

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for February 27, 2011

“Paul’s Expectation for the Corinthians”
2 Corinthians 8:11-15

As Paul began to address the repentant within the church of Corinth beginning in 2 Corinthians 7:2, he detailed 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).

To help them become wholeheartedly committed to completing the collection, he shared with them a number of different things throughout 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).

The second thing that Paul shared with the Corinthians was the example of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:8-10).

The third thing that Paul shared with the Corinthians was his expectation of them in respect to the collection (2 Corinthians 8:11-15).

When Paul told the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 8:11 “but now finish doing it also,” he was explicitly commanding the repentant to complete the collection that they had begun a year earlier.

Paul, after having commanded the Corinthians to finish the collection, then qualified that command by telling them that it should be “by their ability” (2 Corinthians 8:11). Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:13 appears to be responding to a charge against him that his goal in having commanded the Corinthians to give was to prejudicially enrich his Jewish countrymen at the expense of the Corinthians.

The first thing Paul did in 2 Corinthians 8:13 was to deny the charge.

The second thing Paul did in 2 Corinthians 8:13 was to explain to the Corinthians that the reason why he gave the command to give and to do so proportionately was for the sake of equality.

When Paul explained to the Corinthians that the goal of the collection was “equality,” he was speaking of equality with reference to their basic needs (1 Timothy 6:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

Though we might today, in practicing the principle of equality, be the giver, in the future, based on the same principle, we might find ourselves becoming the receiver (2 Corinthians 8:14).

We are responsible for applying the principle of equality only when we personally encounter someone in need or when we are asked to contribute to someone in need by our elders.

We are only responsible for applying the principle of equality when we have reason to believe that the person receiving our help is a responsible individual who, if able to work, is willing to work.

May God give us the grace to humble ourselves before Him, so that the life Christ and the generosity of Christ might flow from us to others in accordance to His Word.