

Studies in

2 Corinthians



Lesson XIV

Text: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 (NKJV)

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: **2** that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. **3** For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, **4** imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. **5** And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. **6** So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. **7** But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. **9** For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

10 And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; **11** but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have. **12** For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

13 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; **14** but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality. **15** As it is written, “He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.”

Discussion Questions

1. One of the ways to keep our faith strong is through the sharing of testimonials. Paul begins chapter 8 with a story about whom? (vs. 1)

2. There are several paradoxes in the Christian life. For example Jesus said, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." How is this paradoxical truth reflected in verse 2?

3. What secret of joy had the Macedonians discovered? (vs. 3-5)

4. Look again at verses 3-5 and identify at least four important principles of giving:
 - I. Giving b_____ one's a_____ (vs. 3)
 - II. Giving as a f_____ w_____ offering (vs. 3)
 - III. Giving u_____ (vs. 4)
 - IV. Giving one's s_____ to G_____, then to o_____ (vs. 5)

5. What role did Titus play in the Corinthians fund drive? (vs. 6)

6. What four things are we to "excel" in? (vs. 7)

7. Paul apparently did not want to use his authority to "command" the Corinthians to give. How did he prefer to motivate them to take action? (vv. 8-11)

8. What makes our gifts pleasing to God, according to verse 12?