

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Day 248 – September 5<sup>th</sup> – 2 Corinthians 8:1-15**

**Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians**

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

**Chapters 8 & 9**

Chapters 8 & 9 seem to consist of separate treatments of the subject of the collection. Martin says that "It is possible that chap. 8 was sent out separately to the Corinthian church, whereas chap. 9 is intended for a wider clientele in the whole of southern Greece (Achaia)." But concludes, "We regard chap. 9 as a separate composition but written in swift succession to chap. 8, and addressed to the same readers but, bearing in mind the language of 1:1 – 'to the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the holy people who are in the whole of Achaia' – we shall regard the addressees as comprising a total audience of Christians in the city and beyond in the province." Martin

**Verse 1**

Γνωρίζομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δεδομένην ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Μακεδονίας,

τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ the generosity of the Macedonians is traced to the grace of God – it all stems from God's gift of Jesus Christ cf. 8:9.

γνωρίζω make known  
 δεδομένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s διδωμι

**Verse 2**

ὅτι ἐν πολλῇ δοκιμῇ θλίψεως ἢ περισσεΐα τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ κατὰ βάθους πτωχεΐα αὐτῶν ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτῶν·

δοκιμη, ης f proof, evidence

δοκιμη here has the sense of a testing which proved their worth, i.e. an 'ordeal' or 'trial'.

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering  
 περισσεια, ας abundance  
 βαθος, ους n depth, greatness  
 πτωχεια, ας f poverty

'rock bottom poverty' Barrett. "Joy in trial was a feature of both the Philippian and Thessalonian churches (Phil 4:4; 1 Thess 1:6)." Martin

περισσευω abound, excel, have plenty  
 πλουτος, ου m & n riches, wealth  
 ἀπλοτης, ητος f generosity, liberality

**Verse 3**

ὅτι κατὰ δύναμιν, μαρτυρῶ, καὶ παρὰ δύναμιν, αὐθαίρετοι

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify

κατα δυναμιν ... παρα δυναμιν according to their means... beyond their means

αὐθαιρετος, ον of one's own accord, spontaneously

A rare term, used also in 8:17.

**Verse 4**

μετὰ πολλῆς παρακλήσεως δεόμενοι ἡμῶν, τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους –

παρακλησις, εως f encouragement, counsel

δεομαι ask, beg, pray

χαρις, ιτος f grace, favour

κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, participation

διακονια, ας f ministry, contribution

"χαρις, κοινωνια, διακονια are three key words in this discussion... We should refuse to treat them as simple synonyms for the collection, though they do overlap in the range of their possible nuances. We have taken χαρις here as a human privilege, a gracious act, while recognising that it has a theological underpinning, i.e., the Macedonians have acted in response to divine grace which prompts and disposes all human endeavour. The thought goes back to 8:1... κοινωνια ... signifies the notion of having a share in fellowship in a work, which in this text is precisely 'the service' of the collection... διακονια ... stands for the offering that Paul was minded to collect from his people at Corinth to support the Jerusalem community." Martin

### Verse 5

καὶ οὐ καθὼς ἠλπίζαμεν ἀλλ' ἑαυτοὺς ἔδωκαν πρῶτον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ,

ἐλπίζω hope, expect

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

ἔδωκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3pl δίδωμι

Paul saw their giving not only as a demonstration of heartfelt response to God but also as a recognition of his ministry as that of an apostle of Christ.

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

### Verse 6

εἰς τὸ παρακαλέσαι ἡμᾶς Τίτον ἵνα καθὼς προενήρξατο οὕτως καὶ ἐπιτελέσῃ εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὴν χάριν ταύτην·

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage

προενήρξατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

προεναρχομαι begin, begin beforehand

ἐπιτελεω complete, accomplish

Titus must have begun work on the collection on his recent visit when he had found the Corinthians had responded positively to Paul's severe letter.

On the Collection, see quotation from Martin in the Introduction to 2 Corinthians in these notes.

### Verse 7

ἀλλ' ὡσπερ ἐν παντὶ περισσεύετε, πίστει καὶ λόγῳ καὶ γνώσει καὶ πάσῃ σπουδῇ καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ἀγάπῃ, ἵνα καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι περισσεύητε.

ὡσπερ as, even as

περισευω increase, abound, excel

πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις

γνωσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

σπουδη, ης f diligence, eagerness, zeal

καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ἀγάπῃ / ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμῖν

The textual evidence seems slightly stronger

for the former reading, "in our love for you."

The context may seem to demand the latter but

Martin, following Bratcher, translates 'in the

love that we have aroused in you.'

ἵνα with the imperative meaning 'make sure that ...'

### Verse 8

Οὐ κατ' ἐπιταγὴν λέγω ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἐτέρων σπουδῆς καὶ τὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγάπης γνήσιον δοκιμάζων·

ἐπιταγη, ης f command, order, authority

Indicates Paul's recognition of the need to approach the matter delicately.

ἕτερος, α, ον other

The 'others' refers here to the Macedonians who had been so eager to give.

σπουδη, ης f earnestness, diligence

ὑμετερος, α, ον possessive adj of 2 pl your

γνήσιος, α, ον genuine, genuineness

δοκιμάζω prove, discern

"The example of the Macedonians provides a criterion for testing the reality of their love for him and their fellow Christians." Fallon

### Verse 9

γινώσκετε γὰρ τὴν χάριν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν πλούσιος ὢν, ἵνα ὑμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσητε.

"Possibly the mention of ἀγάπη, 'love,' prompts Paul to appeal to the highest illustration of love in action." Martin

χαριν 'love in action, expressed on sinners' behalf and reaching out to help the undeserving." Martin

πτωχευω become poor

Refers to the "self-imposed 'poverty' involved in the incarnation." Kruse

πλουσιος, α, ον rich, well-to-do

"The pre-existence of Christ is plainly taught here." Plummer

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those

πτωχεια, ας f poverty

πλουτεω be rich, grow rich

### Verse 10

καὶ γνώμην ἐν τούτῳ δίδωμι· τοῦτο γὰρ ὑμῖν συμφέρει, οἵτινες οὐ μόνον τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ θέλειν προενήρξασθε ἀπὸ πέρυσι·

γνωμη, ης f purpose, decision, opinion

καὶ γνώμην ἐν τούτῳ δίδωμι 'it is only an opinion I am giving [you]'

συμφερω most often impersonal, it is better, it is best

Martin argues that the reference is to the *advice*.

ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅτι who, which, whoever  
ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιῶ  
θελῶ wish, will

In other words, their giving was not mere duty but a willing act. They had been determined a year ago to give, now Paul urges them to complete what had been in their heart.

προεναρχομαι begin, begin beforehand  
περυσὶ adv a year ago, last year

Perhaps in response to Paul's words in 1 Cor 16:1-4. Cf. 9:2 where Paul boasted to the Macedonians concerning Achaia.

### Verse 11

νυνὶ δὲ καὶ τὸ ποιῆσαι ἐπιτελέσατε, ὅπως καθάπερ ἢ προθυμία τοῦ θέλειν οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἐπιτελέσαι ἐκ τοῦ ἔχειν.

νυνὶ (orig. an emphatic form of νυν) now  
ἐπιτελέσατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl  
ἐπιτελεῶ see v.6

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that  
καθάπερ as, just as  
προθυμία, ας f willingness, readiness

ἐκ τοῦ ἔχειν 'as you means allows'. 'he is not requiring his readers to emulate the Macedonians to the point of heroic sacrifice'  
Martin

### Verse 12

εἰ γὰρ ἢ προθυμία πρόκειται, καθὸ ἐὰν ἔχη εὐπρόσδεκτος, οὐ καθὸ οὐκ ἔχει.

προκειμαι be present  
καθὸ adv in so far as, to the degree that  
ἐὰν if, even if, though; often equivalent to ἂν

εὐπρόσδεκτος, ον acceptable

Paul indicates that what is pleasing and acceptable to God is not the amount given but the willingness to give, and to give in proportion with how one has been prospered by God.

### Verse 13

οὐ γὰρ ἵνα ἄλλοις ἄνεσις, ἵμῖν θλίψις· ἀλλ' ἐξ ἰσότητος

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
ἄνεσις, εως f relief  
θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering  
ἰσότητος Noun, gen s ἰσοτης, ητος f equality, fairness

The UBS punctuation links the latter part of the verse with v.14. Martin prefers to view it as the conclusion to the argument of this verse – 'Indeed, it is not a question of relieving others at the expense of your own affliction, but it is a matter of fair shares.'

### Verse 14

ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ τὸ ὑμῶν περισσευμα εἰς τὸ ἐκείνων ὑστέρημα, ἵνα καὶ τὸ ἐκείνων περισσευμα γένηται εἰς τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα, ὅπως γένηται ἰσότης·

καιρος, ου m time  
περισευμα, τος n abundance, excess  
υστερημα, τος n what is lacking, need  
γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι  
ὅπως that, in order that  
ἰσοτης, ητος f equality, fairness

"It is worth noting that it is from the abundance or surplus of those who are better-off that Paul expects the needs of those who are worse off to be met. He does not advocate that those who are better-off reduce themselves to poverty also. The reciprocity of giving and receiving is meant to promote an equality."  
Kruse

Martin thinks that Paul is contrasting the 'present age' in which the gospel is bearing fruit among the Gentiles with some future period of blessing affecting the Jews. "The connecting *ἵνα* looks on to what Paul expected in the coming age when (according to Rom 11:11,12) Israel's reconciliation will be a vindication (δικαιωσις) of God's purpose to bless the world, and that event will presage the final homecoming of the nations (Rom 11:25, 26, 30-32). This is obviously a tremendous theological affirmation which, although expressed succinctly in v.14, merits wider treatment, which Paul will give in Rom 9-11, written only a short while later in his life."

### Verse 15

καθὼς γέγραπται· Ὁ τὸ πολὺ οὐκ ἐπλεόνασεν, καὶ ὁ τὸ ὀλίγον οὐκ ἠλαττόνησεν.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω  
πλεοναζω have too much  
ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small  
ἐλαττονεω be in need, have too little

See Ex 16:15, which refers to the miraculous provision of manna by which God provided adequately for all.