

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for January 23, 2011

“The Example of the Macedonians”
2 Corinthians 8:6-7

As Paul began to address the repentant within the church of Corinth, he detailed for them certain responsibilities that still remained for them to fulfill.

The first responsibility that Paul brought to the attention of the repentant in 2 Corinthians 7:2-16 was their need to completely separate from his opponents.

The second responsibility that Paul brought to the attention of the repentant was their need to complete the collection for the poverty stricken believers in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:1 - 9:15).

What did Paul share with the Corinthians that helped them to become wholeheartedly committed to completing the collection for the poor believers in 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15?

The first thing that Paul shared with the Corinthians was the example of the Macedonians (2 Corinthians 8:1-7).

Paul, in sharing the Macedonians' example of giving began by sharing the source of it in 2 Corinthians 8:1.

Paul, after sharing the source of the Macedonians' example, went on to describe it in 2 Corinthians 8:2-5.

Even though the Macedonians were being sorely tested, “in a great ordeal of affliction” by all that they were suffering, it did not prevent them from giving liberally when given the opportunity (2 Corinthians 8:2).

Paul, after sharing the source as well as the description of the Macedonian giving, went on to share with the Corinthians the implication of it in respect to their own practices (2 Corinthians 8:6-7).

Based on the words of Paul to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 8:6-7, if the Corinthians believed that they were in fact the recipients of God's grace then they, like the Macedonians, should be giving in the same manner.

Paul began by highlighting for the Corinthians the gracious work of God on their behalf through Titus (2 Corinthians 8:6).

The “beginning” that Titus previously made was the grace of God expressed in the Corinthians’ restoration in response to the severe letter that he had delivered to them on behalf of Paul during his first visit.

If the “beginning” was a reference to the grace of God expressed in the Corinthians’ restoration, then the completion of this “grace” or in other words the “gracious work,” would be referring to their recommitment to the collection.

Paul expected that the Corinthians once restored and recommitted would abound in giving, very much as the Macedonians, because they like the Macedonians had been given the grace of God (2 Corinthians 8:7).

May God in light of all the grace that He has and continues to pour out upon us cause us to be conformed more and more to the giving practices of the Macedonians.