

First and Second Corinthians Stewardship and Mission

Lesson #11 for September 12, 2026

Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 8&9; John 3:16; 17:5; Revelation 13:8; Romans 12:8; 15:26-27; Luke 9:58.

1. What does the term *stewardship* mean? How does stewardship relate to mission?

[From the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] A young entrepreneur, Maya, had just launched a small tech startup, focused on community health. Her team was lean, the funding was tight, and the future was uncertain, but they believed deeply in their mission.

During their first profitable quarter, instead of reinvesting everything into growth like most startups, Maya suggested they donate a portion to a nonprofit, helping underserved schools get access to mental health tools. Her team was hesitant. “Shouldn’t we wait until we are more stable?” one asked.

Maya replied, “If we only give when it’s easy, is it really generosity? Let’s lead with purpose, not just profit.”

The company gave. It wasn’t a huge amount, but it was meaningful. Months later, the donation opened unexpected doors—new partnerships, press coverage, and even a major investor who was drawn to their values.

This story mirrors the heart of 2 Corinthians 8 and 9: generosity isn’t about waiting until you’re “ready”—it’s about trusting God, giving from what you have, and watching how He multiplies it for others and for you.—*T-BSG** 145.‡

2. Using the examples of God “giving” His Son and Jesus “giving” His whole life to mankind as well as the example of the Macedonians who gave for the Judean church even though they were not wealthy, Paul tried to motivate the prosperous Corinthians to donate to the Christians of Judea who were suffering during a famine. Is that also an example for us?

[T-BSG:] **Background: Corinth as a Commercial Hub:** The city of Corinth was strategically located on an isthmus, connecting mainland Greece to the Peloponnese. Goods from Europe and Asia passed through, making it a center of trade and wealth. The city was rebuilt by Rome in 44 B.C. and populated with freedmen, merchants, and entrepreneurs, contributing to a strong Roman influence and a diverse economic environment. As noted by New Testament scholar Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “The first colonists were ex-slaves from Greece, Syria, Judea, and Egypt who had everything to gain. They began by robbing tombs to make a living, but the site had so much economic potential that within fifty years a number of the citizens were millionaires.”—Murphy-O’Connor, “Corinth,” in *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. K. Doob Sakenfeld (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2006), vol. 1, p. 733.

The most common currencies of Corinth were Roman coins, especially denarii [*sic*] and sesterces [*sic*] [1/4 of a *denarius*], but Greek coins (such as drachmas [*sic*]) were also used. Coins were made of precious metals

(silver, bronze, and occasionally, gold), and their value was based on weight and metal content. Trade involved not only coins but also barter and credit systems, especially in larger transactions or among trusted parties. Informal banking was common; money changers and lenders operated in marketplaces or temples, offering loans and currency exchange. Interest rates could be high, and debt could lead to enslavement, especially for the lower class. Temples sometimes functioned as financial centers where people deposited money or secured loans.

A wide gap existed between the rich and poor in Corinth. A well-known proverb, quoted by the Greek geographer Strabo (and also referred to by the Roman poet Horace), summarizes well the ethos of Corinth during this time: “Not for everyone is the voyage to Corinth,” meaning that **only the tough survived in the city** (see *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 734).

Wealthy merchants and landowners lived in luxury, while many others—laborers, artisans, and slaves—lived with much less. The early church in Corinth likely included both wealthy patrons and poorer members, which is why issues of equality and generosity (*as in 2 Corinthians 8, 9*) were so relevant. **In Greco-Roman culture, giving was often tied to honor and reciprocity: one gave to gain favor, not out of selfless love.** Paul’s call for sacrificial, grace-based giving in 2 Corinthians was in radical opposition to this prevailing practice. **He exhorted the Corinthians to give, not for gain or status, but from love, equality, and Christlike generosity.**—*TBSG** 145-146.^{†‡§} [That was not common in Corinth! What about today?][†]

God’s Generosity: He “Gave” Us His Son

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] Second Corinthians 8 and 9 show that Paul gave the Corinthians the opportunity to serve their brothers and sisters in Judea. This passage shows that giving is a privilege that God grants us, so that we can emulate the self-giving character of Christ. The language of heaven is one of giving. Notice these remarkable words [of John].—*BSG** for Sabbath Afternoon, September 5.^{†‡§}

John 3:16: For God loved the world so much that he **gave** his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation*^{®*} [GNT] (*Today’s English Version*) [TEV], Second Edition (John 3:16). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV** or *GNB-TEV**].^{†‡}

[BSG:] Furthermore, John 3:16 clearly expresses God’s purpose in giving Jesus, so that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (*NKJV*). **Stewardship and mission go together in this passage.** They are **as inseparable as the two sides of a coin**. It is no wonder that Paul identifies himself and his fellow workers as “stewards of the mysteries of God” (*1 Cor. 4:1, NKJV*). We, too, are stewards in the same sense.—*BSG** for Sabbath Afternoon, September 5.^{†‡§}

1 Corinthians 4:1: You should think of us as Christ’s servants, who have been put

in charge of God's secret truths.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich him by our gifts.** Says the psalmist: “All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.” Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of his mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other.—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,* December 6, 1887, par. 15; *Counsels on Stewardship** [with differences in capitalization of words] 18.3.^{†‡} [God asks us to give in order to grow character! We need it!][‡]
[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.8524&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.8524&index=0)[‡]

Generosity of the Macedonians As an Example of Giving

3. Paul preached in Macedonia (which today includes parts of Greece and Turkey), and the not-so-wealthy converts in that area contributed greatly to help the Christians in Jerusalem and the surrounding area who were struggling because of the famine.
4. ***What issues made it difficult for Paul to raise the money he needed from the Corinthians to help the brethren in Judea? We have already discussed in 2 Corinthians 1-7 the questions Paul had about the members of the church in Corinth. And then, he wanted to talk about raising money! Were they still squabbling?***
5. Paul then used the example of the generosity of the Macedonians to spur the Corinthians. When trying to convince someone of something that they should do, it is often helpful to give examples of others who have done something similar. Paul, in this case, uses the example of the Macedonians. The Macedonians were not rich. In fact, Paul described them as being extremely poor. But, apparently, they were still willing to donate generously.

[T-BSG:] This backdrop sets the tone for the theme of generosity. Generosity isn't just a decision to give—it's a response to divine grace. The **Macedonians** didn't give because they were pressured or because giving made them look good. **Their giving was voluntary, joyful, and sacrificial, motivated by gratitude and love.** This kind of giving doesn't make sense by worldly standards—it reflects a heart changed and motivated by grace, not economics or obligation. True generosity flows from a life surrendered to God. When people are fully His, their resources naturally follow. Grace reorients our priorities, making giving not just an act of charity but of worship.

Paul calls giving a “grace”—the same word he uses for spiritual gifts and God's unmerited favor (*charis*). He's saying that generosity is not just a duty; it's a spiritual act, a divine enablement.—*T-BSG** 147.^{†‡§}

- 2 Corinthians 8:1-14:** ¹Our friends, we want you to know what God's grace has accomplished in the churches in Macedonia. ²They have been severely tested by the troubles they went through; but their joy was so great that they were extremely generous in their giving, even though they are very poor. ³I can assure you that they gave as much as they could, and even more than they could. **Of their own free will** ⁴**they begged us and pleaded for the privilege of having a part in helping God's people in Judea.** ⁵It was more

than we could have hoped for! First they gave themselves to the Lord; and then, by God's will they gave themselves to us as well. ⁶So we urged Titus, who began this work, to continue it and help you complete this special service of love. ⁷You are so rich in all you have: in faith, speech, and knowledge, in your eagerness to help and in your love for us. And so we want you to be generous also in this service of love.

⁸I am not laying down any rules. But by showing how eager others are to help, I am trying to find out how real your own love is. ⁹**You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; rich as he was, he made himself poor for your sake, in order to make you rich by means of his poverty.**

[Admonition to the Corinthians:] ¹⁰My opinion is that it is better for you to finish now what you began last year. You were the first, not only to act, but also to be willing to act. ¹¹On with it, then, and finish the job! Be as eager to finish it as you were to plan it, and do it with what you now have. ¹²If you are eager to give, God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you don't have.

¹³⁻¹⁴I am not trying to relieve others by putting a burden on you; but since you have plenty at this time, it is only fair that you should help those who are in need. Then, when you are in need and they have plenty, they will help you. In this way both are treated equally.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†‡}

Jesus Christ As Paul's Example of Giving/Generosity

[BSG:] We will see that **the concepts of stewardship and mission are deeply rooted in the example of Jesus**. Indeed, stewardship and mission are inseparable. Stewardship provides the church with financial and human resources to fulfill God's mission.—BSG* for Sabbath Afternoon.^{†‡}

[T-BSG:] **Christ, the Model of Generosity**: Paul's appeal to the Corinthian believers is based on Christ's willingness to give Himself for us while we were still estranged from God. **For the Christian, generosity is not about wealth. It's about worship. It's not about guilt or pressure. It's about grace. As we experience the undeserved generosity of God in Christ, we are moved to mirror that grace by giving freely, joyfully, and sacrificially.**

Christ as the model of generosity is one of the most profound themes in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Paul doesn't just teach about giving—he roots it deeply in the gospel. A central verse is 2 Corinthians 8:9 [see Items #5 & #6], which states: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (ESV). This verse is the theological anchor of Paul's appeal.

"*Though he was rich.*" This phrase refers to Christ's pre-existent glory—His divine status, eternal fellowship with the Father, and the riches of heaven.

"*He became poor.*" Jesus emptied Himself, not only by becoming human but by enduring rejection, suffering, and, ultimately, the cross (*Phil. 2:6–8*).

"*So that you . . . might become rich.*" Through His sacrifice, we gain spiritual riches: forgiveness, righteousness, adoption, eternal life.

Paul's point is clear. **Generosity isn't about money—it's about self-giving love.** And no one has given more than Jesus. Paul doesn't manipulate the Corinthians into giving; **he challenges them to let their love reflect Christ's love.**

True generosity is proof of transformed hearts, shaped by the example of Jesus' sacrificial love. Voluntary and joyful giving reflects Christ (2 Cor. 9:7). Just as Jesus gave Himself willingly and joyfully for our sake (Heb. 12:2), believers are called to give in the same spirit—not out of guilt but out of grace-filled joy. Paul reminds the Corinthians that when we give like Christ, we are not depleted—**we are resupplied by God's grace.** The same God who gave us Christ, our greatest gift, is faithful to give us what we need to be generous.—T-BSG* 147-148.^{†‡§}

6. How much did Jesus give up in order to come to this earth and do what He did for us? He was the King of the entire universe!

2 Corinthians 8:9 [Reading again]: You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; rich as he was, he made himself poor for your sake, in order to make you rich by means of his poverty.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

[BSG:] Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 8:9 is one of the most astonishing, powerful, and profound passages in the whole Bible. Paul tells the story of Jesus' mission but with an incredible **economy of words**. There is so much theology here. **This is the story of redemption but in only one verse.**

Even more impressive is that this story is told through financial language. Yes, Jesus was rich. His richness refers to His pre-existence in heaven (John 17:5).—BSG* for Sunday, September 6.^{†‡§}

John 17:5: "Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made."—*Good News Bible-TEV*.* [What did Jesus leave behind? What did He become?][†]

Luke 9:58: Jesus said to him [a "would-be" follower of Jesus], "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lie down and rest."—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*‡} [Think of the example of Jesus!][†]

Philippians 2:7-8: ⁷Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant [or slave].

He became like a human being
and appeared in human likeness.

⁸He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death—his death on the cross [as a traitor to Rome].—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*‡}

7. Ellen White suggested that it would be well for us to spend **a thoughtful hour every day focusing on the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes.** What was His main goal? Our salvation! Paul made the point that stewardship and mission go together.
8. ***What hope would we have if Jesus had decided not to come to this earth? None!***
9. ***Will we ever be able to repay Christ for what He has done for us? Impossible! Paul then talked about how thankful we should be for everything that Christ has done for us. He described that as "the grace of God in Christ."***
10. ***Shouldn't God's unbelievable gifts for our benefit lead us to be generous in***

spreading the gospel to others?

[EGW:] Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ, will follow the example of Him who for our sake became poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. Money, time, influence—all the gifts they have received from God's hand, they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles** 71.1.[‡]

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What is Our Motivation for Giving?

[BSG:] The **language of giving** pervades 2 Corinthians 8 and 9: “The grace of God . . . has been given” (2 Cor. 8:1, *ESV*); “They gave themselves” (2 Cor. 8:5, *ESV*); “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart . . . , for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7, *NIV*); “He has given to the poor” (2 Cor. 9:9, *ESV*); “They will glorify God because of . . . the generosity of your contribution” (2 Cor. 9:13, *ESV*); “Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!” (2 Cor. 9:15, *ESV*). Second Corinthians 8 and 9 begin and end with the language of giving (2 Cor. 8:1 and 2 Cor. 9:15).—BSG* for Monday, September 7.^{†§}

[BSG:] We must read these two chapters [2 Corinthians 8&9] with the idea of giving in mind. They present at least four major reasons for giving our offerings.—BSG* for Monday, September 7.[‡]

11. We should: (1) Show gratitude for God's grace; (2) Want to follow the example of Jesus; (3) Desire to share God's blessings; and (4) Have and show sincere love.

Give with the Motivation of a Willing Heart

2 Corinthians 9:7-12: ⁷You should each give, then, as you have decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly.

⁸And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. ⁹As the scripture says,

“He gives generously to the needy;
his kindness lasts forever.”

¹⁰And **God, who supplies seed for the sower and bread to eat, will also supply you with all the seed you need and will make it grow and produce a rich harvest from your generosity.** ¹¹He will always make you rich enough to be generous at all times, so that many will thank God for your gifts which they receive from us. ¹²For this service you perform not only meets the needs of God's people, but also produces an outpouring of gratitude to God.—GNB-TEV.*[†] [Paul was asking nothing for himself!][‡]

[BSG:] **Desire to follow the example of Jesus (2 Cor. 8:9).** Jesus was rich and became poor (remember that these are symbols for His eternal pre-

existence and then coming into humanity, respectively). There is only one way for that to have happened: He gave all. As for us, by sharing our offerings, we provide means for others to know Christ.

Desire to share God's blessings (2 Cor. 9:10, 11). We give to others only because we first received from God. He enriches us so that we can be generous.

Sincere love (2 Cor. 8:8, 24). Giving is the test of sincere and genuine love. It is the most substantial evidence that love dwells in one's heart. To use an English expression, it is to **"put your money where your mouth is."**—BSG* for Monday, September 7.^{†‡§}

12. ***Paul then turned to the Corinthians, and essentially said: "Considering all these examples that I have provided, what should you do?" Paul did not leave anything to chance. He made very specific suggestions about what the Corinthians should have done to prepare for this gift.***

13. Do you find it is easy to give gladly? ***What would motivate a Christian to give gladly?***

Stewardship Requires Planning and Planned Giving

[BSG:] God's decision to save the world took place even before the world fell into sin. Christ's coming to die for us was **part of an ancient plan** (Rev. 13:8).—BSG* for Tuesday, September 8.^{†‡§}

Revelation 13:8: All people living on earth will worship it, except those whose names were written before the creation of the world in the book of the living which belongs to the Lamb that was killed.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

[BSG:] God was not caught by surprise [by sin]. He had made plans to give Himself through Jesus. In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, **planning is an essential theological principle that concerns the act of giving**. This can be seen in at least two ways:

First, ***planning involves previous decision***. Paul says that "each of you should give what you have decided in your heart" (2 Cor. 9:7, NIV). The Greek word translated as "decided" is the verb *proaireō*. This verb is a compound form. The particle *pro* means "beforehand" or "in advance," and *aireō* means in this context "to decide." Thus, *proaireō* **points to a decision made beforehand**. Also, by starting his statement with "each of you," Paul indicates that the given amount will not be the same for everyone. His point was simply that whatever people decide to give, they should do it with careful reflection. They should give what they believe is the right amount for them to give. [Giving based on what you can give now!]

Second, ***planning involves the principle of proportionality***. Paul reports that the Macedonians "gave according to their means" (2 Cor. 8:3, ESV). Next, he applies this principle of proportionality to the Corinthians, as well. Encouraging them to finish the task that they had already committed to, he urges them to complete that project by using the resources that they possess (2 Cor. 8:11). He concludes this thought by saying that the offering is given **"according to what a person has**, not according to what he does not have" (2 Cor. 8:12, ESV). Whereas the Bible defines the proportionality

of the tithes, namely, 10 percent, the same does not apply to the offerings. “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart” (2 Cor. 9:7, *NIV*) by applying the principle of proportionality. In other words, each one decides which proportion of earnings that he or she will give as an offering. Each one is supposed to give in proportion to what one has. This cannot be done without planning.—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 8.^{†‡§}

2 Corinthians 8:3,11-12: ³I can assure you that they [the Macedonians] gave as much as they could, and even more than they could. Of their own free will....

¹¹On with it, then, and finish the job! Be as eager to finish it as you were to plan it, and do it with what you now have. ¹²If you are eager to give, God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you don't have.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*‡}

[*BSG*:] How faithful are you with tithes and offerings, no matter how rich or poor you are? What excuses do you use to hold back from giving when you know that you can do more?—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 8.[‡]

Giving Must Be with a Generous Attitude?

14. ***Do you think the Corinthians had any questions about why the Macedonians had been so willing to give? The attitude of the Macedonians can be seen clearly in what Paul presented. Notice these points:***

[*BSG*:] First, **they gave with abundant joy (2 Cor. 8:2)**. Paul says that the Macedonians’ “abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity” (2 Cor. 8:2, *ESV*). He later mentions that “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7, *NKJV*). The Greek word rendered as “cheerful” occurs only here in the New Testament. A term from the same family occurs elsewhere: “The one who does acts of mercy [must do it] with cheerfulness” (*Rom. 12:8, ESV*). Terms from this word family sometimes appear in extra-biblical literature, with a sense of gladness and happiness. In 2 Corinthians 9:7, being a cheerful giver means giving without reluctance.

Second, **they gave with generosity (2 Cor. 8:2)**. Before Paul mentioned the Macedonians’ generosity, he first referred to their “extreme poverty” (*ESV*). The word “generosity” (in Greek, *haplotētos*) appears twice more in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Paul says, “You will be enriched in every way so that you can be *generous* on every occasion” (2 Cor. 9:11, *NIV*; *emphasis supplied*), meaning that we are given so that we can then give. A little further, he mentions “the *generosity* of your contribution” (2 Cor. 9:13, *ESV*; *emphasis supplied*). In this passage, being generous in contributing is a way of confessing Christ’s gospel.

Third, **they gave “of their own free will” (2 Cor. 8:3, *NLT*)**. This means that they gave voluntarily. This becomes even more admirable when one sees they did not give out of their surplus, for their resources were extremely limited. Paul uses the same idea to characterize Titus’s willingness to visit the Corinthians. He went to Corinth voluntarily (2 Cor. 8:17).

Fourth, **they gave with a sense that giving is a privilege (2 Cor. 8:4)**. This attitude is perceptible in the Macedonians’ request to participate in the

collection. “They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service” (2 Cor. 8:4, NIV).

Finally, **they participated in the collection as an act of total consecration (2 Cor. 8:5)**. Paul says, “They gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us” (2 Cor. 8:5, ESV). Giving oneself to the Lord results in giving oneself to others. The Macedonians expanded their mission involvement beyond financial assistance. That is, **giving** and being generous **is not limited to money alone**.—BSG* for Wednesday.^{†‡Ω§}

[EGW:] How great was the gift of God to man, and how like our God to make it! With a liberality that can never be exceeded he gave, that he might save the rebellious sons of men and bring them to see his purpose and discern his love. Will you, by your gifts and offerings, show that you think nothing too good for Him who “gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? The man who truly loves God will not offer to him lip service merely. He will bring to the treasury his gifts and offerings, that laborers may be sent forth to sow the precious seed.—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,* May 15, 1900, par. 8.[‡]
[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.19267&index=0>][‡]

Generosity and Willing Giving Brings Unity to the Church

15. *We need to remember that Paul was then primarily working for Gentiles. The formerly-Jewish Christians had serious questions about that effort and what impact it should have on the church. Paul was trying to get his Gentile Christians to show their unity with their Jewish “brethren” back in Judea. What would you have done if you were Paul to try to convince the Jewish Christians that these new Gentile Christians were true brothers and sisters in the faith? Give a generous gift?*
16. Clearly, Paul wanted all Christians to feel like they were part of a single movement.
17. During the winter that Paul was in Corinth in preparation for his travel back to Jerusalem, he wrote the books of Galatians and Romans. Notice how he felt about the relationship between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians.

Romans 15:26-27: ²⁶For the churches in Macedonia and Achaia have freely decided to give an offering to help the poor among God’s people in Jerusalem. ²⁷That decision was their own; but, as a matter of fact, they have an obligation to help them. **Since the Jews shared their spiritual blessings with the Gentiles, the Gentiles ought to use their material blessings to help the Jews.**—Good News Bible-TEV.*[†]

18. *Paul clearly considered this gathering of money to support other brethren as an act of worship. When you donate to the church, do you think of it as worship?*

Financial Integrity with the Church Resources Must Be Present

[T-BSG:] Paul ensures accountability in handling the offering in order to protect everyone involved.—T-BSG* 145.[‡]

[T-BSG:] **Financial Integrity Matters:** Beyond the call to generosity, Paul is deeply concerned with **how the money**, given to support the struggling church in Jerusalem, **is handled**. In 2 Corinthians 8:18–21, he very

transparently explains the system: “With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel. And not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will. We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of man” (ESV). [Choose a person you trust to carry the money!]

Paul makes the case, in 2 Corinthians 8:18–21, that trustworthiness and transparency are two important values in building God’s kingdom. These two qualities **ensure that everything is done in a manner that is above reproach**. Furthermore, **they show accountability** before God and people, and, finally, they protect the mission—and Paul himself—from any suspicion of misuse.

Paul’s example is a model of proactive integrity. Paul doesn’t wait for questions to arise; he builds credibility from the beginning. **Paul chooses multiple men with proven character to oversee the offering**. They aren’t just qualified—they are known for their integrity and dedication to the gospel. Their character builds trust in the process and ensures shared responsibility. In Paul’s eyes, handling money—especially money given for God’s work—is not a casual task. It’s **a sacred responsibility**. God’s resources must be managed in a way that honors Him. Integrity in finances is not just about avoiding fraud; it’s about maintaining the credibility of the gospel and building trust in the community.

One key reason people hesitate to give is a lack of trust—they fear their money might be misused. Paul addresses this fear head-on. By emphasizing **transparency and accountability**, he clears the way for greater generosity, because people can give with confidence.

Paul understands that financial integrity isn’t just about personal conscience (2 Cor. 8:21)—it’s about public testimony.—*T-BSG** 148.^{†‡§}

19. ***In order to encourage trust in the whole process. Paul chose two well-known and trustworthy friends to join Titus in taking charge of the money. He did not carry it himself. Those brethren who had been assigned to carry the money had actually been chosen by the various churches as trustworthy messengers and agents.***
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