we have not failed the test.** 7 Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed. 8 For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

4) **Correct yourselves now, so you won't need harsh correction from Paul.**

v. 9 We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and **our prayer is that you may be fully restored. 10 This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority**—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

5) **Conclusion and final instruction.**

v. 11 Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! **Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.** 12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. 13 All God's people here send their greetings.

6) **Apostolic, Trinitarian blessing with the grace, love and fellowship of God.**

v. 14 May the **grace** of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the **love** of **God**, and the **fellowship** of the **Holy Spirit** be with you all. (*Amen*)

“The wording of this benediction implies equality between the sources of **grace, love and fellowship** (Greek *koinônia*, which can also be rendered "communality," "commonness," "communion")-that is, between the **Father (God)**, the **Son (the Lord Yeshua the Messiah)** and the **Holy Spirit (the Ruach HaKodesh)**. But this equality remains an implication and is not stated as a proposition. As pointed out elsewhere, *Adonai* is never called a "Trinity" in the New Testament. However, the three terms which appear here, along with equivalent terms, are used in various ways in both the New Testament and the *Tanakh* when speaking of God.”

The Jewish NT Commentary