

## *The Proof of Your Love (2 Cor 8)*

[www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)

**Introduction:** It is important that we never lose the reason behind our work for the Lord.

- A. The Corinthians had demonstrated a willingness to ask questions and seek further understanding. For this Paul praised them. **(1 Cor 11:2)**
  - 1. Understanding is not easy! We must constantly seek it. **(Jn 4:23-24)**
  - 2. We fall into the way of the Pharisee's when we substitute the outward for the inward! **(2 Cor 10:12)**
- B. This chapter is dealing with a contribution he had earlier commanded the Corinthians. **(1 Cor 16:1-4)**
  - 1. In this contribution other churches were sending to the church at Jerusalem to help the needy Christians there.
  - 2. Paul knew that proper purpose and motivation was important throughout our efforts for the Lord.
  - 3. Also we see how Paul used wisdom in the handling of the money.

### ***I. The Power of Example (8:1-7)***

- A. When God's people understand the grace of God they will bear much fruit. **(8:1)**
  - 1. What did the grace of God bestow upon these churches? They made great sacrifices under extreme conditions.
  - 2. God's grace will push us to suffer for the glory of God. **(Titus 2:11-12; Phil 1:29)**
  - 3. How do you see the grace of God in your life?
- B. We can do much more than we realize!
  - 1. Consider the "impossible" conditions these brethren were experiencing. **(8:2)**
  - 2. Some of us might say to them: "You do not have to give!" We would be wrong.
  - 3. Are you a liberal? These brethren were poor yet rich! **(2 Cor 6:10)**
  - 4. These brethren begged Paul to let them give. Why? Because they wanted to have fellowship in the work of God. **(8:4)**
    - a. Would you tell someone that they did not have to pray?
    - b. Do we view our giving this way? **(Phil 4:15-17)**
  - 5. What is the key to abounding in any work we do? **(8:5; 1 Cor 6:19-20)**
    - a. Far too many have never died to the world! They still think they are their own master!
    - b. How have you planned your day tomorrow?
- C. We need to abound in our work to its completion! **(8:6-7; 10-11)**
  - 1. Why do many start and fail? **(Lk 14:28-30, 33)**
  - 2. When we are half hearted there is much damage done to us and to others by example. **(Heb 6:11-12)**
  - 3. Let us not be satisfied in just doing something, let us abound in it! Would Paul cite you as an example for others?

### ***II. Maintaining Proper Motivation (8:8-15)***

- A. Paul had earlier commanded these Corinthians to give. **(1 Cor 16:1-2)**

1. The word "order" means: **6486 διατάσσω** - strictly *arrange carefully, make precise arrangement*; hence *order, direct, command* (MT 11.1); middle with the same sense (AC 24.23); passive *be ordered* or *ordained* (GA 3.19)
  2. We know that the same command applies to us because of the obligation given to churches that involves money! **(2 Cor 11:8)**
  3. When we take everything that God says on this subject we apply this verse concerning how money is raised. This is a matter of authority. **(2 Tim 3:16-17)**
- B. Paul also makes an appeal on the basis of God's love in them. **(8:8)**
1. Paul knew that those who have the love of God in them will respond to the work of God if they are commanded or not!
  2. This is a good test for us! Do we only do what is required? Do minimums become maximums?
  3. What did Jesus give for us? **(8:9)**
  4. Do you think this way? This is the key for motivation! "What would Jesus do?"
- B. Why did one church send money to another church? **(8:12-15)**
1. Paul wanted them to know clearly that there was a need!
  2. The work of caring for needy members was the God given obligation of the local church.
  3. This assistance was temporary and later the tables could be turned.
  4. This bears no resemblance to the sponsoring church arrangement developed by brethren in the 50's.
  5. Do you know how this church spends its money.
- III. Wisdom in Protecting Reputation (8:16-24)**
- A. When dealing with money it is important to go to extra lengths to do things right.
1. Paul used men of good reputation. **(8:16-18, 22-23)**
  2. Each church chose who they would send. This is an example of autonomy! **(8:19; 1 Cor 16:3-4)**
  3. Paul knew the potential of misrepresentation. **(8:20-21)**
- B. The Corinthians also had a reputation based upon this test! **(8:19, 24)**
- Conclusion:** What if every member did as you?