

Sermon Outline

NOBC

#25 2 Corinthians 9:1-5 (page 856)

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God's Grace of Giving: Part 5

Paul was collecting the offerings that the various gentile congregations had pledged to give to help the believers in Jerusalem. It was not only a magnificent and wonderful Christian experience of love and sharing, but also an opportunity for the gentile Christians to learn about the Christian grace of giving.

However, Paul had one problem church, Corinth, and in the account of his dealing with them we are able to learn some very helpful truths about this unique grace. Because the Corinthian church, which was the most affluent of all the churches, had made a pledge to give a certain amount, but failed to do so, we are able to learn how to deal with those things that become obstacles to giving.

I. PAUL EMPHASIZED THE POSITIVES 2 Cor. 9:1-2

A. Paul Knew That They Knew What They Were Supposed to Do

1. Their failure was not due to their ignorance
2. Information was not what they needed
3. For Paul to inform them would have been totally unnecessary

B. They Had Demonstrated Strong Emotions Regarding This Ministry

1. Paul had boasted of their passions about the offering
2. All of the other churches knew about their passions and were motivated by what they had heard about the Corinthians

II. PAUL'S STEPS TO HELP THE CORINTHIANS 2 Cor. 9:3-4

A. He Sent Some Friends to Encourage Them

1. Friends: People who have invested the time and energy to build a relationship with others
2. Friends are able to say things to help that others cannot say

B. Paul Gently Reminded Them of Their Commitment

1. Paul did not want them to be embarrassed
2. Paul did not want them to develop a "guilt complex"

III. PAUL ENCOURAGED THEM TO TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO FULFILL THEIR PLEDGE

IV. PAUL HELPS THEM DEAL WITH THE DIFFICULT ISSUES 2 Cor. 9:5

A. Intentions Need Action To Move To Completion

1. Good intentions never accomplish anything
2. Good intentions need a plan of action to move to fulfillment
3. Good intentions languish if the determination of the will is not involved
4. Good intentions often run into difficulties prior to fulfillment so the difficult ties must be addressed and overcome

B. Paul Identified Covetousness As Their Major Problem

1. Covetousness must be identified as a powerful sin
Mark 7:21-22; 2 Peter 2:14; Micah 2:2; 1 Corinthians 5:1 1; Romans 1:28-29
2. A covetous person cannot enter heaven
1 Corinthians 6:9-1 1; Ephesians 5:5
3. Covetousness is self-destructive; get rid of it!