

The Men Who Handle the Collection



2 CORINTHIANS 8:16-24

**TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL
HELPS**

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THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS, [2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15](#)

The Men Who Handle the Collection, [2 Corinthians 8:16-24](#)

[\(2 Corinthians 8:16-24\)](#) **Introduction:** men who handle collections in the church have an important function, very important. They hold a position that is very visible. People are always aware of the persons who handle their money. Therefore, within the church it is important that such persons be trustworthy and moral; that they live a good and clean life, and that they have a strong Christian testimony.

In the present passage, a special mission project is being undertaken to help the poor churches in Judea. A large sum of money ("**this abundance**") is involved. Paul wants to make absolutely sure that everything is above board, that he leaves no door open for questioning what happened to the money. He wants to protect the name of Christ and his own name. Therefore, he chooses Titus to head up a delegation of men to handle the offerings.

And note: the men are chosen by the church, not by Paul ([2 Cor. 8:19](#)).

Again, the importance of the men who handle collections cannot be overstressed. For this reason, this passage discusses these men and the kind of men they must be. (See [Acts 20:4-6](#); [1 Cor. 16:1-4](#)).

1. **They care for the church—earnestly care (v.16-17).**
2. **They have a reputation for the gospel, a testimony for witnessing (v.18).**
3. **They are representatives chosen by the church in order to avoid charges of misconduct against the minister (v.19-21).**
4. **They are diligent in many things, but especially in collections (v.22).**
5. **They are partners of the minister (v.23).**
6. **They are to be loved by the church (v.24).**

1. [\(2 Corinthians 8:16-17\)](#) **Stewardship— Offerings: men who handle collections (ushers) care for the church, earnestly care.**

Paul says that Titus had the "same earnest care" for the Corinthian church that he had. Imagine caring for the church as much as Paul cared! The word "earnest" means zeal. Men who handle collections must have a zealous concern for the church and its welfare. But note where the concern and zeal must come from.

1. The concern for the church must come from God. It was God that *put the care and concern* into the heart of Titus.

Titus did not care for the church.....

- a. because of tradition.
- b. because it was the church of his parents or forefathers.
- c. because he felt that it made him acceptable to God.
- d. because he sought to be seen and recognized by the people.

Titus had a *zealous care* for the church because God had *put the care* into his heart. Men who handle the collections must know God personally, know Him so intimately that God can move upon their hearts and put a spirit of caring within them.

2. The concern for the church must come from within the heart. This was true of Titus. Titus was not void of feelings; his heart was tender and warm toward the church. He had a natural care for the church and for the things of God.

The point is this: the men who handle the collections must have a zealous concern for the church, a concern that comes both from the Spirit of God and from a warm, tender heart for the things of God.

2. (2 Corinthians 8:18) Stewardship— Offerings: men who handle collections (ushers) have a reputation for the gospel, that is, for believing the gospel and for bearing witness to it.

The man mentioned in this verse is never named, and any attempt to identify him is futile and worthless conjecture. Three significant things are said about him.

1. He was a "**brother**" in the Lord, a Christian brother to Paul and to other believers.

This is essential for those who handle collections:

- a. They must be men who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- b. They must be acting like brothers, living in fellowship, harmony, and unity with other believers. There is no room for criticism, murmuring, or divisiveness.

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" ([Matthew 12:50](#)).

2. He had a strong testimony in the gospel. This means that he was a strong witness to the gospel. He not only lived for Christ, but he bore witness to the saving power of Christ—that Christ could and would change a person's life: transforming him into a new creature, forgiving his sins and giving him eternal life.

3. His testimony was so strong that it was known throughout "all the churches."

Thought 1. What a dynamic testimony for all those who handle collections!

How important.....

- a. that they be true brothers in the Lord.
- b. that they have strong testimonies in the gospel.
- c. that their testimonies be so strong that people know that they follow the Lord.

**"For by it [faith] the elders obtained a good report"
([Hebrews 11:2](#)).**

"For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" ([Romans 16:19](#)).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" ([1 Peter 3:15](#)).

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold" ([Proverbs 22:1](#)).

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" ([Psalm 66:16](#)).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" ([Isaiah 43:10](#)).

[3. \(2 Corinthians 8:19-21\) Stewardship— Offerings— Ushers: men who handle collections \(ushers\) are representatives chosen by the church in order to avoid charges of misconduct against the minister.](#)

This is a very significant fact—a lesson that must be heeded by ministers and churches alike. If Paul had handled the offering himself, he could have left himself open to the charge of confiscating or stealing money. The only wise course was to have the church elect one of its own men to handle the offering.

Note that the offering was called "**this grace.**" As **Charles Hodge** points out, any free gift is a grace (*[An Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#), p.209*). Therefore, the offering of a church is a grace; it is the heart of the church being poured out in a free gift to reach and help the desperate of the world. The church must pour its soul out in offerings for the lost and needy of the world. They reel under the weight of sin, hunger, thirst, disease, ignorance, loneliness, helplessness, purposelessness, and death. This alone stresses the *awesome importance* of the ushers and men who handle the collections.

Note another significant point: why the offering was being ministered. It was for the glory of the Lord. When people saw the offering and knew what it was to be used for, their hearts would glorify the Lord. The Lord would be praised more than He otherwise would be.

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15).

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" (Hebrews 3:5).

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Peter 3:13-14).

Note: Paul clearly states why he had taken such precautions. He wanted all men to know that he was honest, that he would never put his hand into the till and take money out of the offerings. He did not want anyone to have a question about his personal conduct. Appearance mattered—what people thought mattered—for he had dedicated his very life to reaching and helping people.

4. (2 Corinthians 8:22) Stewardship— Offerings— Ushers: men who handle collections (ushers) are diligent in many things, but especially in collections.

Who this unnamed brother was is not known. Three significant points are made about him, points that should speak to the heart of every usher and person who handles collections.

- 1.** He was a brother, a true believer who was in fellowship with other believers and cooperated with the church in its mission endeavors.
- 2.** He had often "**proved diligent**" when other ministries had been assigned to him. The word "**diligent**" (*spoudaion*) means "**earnest, zealous, devoted**". He gave himself wholeheartedly to whatever task the church gave him.
- 3.** He observed and was alert to the testimony of churches. When Paul told him about the Corinthian church—about the great revival of the church—he became excited and was more willing than ever to serve Christ in the midst of the church.

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11).

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end" ([Hebrews 6:11](#)).

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" ([2 Peter 1:10](#)).

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" ([2 Peter 3:14](#)).

5. ([2 Corinthians 8:23](#)) Stewardship— Offerings— Ushers: men who handle collections (ushers) are partners of the ministers.

Note that Paul expected people to be asking who these men were. This is a natural inquiry, for the men handle the offerings for the church. Therefore, it was extremely important that the credentials of the men be of the highest quality.

1. Titus was the partner and fellow helper of Paul—especially in ministering to the Corinthian church. Most of the Corinthians would know this, for Titus had been God's main instrument in bringing revival to the church.

2. The other two men were messengers of the church, men especially chosen by the church to represent the church. Note also that they were the messengers of the glory of Christ. They were to reflect and share the glory of Christ as they served the church.

Thought 1. Both points are to be true of all ushers and men who handle collections in the church.

1) Ushers are to be the partners of the minister.

2) Ushers are to be messengers of both the church and of the glory of God.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" ([Romans 12:5](#)).

"And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" ([1 Cor. 12:5-7](#)).

"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" ([1 Cor. 12:11-12](#)).

6. ([2 Corinthians 8:24](#)) Stewardship— Offerings— Ushers: men who handle collections (ushers) are to be loved by the church.

This is essential: the church had to prove its love to the men who were handling the money if they were to effectively fulfill their ministry.

The church was to prove its love in two ways:

1. **First**, by receiving the men, accepting both them and their ministry.
2. **Second**, by helping the men fulfill their ministry. The church had to let the men present the mission project and then contribute to it.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" ([Matthew 5:16](#)).

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" ([John 13:34-35](#)).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" ([Romans 13:10](#)).

"If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors" ([James 2:8-9](#)).