

2 Corinthians 8-9 (56 AD from Macedonia to Corinth)

Collection of money for the Jerusalem believers:

- Began collection for Jerusalem believers in Corinth in 55 AD when it was mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:1-4.
- Galatian churches had already begun collecting money to be taken to Jerusalem by 55 AD.
- In 56 AD while Paul was in Macedonia writing 2 Corinthians the Macedonian churches had collected money for Jerusalem believers.
- In 57 AD Paul mentions the collection to the Roman church when Paul writes the letter of Romans from Corinth before he leaves for Jerusalem with the money. Romans 15:25 – *“Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them....”*
- In Acts 21:17-19 Paul and about nine men traveling with him from these Gentile churches arrive in Jerusalem and meet with the elders, James and the church. It is at this time this offering is given to the church leaders to be distributed to the Jewish Christians living in Jerusalem.

Paul began the collection in Corinth in 55 AD in 1 Corinthians, but ignored it in his harsh letter sent with Titus from Ephesus in 56 AD. Now, later in 56 AD while writing from Macedonia Paul resumes this collection of money in 2 Corinthians 8:1 because Titus has brought a positive report that says the Corinthians have resumed their obedience to the apostolic teaching after having been distracted by the relevant culturally acceptable message of the Greek philosophers.

Paul appeals to five examples to guide and motivate the Corinthians:

1. The Macedonian's example (1 Cor. 8:1-5)
2. The Corinthians original beginning and desire to give (1 Cor. 8:6)
3. The Corinthians resumed pursuit of spiritual growth and production (1 Cor. 8:7)
4. The sincerity of the Macedonian givers (not pressured, not trying to impress, etc) (1 Cor. 8:8)
5. The example of Christ and deity (1 Cor. 8:9)

8:1 – Ability and desire to give is a “Grace” provide by God

8:2 – Macedonian combined spiritual joy with physical poverty to produce “rich generosity” in the midst of a severe trial.

8:3 – Macedonian believers gave beyond their natural ability

Macedonian believers gave because of their own desire, not because they were manipulated

8:4 – “pleaded” for the “privilege of sharing” in “service to saints.”

This is the “cheerful giver” of 9:9.

8:5 – They responded in the correct sequence by responding to God first and then to man, instead of responding to man first and then to God.

God's will is that the believer first goes to God for strength, maturity, direction, growth, empowerment, and then go to meet the needs, desires and ministries of man.

8:6 – Paul had begun the collection in 1 Cor. 16:1-4, but Paul had backed away due to the Corinthian confusion. Now, with Titus' arrival the collection had resumed, and Titus was going to return to finish the collection before Paul arrived. The willingness to lead the people into a giving project indicates the leadership considers them spiritually mature and self-motivated instead of manipulated.

8:7 – Spiritual gifts, spiritual fruit and spiritual maturity will manifest in the believers:

1. Faith
2. Speech
3. Knowledge
4. Earnestness (diligence)
5. Love
6. GIVING – “see that you also excel in this grace of giving”

