

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS

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

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

[2 Corinthians 8:16-24 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁶ But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

¹⁸ We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of the gospel has spread* through all the churches;

¹⁹ and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness,

²⁰ taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift;

²¹ for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

²² We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of *his* great confidence in you.

²³ As for Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, *they are* messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.

²⁴ Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

[\(2 Corinthians 8:16-24\) 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 Corinthians 8:16-19](#)).

2 Corinthians 8:16-19 (NASB)

¹⁶ But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

¹⁸ We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of the gospel has spread* through all the churches;

¹⁹ and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness,

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 below note—’ [Acts 20:4-6](#); and note—’[1 Corinthians 16:1-4](#) for more discussion.)

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.

2 Corinthians 8:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶“But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.”

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...

- because of tradition.
- because it was the church of his parents or forefathers.
- because he felt that it made him acceptable to God.
- 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.

Stewardship with Integrity Calls for Submission to Pastoral Leadership

2 Corinthians 8:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶“But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

¹⁷ For **he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.**”

Paul here anticipated and answered another potential objection to the offering, namely, that the project was his alone. But it was not just Paul’s passion; **God had put the same earnestness** for the project **in the heart of Titus**. Titus, who knew them so well and loved them so dearly (cf. [2 Corinthians 7:15](#)), was also wholeheartedly committed to the relief effort for the Jerusalem saints.

2 Corinthians 7:15 (NASB)

¹⁵“His affection abounds all the more toward you, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling.”

That God had so united the hearts of Paul and Titus further confirmed that the collection was His will. Nor could the anti-Paul faction accuse Titus of having a Jewish bias, since he was a Gentile.

Lest any should think that Paul coerced Titus into being involved with the program, the apostle noted that **he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord**. Paul did ask Titus to participate, and he **accepted** the apostle’s appeal. But so **earnest** was Titus’s support for the project that he went to Corinth **of his own accord**. His voluntary participation along with Paul was further evidence of the unanimity between the two.

Forceful, strong-willed leaders can often ram through their projects. But biblically sound stewardship programs will be led by a plurality of godly men. The church's finances are to be overseen by wise, theologically sound, spiritually mature men who agree to seek the mind of God.

Note # 1

Acts 20:4-6 (NASB)

⁴ And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

⁵ But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas.

⁶ We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.

([Acts 20:4-6](#)) **Discipleship**: the faithful minister grew disciples. These men were chosen by the various churches to help Paul deliver the relief offerings being sent to the Jerusalem church.

1. **Sopater** or **Sosipater** was from **Berea**. He may be the same person mentioned by Paul as being with him when he wrote Romans ([Romans 16:21](#)). He was a servant of the Lord who was held in high esteem by the church at Berea. He was the one trusted with their offerings to the church of Jerusalem.

2. **Aristarchus** (see [Philemon 1:24](#)).

3. **Secundus**. This is the only reference to him. He was a disciple of Paul, a man highly esteemed by his church at **Thessalonica**, being entrusted with the offering to the poor.

4. **Gaius** was a common name, and there are several possibilities as to who he was. Note that he was accompanying Paul.

⇒ There was **Gaius**, a native of **Macedonia** and a disciple of Paul who was seized in the riot at Ephesus ([Acts 19:29](#)).

⇒ There was **Gaius**, a native of Derbe and a disciple of Paul ([Acts 20:4](#)). This Gaius is most likely the same as the **Gaius** of **Corinth**.

⇒ There was **Gaius** who was led to the Lord and baptized by Paul in Corinth ([Romans 16:23](#); [1 Corinthians 1:14](#)).

5. **Timothy**

6. **Tychicus**

7. **Trophimus** was from **Ephesus**. There are only three references to him. He was the highly-esteemed leader in the church at Ephesus who was entrusted with their offerings to the poor at **Jerusalem** ([Acts 20:4-5](#)). He was the reason why the Jews of Jerusalem rioted and arrested Paul. He was left sick by Paul in **Miletus** ([2 Tim. 4:20](#)). (Note Paul was unable to heal him. It is not always God's will to heal. But we must always remember: God does will to heal sometimes.)

Thought 1. Paul was constantly making disciples, attaching men to himself and growing them in the Lord.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
²⁰teaching [making disciples] them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

2 Timothy 2:2 (NASB)

²“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

Thought 2. Note that these men were chosen to handle the offerings of the church. They show us what kind of men (ushers) should be chosen to handle money for the church.