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The Principals of Christian Giving According to Second Corinthians Eight and Nine

Roland E. Grumm

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_grummr@csl.edu

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**THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN GIVING ACCORDING
TO SECOND CORINTHIANS EIGHT AND NINE**

**A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of New Testament
Theology in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of Bachelor of Divinity**

by

Roland E. Grumm

June 1955

Approved by:

Victor Bartling
Advisor

J. T. Mueller
Reader

CHAPTER I

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

The concept of Christian giving as presented in Scripture presents it, not as an end in itself, but as a means of expressing the Christian life--a life of love.

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In order that the Christian may know what is the will

1 Cor. 16:1; 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Chron. 29:14; Rom. 13:7,8.
2 Cor. 8:19; 1 Cor. 4:7.
3 Cor. Luke 16:2; 1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 23:23, 26; Luke 12:48;
1 Peter 4:11.

CHAPTER I

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

The concept of stewardship, as Scripture presents it, is a manner of explaining the Christian life--a life of service utilizing those abilities and means which God has given to His child. Understandably, Holy Writ offers many aspects of the picture of stewardship. Three general principles can safely be recognized as established by the Lord through His inspired writers. Of first significance is the reality of divine ownership of all.¹ This is all inclusive--the universe, nature, and even the human body and soul. Secondly, as Luther taught in his explanation of the First Article, everything that is man's possession is a gracious gift of the Almighty.² This follows naturally after the initial principle and in like manner is all inclusive. Finally, on the basis of these facts the duties of stewardship demand that these gifts be used in full obedience to His will.³

In order that the Christian may know what is the will

¹Cf. Ps.24:1; 1 Cor.6:19; 1 Chron.29:14; Rom.14:7,8.

²Cf. Ecc1.5:19; 1 Cor.4:7.

³Cf. Luke 16:2; 1 Cor.4:2; Matt.24:45,46; Luke 12:48; 1 Peter 4:11.

of God in performing the obligations of the steward, we must search God's Book for information. Scripture is quite generous with such explanatory instruction. In the Old Testament we hear of the command to give the first born to the Lord (Ex.13:2). From this sprang the regulations of the tithe (Lev.27:30) and the offerings (Ex.25:2). The Old Testament children of God seemed to comprehend this stewardship life, for the examples of their stewardship are many.⁴

Jesus, during His ministry on earth, taught on the basis of this Old Testament background, but reorientated the Christian with New Testament guidelines for stewardship--His command to give to the poor (Matt.5:42); His exhortation to cease from worrying about material things (Matt.6:19-21,24-34); His advice to the Rich Young Ruler (Luke 18:18-30); His teaching in Luke 16. This is not to forget Christ's parables, especially those of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-34) and the parable of the talents (Matt.25:14 ff.). The Apostles continued our Savior's teaching, as we find mention of these principles among their writings.⁵

⁴Cf. Ex.35:22; 36:5; Num.7:3; 1 Chron.29:3,4; 2 Chron. 24:10; Ezra 1:6.

⁵Cf. 1 Cor.4:2; 16:2; 1 Peter 4:10,11; James 1:17; 1 John 3:17.

Of prime importance in a study of the principles of Christian stewardship is the portion of Scripture found in the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians. Without a doubt there are gathered here some of the most pertinent passages in the Bible on this subject. Significant is first of all the amount of material that is in this one place. The Apostle delivered what we might call an extensive treatise to the Corinthians, aimed at the goal of aiding the growth of their stewardship. Secondly, in these two chapters are included the chief principles in a major phase of stewardship--Christian giving. This Second Corinthian passage offers, either explicitly or by inference, all the foundations for giving as a part of the Christian life. Thirdly, the practical applications of these principles are emphasized, for here is an actual situation. The Apostle is concerned with a Christian congregation that needed help in its stewardship life. To be of assistance, Paul not only explained the reason for giving as a Christian, but also suggested ways to accomplish it, and set up a program to aid in the actualization of giving. Because of this the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians stand out in any discussion of stewardship, but especially in a study of Christian giving.

To aid in the examination of these chapters it would be helpful to visualize an outline of Paul's exhortation

on Christian giving. A simple division of thought is offered by both Plummer⁶ and Bernard⁷ in their commentaries. The following outline is composed of a combination of the two:

- 8:1-7 Example of liberality set by the Macedonians.
- 8:8-15 Example of Christ and proportion in giving.
- 8:16-24 Mission entrusted to Titus and two others.
- 9:1-5 Have everything ready.
- 9:6-11 Liberal giving is blessed of God.
- 9:12-15 Liberal giving will call forth the blessings of the recipients.

Another interesting outline, which may be of help in crystallizing and accenting the main ideas of the chapters, is that offered by Morgan⁸ in his commentary:

- I. The example of the Macedonians. 8:1-5.
 - 1. The manner.
 - a. Source. Grace of God.
 - b. Spirit. Joy and liberality.
 - 2. Method.
 - a. Self first.
 - b. Substance thereafter.
- II. The Deputation.
 - 1. The privilege of the Church, after the pattern of Christ. 8:6-12
 - 2. The method of Christian equality. 8:13-15.
 - 3. The business side of things. 8:16-24.
 - 4. The appeal and confidence of love. 9:1-5.

⁶Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 229.

⁷J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1900), III, 84-93.

⁸G. Campbell Morgan, The Corinthian Letters of Paul (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1946), p. 250.

- III. The results to follow.
1. The enrichment of liberality. 9:6-11.
 2. The church at Jerusalem. 9:12-14.
 3. Thanksgiving for the One Gift. 9:15.

As the theme indicates and the preceding introductory material inferred, this thesis is concerned with principles. Its purpose is to ascertain from Paul's dissertation what are the true guidelines for Christian giving. Drawing only from this source of stewardship teaching--the Apostle's exhortation in Second Corinthians--the basis for giving of our means to the Lord shall be established. This will entail a discussion of the "why," the reason that a Christian contributes, and the power that makes a Christian a cheerful giver. Thus the first principles will be set forth under the caption, "The Motives for Christian Giving." Included in this chapter will be a discussion of what the Apostle sets forth as the inner driving force that makes it possible and compels Christians to "abound unto the riches of their liberality."

Furthermore, these two chapters offer such significant details of Christian giving that it is necessary to delve into the "what" of this aspect of stewardship. The study of the traits and the quality of that giving composes the section entitled, "The Characteristics of Christian Giving." This will constitute an examination of the Apostle's description of this service to the Lord. It will involve

attitudes, aptitude, purpose, and complementary effects.

The "how" should not be neglected, for Paul puts quite a stress on performing that which was desired. The suggestions for applying the afore-mentioned principles are considered from two aspects and under two chapter headings. First there is the presentation of "The Planning for Christian Giving." This constitutes chiefly the administration of a stewardship program in a congregation, as was established in the Corinthian church. The second angle of this application is closely related and is discussed in the chapter entitled, "Education for Christian Giving." The different ways Paul tried to instruct his flock are examined and made relevant to modern methods of education in a stewardship program.

Finally, the end result need come into consideration, for it is necessary to discover what Paul declares will come about if his churches "prove the sincerety of their love." This chapter is captioned, "The Results of Christian Giving." The blessings, both spiritual and temporal, which are the consequence of Christian zeal and forwardness in giving, are described by the Apostle chiefly in Old Testament quotations. This section of the thesis will present what is declared concerning those blessings and the connotations they leave for modern Christian liberality.

Before proceeding into the body of the work, it would be appropriate to explain an emphasis which will be found throughout. In many instances, even in the consideration of basic principles, there will follow subjective impressions of the implications the teachings of Paul have for the modern day child of God and for the stewardship program of today. This emphasis is due partly to the Apostle's practical presentation, and partly to the writer's concern for making exegetical studies as this useful in the parish ministry. As the Theologian did in the first century of Christianity, so should his followers.

CHAPTER II

THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS

The circumstance which occasioned Paul's writing the Corinthians concerning liberality in giving was the collection for the saints at Jerusalem. The Apostle had initiated this service because the Christian congregation at Jerusalem was suffering from want. Although in his letter he only mentions the fact of their suffering and does not describe it, there are some inferences that can be drawn on the basis of secular writings and parallel Bible passages.

Especially for the lower classes poverty in Jerusalem was a normal thing. This is clearly evident from the Gospels, for the examples of people that Jesus encountered and the poverty they revealed are found throughout. It is suggested that the characteristics of the city bred chaotic conditions, because it had no natural or commercial wealth. Jerusalem lived mainly on the religious attractions of the temple and the feasts. The money which the travellers spent while visiting the holy places was the chief source of wealth for the inhabitants.¹ Beside the indications

¹G. G. Findlay, "St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1908), II, 944-945.

that Jerusalem naturally produced a poverty-stricken class, Judea also suffered periodically from famine. Josephus² mentions numerous such famines including the one prophesied by Agabus (Acts 11:28) which occasioned an earlier collection for the saints.

No doubt the Christian community at Jerusalem suffered as did their fellow-citizens. However, it is more probable that their want came as a result of their confession of faith. It is very possible that they suffered persecution similar to the one that the fanatic Saul led. That persecution was recent is intimated in 1 Thess.2:14. It could have been that as part of the intense bigotry of the Jews, these Christians found it difficult to engage in adequate employment.³

Other explanations could be plausible. One conceivable explanation for this want of the Jerusalem church could have been the self-impoverishment caused by the com-

²Four famines are mentioned in Josephus: 1) the Samaritan famine in the time of Aristobulus, Antiquities Bk.XIII Ch.X,2; 2) in the thirteenth year of Herod (24 B.C.), Antiquities Bk.XV Ch.IX,1; 3) in the time of Claudius, which may be identified with that in Acts, Antiquities Bk.III Ch.XV,3; 4) during the siege of Jerusalem (69 B.C.), Wars Bk.V Ch.X. Complete Works of Josephus (New York: Bigelow, Brown & Co., Inc., n.d.), I, 217; II, 344, 542-543; IV, 246.

³Findlay, op. cit., II, 945.

munity of goods that they willingly proposed soon after Pentecost (Acts 4:32-37). One commentator even suggests the possibility that a portion of their lack was caused by their contributions for mission work among the dispersed brethren.⁴ Whatever the cause might have been, it was quite evident that the mother church at Jerusalem was in need of help.

Thus it was that Paul began his plans for a collection among his mission congregations. Information concerning this project can be garnered from four references: 1 Cor. 16:1-3; Rom.15:26,27; Acts 24:17; and 2 Cor. 8,9. The first we hear of it is in the First Corinthian passage. It is plain from this section as well as from 2 Cor.8:10 and 9:2 that the project had been organized some time before the first letter to the Corinthians was written--possibly in the so-called Lost Letter. At any rate, by the time that Paul was in Ephesus writing this letter, the program for helping the Jerusalem saints was moving along.

Most of the mission churches which Paul established on his journeys participated. In 1 Cor.16:1 Galatia is men-

⁴C. F. Kling, "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 355.

tioned as taking part. The Galatians probably received their directive during Paul's residence among them. Acts 20:4 declares that a representative of Derbe accompanied Paul in the deputation which conveyed the Gentile offering to the Mother church. In Macedonia, according to 2 Cor.8:1-5, the plan had been warmly received and the Acts passage lists men from Berea and Thessalonica on the committee. This same passage includes Asians, so probably Ephesus and the surrounding congregations also contributed to the cause. Naturally the Corinthians, which are our concern, had a major role along with other churches in Achaia (2 Cor.9:2).

Having set the wheels of the program moving, Paul did not intend that this drive be drawn out over a long period of time. He was desirous to take this offering to Jerusalem immediately after leaving Corinth, as is intimated in Rom.15:25-32. No doubt the immediate need of the Jerusalem saints prompted the short campaign, as well as concern for the stewardship life of his young congregations. Leaving Corinth he journeyed to Jerusalem with the representative deputation spoken of in Acts 20:4 and delivered the results of his people's liberality.

It goes without saying that one objective of this collection was satisfying the wants of the saints. In initia-

ting this undertaking Paul was fulfilling one of the stipulations that the Twelve made when they sent him among the Gentiles, that he should remember the poor (Gal.2:10). But there was in the mind of Paul an even greater aim than this. First of all, it was his desire to create in the hearts of the newly-won Christians a greater love for people, especially those of the household of faith. Secondly, and closely related to the first, he wished to use this as a means of fostering closer unity between the Jewish church at Jerusalem and the Gentile churches which had sprung up as a result of his preaching. Paul figured that as the Gentiles shared the spiritual possessions of the Jews, the Jews should share the worldly possessions of the Gentiles, thus binding them together (Rom.15:27). This need for a closer unity was especially pressing in Jerusalem's relation to the church in Corinth. It was here that judaizing teachers claiming to have come from Jerusalem had misled the people and denied the authority of Paul. If Paul could bring a large sum from Corinth, it would prove to Jerusalem that his authority in Corinth was a good influence.⁵ However, his primary intention was to strengthen their unity

⁵Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 230.

of love (2 Cor.8:4).

With this purpose in mind, Paul doubtlessly preached of Christian giving in all his visits. In the case of the Corinthian church we have a record of his measures to exhort the Christians to nobler giving. After the plan for the collection was inaugurated, the Apostle found he had to urge them to continue their efforts. He spurred them forward in his first epistle reminding them of their duty and suggesting a manner of gathering the funds, as he had also instructed the Galatian churches (1 Cor. 16:1-3).

Paul's second step was the sending of Titus. Titus, it seems, during the time that he was at Corinth to help iron out their congregational troubles, had also helped in establishing the program for this collection (2 Cor.8:6).⁶ At the time that Paul is writing this second letter, Titus is with the Apostle in Macedonia⁷ and is being commissioned

⁶Goudge thinks that the "beginning" which Paul describes Titus as making here was in Macedonia and not in Corinth. Titus was the treasurer in Macedonia, is his conjecture, and the Corinthian contribution would be the final one. H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 81.

⁷The verbs in 2 Cor.8:17 are epistolary aorists which must be rendered as presents in English. This makes it possible to interpret Titus as being with Paul in Macedonia as he is writing this letter. Plummer, op. cit., p. 247.

again to Corinth so that he might aid them in furthering that program. With Titus are sent two brethren (2 Cor.8: 18,19,22) who are highly recommended--one being chosen of the churches--to support Titus in this work. Although these brethren are unnamed, many are the attempts to identify them.⁸ As a secondary measure to the sending of Titus, Paul arms the young pastor with Apostolic advice and authority as it is found in the second epistle.⁹ This will be the subject of our study. Paul employed these efforts so that the Corinthians would be prepared when he arrived with the delegation (2 Cor.9:4).

Before leaving the discussion of the collection and entering into an examination of the principles of Paul's exhortation, it might be interesting to consider the results of the campaign. How was it received? Did it accomplish the purposes for which Paul desired it? We have no absolute word. Some have answered one way, some the other. Farrar¹⁰ feels that the elders of the Jerusalem church were unresponsive to Paul and the gift, since there

⁸See Appendix A for conjectures on the identities of the unnamed brethren in 2 Cor.8.

⁹See Appendix B for a study of Paul's use of words for the collection.

¹⁰F. W. Farrar, The Life and Work of St. Paul (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1880), p. 523.

is no recorded word of thanks. The ensuing attitude of the elders toward Paul as recorded in Acts 21 seem to accent the Apostle's failure in bringing about unity, Farrar surmises. On the other hand, Conybeare and Howson¹¹ think the delegation was received gladly by the church and that unity was brought about as the elders received the travelers with the symbol of brotherhood--the kiss of peace. The actual results concerning the relationship between the Jerusalem church and the Gentile churches is all a matter of conjecture. The latter view appears the most likely.

Although we cannot ascertain the benefits derived concerning the unity of the Church, there are other indications of success. Clement of Rome¹² in his letter to the Corinthians drops a remark which seems to imply that the principles of giving that Paul taught them had remained with them for some time. Thus in a measure it can be said that the collection was successful.

¹¹W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, The Life and Epistles of St. Paul (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1869), II, 237-238.

¹²Clement, living ca. 95 A.D., praises them as ἡδίστων
 ἰδόντες ἢ λαμβάνοντες, and later as ἑτοιμοὶ εἰς πᾶν
 ἔργον ἀγαθόν. J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, ed-
 ited by J. R. Harmer (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1926),
 p. 6.

CHAPTER III

THE MOTIVE FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING

In order that this collection among the Corinthians might be a success both in quantity as well as in quality, the Apostle deemed it necessary under the guiding hand of God to direct the Corinthians to the source of true Christian giving. Very clearly Paul unveiled the motive for giving. The power to perform this work in every sense centers in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle finds the motive for all Christian life--not excluding giving--in his Savior. And because Paul finds his basis for stewardship in Christ, it is not strange to find him quickly switching from contemplation of the redemption to sanctification. Our topic is a case in point, for in 1 Cor. 16 we discover Paul telling his Corinthian brethren to lay by them in store a contribution. This is immediately preceded by his discussion of the resurrection. For Paul there is evidently no conflict in the two ideas.

Glancing quickly over the two chapters, it is noteworthy that the word "grace" is used frequently. It is also of great importance to note that each use of this word either refers to God or denotes something in relation to God. Consequently, in the discussion of grace as a motive

for giving, it will be necessary to remember that "grace," as it is used here, has divine characteristics.¹ At first glimpse one might say this grace is not always used in relation to God, as for instance in 8:4. Admittedly, there are shades of meaning, but the basic thought of the "grace of God" influences each usage.

The first study, then, should be of this primary meaning of grace, which could be defined as follows: God's gracious disposition which for Christ's sake He cherishes in Himself toward sinful mankind and by which He in His heart forgives men their sins. This gracious disposition of God is declared unto men in the Gospel with the intent that they should believe it.² As is mentioned in 8:1, it is always bestowed, never of human origin. Thayer's³ definition gives a fine emphasis to this when he says $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ is "the merciful kindness by which God exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith." Grace is completely theocentric. It is God's love toward man.

The Apostle gave the Corinthians his meaning of grace

¹For study of $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ see Appendix B.

²Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), II, 7.

³J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 666.

in the ninth verse of the eighth chapter when he begins:

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"

For God's definition of grace, Paul points the Christian to a person and to an event that took place in history.

The person is God Himself in the form of the Man Jesus.

The act in history is His mission on earth for the salvation of souls.

Grace gives us this picture of Jesus Christ. He is called "Lord," and rightly He should be, for He is God Himself, the Master of the universe. He is called "rich" because in Him is all the fullness of the Godhead (Col.2:9). He has full possession of all glory, honor, and power. And all this majesty is His which He had with the Father before the world began. Human words fail adequately to portray this richness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, the verse goes on to relate that our Lord set these mighty and glorious powers aside and became "poor."⁴ Or as Phil.2:8 says, "humbled Himself." It was thus that our Lord makes His appearance in history, as the Man Christ Jesus. In Christ we find God become poor, who of His own free will descended, to place Himself under the Law. But this humility of our Lord did not solely consist in being a

⁴See Appendix C for study of the word Πτωχεύειν.

man, but the idea intrinsically contains what Phil.2:8 reveals, that He became "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Here is the fullness of the thought of being "poor," the sacrifice of the Innocent Lord for the rebellious servant. Paul points the Corinthians to this for their conception of grace--the suffering Servant and His sacrifice on Calvary.

However, our initial definition spoke of grace as not just an objective thing which makes a nice story, but it is for human beings, as 8:9 goes on to explain. The Lord Jesus Christ became poor "for your sakes . . . that ye . . . might be rich." This is grace to the Christian, that our Lord offers him the benefits of His poverty, enriches His child with the forgiveness of his sins. The gracious gift of God turns rebellious servants into pardoned sons of God and heirs of eternal life. The Apostle finds grace always in Christ and His sacrifice, His poverty on behalf of mankind. This grace was bestowed on the Macedonians (8:1), the Corinthians, and all who will accept that forgiveness by faith.

It is most certain that this grace of God in Jesus Christ is of utmost importance in a discussion of Christian giving. Paul meant it so to be for the Corinthians. He always had this picture of his Lord in the back of His mind in whatever he did or said. When he was searching for

an example of Christian living, always the love of his Savior for mankind came to mind, as in 8:9. Christ was an example for living, but more important, He was for Paul his Redeemer, and thus his power for living. This he desired to communicate to his people, as God does to us by Paul's words. Yes, even in the midst of speaking about a budget St. Paul's exclamation ought not startle us: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift" in Jesus Christ.⁵

That Christ enriches us in forgiveness through His poverty is the basic idea of the grace of God. But it is evident that many uses of grace in these two chapters do not harmonize strictly with the foregoing thought. Consequently, there is distinguishable in "grace" a secondary shade of meaning, one which reflects the gift of God in Christ. Thayer⁶ considers this second aspect as action or attitude which is due to grace--a token or proof of grace. This collection may then be called a "grace," because the desire to give liberally is due to the working of Christ's forgiveness, empowering the Christian to give as a child of God. Plummer⁷ explains it thus--God's grace has been and

⁵See Appendix D for the interpretation of 9:15.

⁶Thayer, op. cit., p. 666.

⁷Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 233.

still is operating there producing in the converts a marvellous degree of Christian generosity. This can be called the grace of giving, the giving of gifts by Christians out of love, acknowledging that it is the grace of Christ that produces in them the power to do them. This grace is the outward proof that the divine grace of forgiveness and life is within us. As Kling⁸ in the Lange Commentary says: "Every enlargement of the heart among the people of a place may properly be characterized as a putting forth of divine grace."

The Macedonians, of whom Paul wrote, seemed to have in a large measure this grace of giving which flows from the grace of forgiveness. Such action as he proceeds to describe is supernatural--it is beyond the range of unregenerate humanity.⁹ The Apostle tells us that they were in deep poverty. The phrase ἡ κατὰ βῆθος πτωχεία gives the connotation of down to the depths.¹⁰ Yet Paul tells the Corinthians that their joy at being saved by Christ, their

⁸C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scripture, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 137-138.

⁹H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 80.

¹⁰A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Third edition; New York: George H. Doran Co., 1919), p. 607.

joy of fellowship with Christ, and the assurance of their salvation just overflowed and opened their hearts to give liberally for the relief of their brethren. This, the Apostle emphasizes, was done freely, not by over-persuasion or necessity, but of their own accord. A clear example is presented here of the grace of giving, where the will of man, renewed by faith in Christ, does freely the will of God.

In speaking of stewardship of money, Trimble¹¹ writes that times change, conditions change, and methods of collecting money may differ, but the spirit of Christian giving must be the same through all ages. The Christian life is committed to partnership with God through Jesus Christ. Verse five of the eighth chapter points this up when Paul declares that the Macedonians "first gave their own selves to the Lord." He was explaining to the Corinthians, by the example of others, that this grace of giving meant at the outset to dedicate oneself wholly to the Lord. Money as a form of power is so intimately related to the possessor that one cannot consistently give money without giving self, nor can one give self without giving money.¹² The

¹¹H. B. Trimble, The Christian Motive and Method in Stewardship (Nashville, Tenn.: Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 160.

¹²Ibid., p. 155.

negative of this principle is demonstrable in the world of business, where many are driven by the lust for money, so that it possesses them completely. Can it not be said, then, that in whatever manner the Christian gives himself to the Lord, he will also give his substance to the Lord?

This giving of oneself to the Lord infers the acknowledgment of God's ownership of all. For a Christian there is no absolute right in property, he is a steward, a trustee (Matt.25:14). It is his Master's money he has. When Christ saw men insecure and impoverished, He bade them seek first the Kingdom of God (Matt.6:24-33). When it is realized that God's hand is in everything, that He owns all-- His gift of life to the child of God--then the people of God give themselves to the Lord. This means a renunciation of all personal interests and a complete self-dedication. What renunciation of self is, is illustrated graphically by a poor Chinese girl, many years ago, who brought eighty-five cents to the missionary for the Lord's cause. The missionary learned later that the little girl had sold herself into perpetual slavery for the eighty-five cents she gave to spread the Gospel.¹³ She first gave her own self to the Lord.

¹³Charles Pflueger, Sowing and Reaping (Columbus, O.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1921), p. 44.

Giving oneself to the Lord (8:5) is closely related to giving oneself to the ministry and thus to the Church. The Apostle says both in one breath of the Macedonians: "first gave their own selves to the Lord and unto us, by the will of God." There is not intention of a "first to the Lord, then to us," but rather the sequence denotes a close connection. Giving to Paul, as the minister of Christ and servant of the Church, was the practical manifestation of giving to the Lord. As Calvin suggests:

It is quite a common thing, that when God charges or commands through means of anyone, He associates the person whom He employs as His minister, both in authority to enjoin, and in obedience that is rendered (Cf. Acts 15:28).¹⁴

Therefore, when the pastor and the Church asks for money of its people, it is asking for a demonstration of Christian dedication, as Paul describes. The minister need not apologize for requesting money.

The Macedonians provide a marvelous example of dedication to the Apostle and to the Church. This could have been manifest in the form of money, but because of their poverty, possibly it means a general disposition to do all that was in their power. This meant personal service in

¹⁴John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. J. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), II, 287-288.

spreading the Gospel for such men as Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica (Acts 20:4), Epaphroditus of Philippi (Phil.2:25-30). The Macedonians' begging to participate in the work (8:4) was doubtlessly a deep concern for the Church. Christians were in need, and these Macedonians desired to help fellow saints in the Body of Christ, for they had so dedicated themselves to the Lord and to His Church.

The Apostle provides for the Corinthians another picture of this grace of giving by the use of δοκιμῆ (8:8, 24), to prove by testing.¹⁵ In testing the sincerity of their love by an appeal to the example of others lies the exhortation to demonstrate their love. This is made explicit in verse twenty-four. Paul had preached to them of the forgiveness of sins and the love of God. The Corinthians had responded, declaring that by faith this love was theirs, and they formed a church (1 Cor.1:2). Now, says Paul, prove to the Church that this grace, this love of God, is in you; prove it by the test of Christian living, especially by Christian giving. The Macedonians had given for this purpose, to show above all things their grateful love to Christ their Redeemer. Their desire to contribute was emphatic evidence of their love. Christians have

¹⁵Thayer, op. cit., p. 154.

passed the test of their love in this manner from the time that they were known as Christians. The results of this are demonstrable today in the growth of charities and the spread of the Gospel.

In conclusion, the motives for Christian giving can rest only in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. As strange as it may seem to mix contributions with Calvary, Paul declares decisively that the vision of Christ's poverty must always be before the eyes of the Church in any Christian financial endeavor. For from the Cross of Christ does the child of God gain power and ability to give as a Christian, as the Macedonians did. At Golgotha he is enriched so that he is able to dedicate wholly his life and his substance to the Lord and His Church. For in this dedication and by acting upon that dedication in liberal giving, does the Christian pass the test of the sincerity of his love.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

The Apostle Paul definitely portrayed the reason, the power, the ability for Christian giving--the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, St. Paul was desirous also of placing before his people the manner in which a Christian gives, and consequently he sprinkled throughout his exhortation the characteristics of Christian giving.

One of these outstanding characteristics and the one which Bible readers probably are most familiar with are the words of 9:7: "For God loveth a cheerful giver." This is a free quotation from the Septuagint addition to Proverbs 22:8. The duty of almsgiving played a large part in Hebrew ethics and it was to be done without covetousness, ungrudgingly, cheerfully (Deut.15:10; Tobit 4:7; Eccles.35:9).¹ These same characteristics, Paul says, are to be attributed to Christian giving.

The Apostle, to the New Testament Church, gives the

¹J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1900), III, 92.

reason for this cheerfulness (9:7).² Their joy, especially as exemplified by the Macedonians (8:2), rises from the pardon for their sins--the grace of God. Cheerfulness comes to those filled with divine love. In regard to their gifts, joy in God's fellowship lifted the Macedonians to the level where they were released from the love of money.

The real depth of this joy is shown in their cheerfulness even in extreme poverty. Verse two of the eighth chapter mentions the afflictions which the Macedonians had undergone--either affliction of poverty which was shared in common with fellow citizens, affliction which arose from the social conditions, or those peculiar to Christians due to persecution. One can at once see the difficulty of giving cheerfully when weighted down with poverty. But with God all things are possible. He can give the desire to be generous and the means of being generous. Plummer gives a fine comment on this joy in which the Macedonians lived:

'The abundance of their joy;' a strange thing to be found 'in much testing of affliction.' But few things are more characteristic of the Christians of the Apostolic Age than their exuberant joy . . . This abiding and conspicuous effect of the Good Tidings was

²The word ἡλαρός is derived from ἔλαος --propitious, gracious. It connotes a joyous readiness of mind to do something. Used only here in 9:7 in the New Testament, although ἡλαρότης is found in Rom.12:8. Cf. Ecclus.26:4. J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 301.

the leading cause of the Gospel's rapid success.³

Speaking of the positive characteristics of giving also necessitates a warning against the negative. That is what Paul does in 9:5 where he warns against an offering of covetousness. As Robertson says, "Some offerings exhibit covetousness on the part of the giver by their own niggardliness."⁴ Again in 9:7 the Apostle says that the giving is not to be done grudgingly or of necessity. In contrast to the free, cheerful giving which originates from a heart gladdened by pardon, Paul places another kind of giving that springs from selfish motives. When such are the motives, a sadness and a gloomy frame of mind accompanies the parting of the gift from the giver. Then it is compulsion that drives a man to give, only because he cannot avoid it. Against this the Apostle warns, and pictures for us a man with Christ-powered motives. Concerning him Paul says, "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Another outstanding characteristic of Christian giving is the liberality of the offering (9:11,13). Here we have the fine example again of the Macedonians. Today when peo-

³Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 233.

⁴A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), IV, 248.

ple claim they are too poor to give, we excuse them. But these poor Macedonians didn't want to be excused, even though the Apostle did not expect them to give much (8:5).⁵

The poverty of these people must have been great.⁶ Livy⁷ tells us that the economic conditions in Macedonia were truly harsh. Successive civil wars raged through the country. Then the Romans had taken possession of the gold and silver mines, and were taxing heavily the smelting of copper and iron. They had reserved to themselves the importation of salt and the felling of timber for ships. The Macedonians said that their nation was like a lacerated and disjointed animal.

Beside this economic poverty over the entire land, it

⁵Four expressions denote the idea of liberality. In 8:2; 9:11,13 ἀπλοτης is used. This connotes the virtue of one who is free from pretense, an openness of heart. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 57. Παρὰ δύναμιν in 8:3 suggests that liberality is not a set amount, but according to ability. *Ibid.*, p. 159. For ἐδρότης (8:20) see Appendix B. Περιερίσω implies that it should be more than enough, it should overflow. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 505.

⁶Supra, p. 22. The phrase ἡ κατὰ βάθος in 8:2 presents a picture of a vessel which is almost empty into which we must reach down deep. C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 138.

⁷Livy, with an English Translation, trans. by A. C. Schlessinger (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951), XIII, 347-351.

is highly probable, recalling the way Paul was treated in Philippi and Thessalonica (Acts 16 and 17), that the Christians were being persecuted, and what employment there was, these Christians were being barred from it. Whatever the cause of it humanly speaking, Paul says, by this deep poverty they were being tested--δοκιμῆ--to show whether they were genuine Christians. The result? They gave beyond their power, begging the Apostle that they might take a major role in the collection for the saints (8:3,4).

One of the chief causes for liberality in Christian giving is selfless devotion to God on the part of His children. When a person looks too carefully and too far forward in considering the dangers that may occur if he gives a larger amount, he loses sight of the motive for giving. But when a man depends upon the blessings of God, and gives out of devotion to his Redeemer, it will be a liberal offering. Granted, the flesh is still a part of every child of God, but in that degree to which a person through the power of God has devoted his life selflessly to God, in that degree will he liberally offer his means to the Lord and His Church.

A fine example of such selfless devotion is that of the Korean boy and his father who were seen by two wealthy travellers. They were plowing a field, the boy pulling the

plow, while his elderly father was guiding it. One of the travellers remarked to the missionary who was guiding them, "That family must be very poor." The missionary replied, "Yes, that is the family of Chi Noui. When we were building our church in the village, they had no money to give, so they sold their ox and gave the proceeds to the church. Now they plow by hand." The man exclaimed, "What a great sacrifice!" But the missionary quickly replied, "They did not think it such. They were glad they had an ox to sell."⁸ This is selfless devotion which abounds unto liberality.

Christian liberality is also spontaneous, as Paul pictures the Macedonians giving "of their own free will" (RSV). *ἑκούσως* is used in classical Greek of things which are spontaneously accepted, as death and slavery (Cf. 2 Macc. 6:19).⁹ So as man could not but face the inevitable, as death, so the child of God inasmuch as he is regenerate does the inevitable for the child of God. The inevitable is to live the Christian life, and a part of this is to give liberally. According to the new man, his will is God's will. Likewise, then, according to the new man, ev-

⁸Charles Pflueger, Sowing and Reaping (Columbus, O.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1921), pp. 45-46.

⁹Plummer, op. cit., p. 235.

everything is done voluntarily according to the will of God.

This the Formula of Concord states in interpreting 9:7:

In this understanding and in such sense it is correctly said and taught that truly good works should be done willingly or from a voluntary spirit by those whom the Son of God has made free¹⁰

Thus the Macedonians did not wait to be asked to give; they "of their own free will" asked to be allowed the privilege of giving. Thus, David Livingstone spontaneously exhibited his liberality when he left his mission station among the Makololo tribe to explore the dark continent. For he paid all the expenses of the missionary who took his place--\$7000.¹¹

Beside the aspect of selfless devotion and spontaneity, there lies the thought that Christian liberality is measured according to the disposition of the giver and not according to the amount. Thus Paul in 8:12 says: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath and not according to that he hath not." Liberality is not extravagant gifts. God regards the disposition. He regards a small gift which shows greater willingness far better than a much larger one (Cf. Mk.12: 41-44). Paul speaks of the "riches of their liberality"

¹⁰"Formula of Concord," Concordia Triglotta (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 943.

¹¹Pflueger, op. cit., p. 42.

concerning the Macedonians (8:2).¹² Knowing their poverty this could hardly suggest that their contributions were large, but rather their richness was in their willingness of mind.

The overtone in 8:11-15 suggests what is called today proportional giving. This section, especially when speaking of equality, is chiefly concerned with the church as such doing its share. However, it is easily conceived that Paul desired the principle to apply to the individual as well. Verse twelve in particular hints strongly at sharing with the Lord as a man is able. Those who have much are to give much, while those who have little can give only a little.

In order that this principle should work, it means that everyone should take part in contributing to the Lord as he is able. All Christians are stewards, without exception, not just the prominent and the influential. The people at Corinth were not the influential people of the community, but the lowly and despised. Yet they are urged to show liberality in Christian giving "according to that a man hath." As Fritz says:

¹²Note the usage of "riches" in connection with the grace of Christ--Eph.1:7; 2:7; 3:8,16; Phil.4:19; Col.1:27; 2:2.

Nowhere does the Bible say that only the man (father) shall give and not the woman, or only the old and not the young. According to the Bible everyone should prove the sincerity of his love to the Lord. 2 Cor. 8:8.¹³

A third characteristic of Christian giving is fellowship. Fellowship might correctly be considered to be a result, rather than a characteristic of Christian giving. However, it is discussed as an attribute with the intention of exhibiting the fact that Christian liberality aids and manifests Christian fellowship. The two are close relatives.

The main idea of *κοινωνία*¹⁴ (8:4; 9:13) is that of common unity in sympathy, labor, and responsibility. So, in the first place, the fellowship of giving should consist in all praying together, working together, and administering the program together. Thus all the churches established through Paul's mission work had banded together to perform the service of bringing this collection to the saints at Jerusalem. Each was to do its share, each had their representative on the committee who should carry their portion to Jerusalem.

Verse twelve of the ninth chapter hints at this fel-

¹³J. H. C. Fritz, Church Finances (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), p. 24.

¹⁴See Appendix B.

lowship in the word προταναπληροῦσα--filling up in addition, or helping to fill. The Corinthians were not the only contributors.¹⁵ They were working together with others. Paul's use of ἐκκλησία in 8:1 instead of the more common ἀδελφοί suggests, Kling says,¹⁶ a grand fellowship, possibly ecclesiastical unity. In like manner, when local congregations today receive their report from the mission board and hear how all their neighboring congregations are contributing to the same cause, they should realize the bond of fellowship that is fostered by their contributing.

However, Paul desired a closer unity in sympathy and thought between the Jewish and Gentile Christians.¹⁷ He knew that in true Christian liberality there is true Christian fellowship, as both spring from the same motivating force and are correlatives. A Christian giver, inasmuch as he is driven by grace, gives to the church as to the Lord. By doing so he is helping churches and brethren, and this is fellowship. Likewise, being concerned about fellow Christians means he will give to aid them. The giver's chief interest in the recipient should be that he is a Christian, a fellow-redeemed. Consequently, he should

¹⁵Plummer, op. cit., p. 265.

¹⁶Kling, op. cit., p. 138.

¹⁷Supra, pp. 15 ff.

pray for him and be encouraged to give even more. The recipient in turn ought to thank the giver, pray God's protection over his benefactor, and be urged himself to return aid when able.

No doubt the most practical aspects of the fellowship fostered by the collection for the saints was in the meeting of the deputies with the church at Jerusalem. They could bring back the news of the joy in which the Christians there received their gift. But regardless how this fellowship works out practically, whatever duty is discharged to one member in the body of Christ, it redounds to the advantage of the entire body.

A fourth characteristic which this portion of Scripture claims for Christian giving is its showing forth the glory of God. The messengers sent to Corinth to help in taking the collection are called messengers of the churches and "the glory of Christ (8:23)," because their work is to the greater glory of God. Giving to the Lord is not a selfish thing if it really is Christian giving. But its sole purpose is that God be glorified, and that purpose must be present in all giving inasmuch as it is Christ-centered. Thus our giving is a confession of our faith in Christ. As Bernard comments on 9:13:

The contribution of money for the relief of the Christian poor is a *δολογία*, inasmuch as it is the

manifestation to the world of the belief in Christ's Gospel.¹⁸

Another angle to this glorifying God is suggested in 9:9 where Psalm 112:9 is quoted. Here the righteousness of the man of God is said to remain forever. Plummer¹⁹ thinks that the best interpretation of righteousness here is that the Christian's goodness will always be remembered and rewarded by God. However, the interpretation of Goudge²⁰ would be more acceptable in the light of Pauline teaching, for righteousness is religious rather than ethical. Here it would mean: the practical manifestation of God's favor will never cease. By living a Christian life, especially the aspect of giving, a man exhibits that righteousness of God in him, and by means of this showing forth, God is glorified.

However, to live a confession to the glory of God implies obedience to the will of God. This is what Paul says in 9:13. This obedience is a willing one, because the child of God according to the new man inherently desires

¹⁸Bernard, op. cit., p. 94.

¹⁹Plummer, op. cit., p. 262.

²⁰H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1928), pp. 88-89.

God's glorification. And a Christian obeys his confession, because God has made his will the same as His own. Obedience

is the characteristic manifestation of life in the spirit He expects of those who are His own the same life-investment of obedience to God's will. Quite simply He says, 'Follow me.' Stewardship is nothing but a wholehearted response to this Word.²¹

Obedience as Christians is the necessary associate with confession, as we exhibit in giving the greater glory of God.

True Christian giving is motivated by love for the Master. But human beings cannot look into the heart and judge. Therefore, in order that in some measure Christian giving may be distinguished from other types of so-called charities, Paul has outlined these characteristics. There should be joy in giving to the Lord, and no grudging or regretting, because joy is the natural result of salvation in Christ. Liberality is another key word in distinguishing the Christian contribution. This connotes a selfless devotion which produces a free-will offering in every sense of the word. This naturally does not mean a specific amount is necessary for a contribution to be liberal, but the idea

²¹T. A. Kantonen, "The Scriptural and Theological Basis of Evangelism and Stewardship," The Lutheran Quarterly, III (August 1951), 276.

of proportional giving remains. One clear-cut method of determining such service, is noticing if a real Christian fellowship accompanies and fosters such abundance. That is a true sign, as well as a professed obedience to the will of God and for the glory of God. These are the characteristics which the Apostle desired to be manifested in the Corinthian church.

CHAPTER V

PLANNING FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING

Christianity is a practical religion. Although Scriptures emphasize again and again the principles of faith and life, there are always many definite practical suggestions for carrying out those principles. So it is with Christian giving. Paul intersperses his guidelines of giving with his advice for carrying them out. When he speaks of the bases of Christian liberality, the motives and characteristics, he speaks with the authority of God. But when he deals with methods of performing, he says, "I speak not by command," or "herein I give my advice" (8:8,10).

An important aid in the practical execution of a Christian giving effort is the leadership of the ministry. Nowhere does Paul say the minister must take an active part, nor does he in so many words suggest it. But from his own example and that of Titus it is a safe statement to declare that if asked, the Apostle would have doubtlessly so advised. The Apostle took active leadership in this collection for the saints. He initiated it, he gave order to his different churches, and he earnestly fretted with Corinth, as is noticed in the two letters he dispatched to this congregation. Titus also seems to have assumed much

of the leadership, for it is mentioned (8:16,17) that being earnestly concerned he went of his own accord to Corinth to aid in the program.

In Titus is found the spirit in which the pastor is to accept leadership. Verse fifteen of chapter eight states that God placed into Titus' heart an earnest care for the people in Corinth. No doubt everyone knew this at Corinth, because they willingly accepted Titus and followed his advice. God had led Titus, as He will every Christian pastor, to be deeply concerned, not just about getting enough money for the Jerusalem saints, but he was concerned also about their stewardship life--that they be cheerful givers, giving freely and voluntarily. They knew that Titus was not just putting on a pious front until he had gotten the money; but there was a deep, habitual¹ concern for these Christians and their giving habits. This is the criterion for ministerial leadership today. The concern is not a superficial one, but there is to be a zealous earnestness to guide the people of God along the paths of true Christian giving.

¹Κηρυξων is used (as in Rom.4:19; 1 Cor.4:7; 12:16; Gal. 1:14; Phil.2:6) instead of ων, as expressing not merely the fact that Titus was more earnest, but that this was his habitual condition. J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1900), III, 88.

A pastor may have the God-given disposition to lead his flock, but he will not know where to start or how to accomplish his desire, unless he becomes acquainted with the stewardship life of his people. Paul knew his parishioners. In 8:3 Paul says that he bears record of the fact that the Macedonians gave beyond their power. It seems as if he knew what their ability to give was. It is doubtful that the Apostle snoopied about trying to find out everyone's income. But it is possible that the people confided in him their financial difficulties and their desire to help the Kingdom, because they saw his intense concern for their souls. A pastor today can often discover the giving ability of his flock in like manner. And a member manifests whether he is giving according to his ability by other signs of service for the Lord.

Knowing the state of the church's health, it is the pastor's duty as leader of the church to teach true Christian giving by every means possible--from the pulpit or privately. In this also he should be a leader and not shrink from duty's command. Paul never shirked his duty to lead his Corinthian brethren to a deeper understanding of Christian liberality. Despite the turmoil in that congregation, even animosity toward him, in the very first letter he exhorted them to give. The intensive message of the second letter soon followed. And afraid that this might

not be sufficient, he sent Titus to teach these brethren personally.

The teaching, as is clearly noted, was always Christ-centered. Paul, and no doubt Titus, brought to their attention the motives for giving, the gift of Christ. Again and again they urged them to abound in this grace that they might receive the ability for true giving. The Christian Church must always keep before its eyes the true reason for giving--the unspeakable Gift; and following the example of Paul and Titus the pastor as leader strives to keep the Cross above the collection plate.

St. Paul's chief advice concerns the administration of the collection. The administration, as suggested by Paul, was not chiefly a matter of bookkeeping and the like, but his concern was that order be brought into the planning. And this order was for but one reason--to be a service to the local church and to the saints at Jerusalem (8:20; 9:12).² Bookkeeping, publicity, committees are worthless, unless they are a service in promoting true Christian giving. Whatever kind of administration is set up for a stewardship program, it must be done, so that its machinery serves to foster love of Christ as the motive and cheerful

²See Appendix B for a study of *Συναγωγία*.

liberality as characteristics of giving. If that is lost, the setup must be discarded, regardless how wonderfully it seems to be running.

One of the important steps that Paul took in establishing the administration of this collection was the appointment of responsible men. The interesting thing is that they were selected,³ not by St. Paul, but by the churches (8:19). From the Corinthian church also representatives should be chosen (1 Cor.16:3). It seems that Paul favored executing this program through men who had the churches' approval, not only his. For by this system of chosen committeemen each church would know that they were truly represented in this great project.⁴

However, the basic reason for these representatives is that which is mentioned in 8:20 ff.: "Avoiding this, that no

³ Χειροτονέω (8:19) has three stages in its history: 1) elect by show of hands; 2) elect in any way; 3) appoint either by election or not. Only other use in the New Testament is Acts 14:23. Contemporary writers use it for appointment without election: Josephus (Ant.VI 13,9; XII 2, 2); Philo (De Josepho 21). It does not mean the imposition of hands in ordination. The important point in this passage is that the appointment came from the churches and not from Paul. Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 249.

⁴For note as to identification of the men in 8:18-22 see Appendix A.

man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us, providing for honest things" Philo⁵ tells us that great care was taken to have trustworthy men to carry the temple tribute. Likewise Paul is concerned that all things be done honestly in the Christian church. It is noted that the Apostle added, "also in the sight of men." God can look into hearts, as he did with Judas, and see dishonesty, but men cannot. Add to this the factor of the Old Adam in church members and great are the chances for accusations of blame.⁶ It does not take much to draw the accusation of embezzlement, whether true or not, for the Old Man looks with glee at the slightest opportunity to disrupt the work of the Lord. To protect the efforts of Christian giving, Paul says emphatically to avoid, guard against⁷ any such occasions. That is the reason for the committees, to diminish the opportunity for such accusations, and to substitute for the spirit of distrust, a deep

⁵"The Special Laws," Philo, trans. by F. H. Colson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937), VII, 145.

⁶Μωμεΐσθαι signifies in 8:20 the imputation that they had been unfaithful to their trust in the transaction of the business. C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 145.

⁷Ἐτελλόμενοι (8:20) has the sense of: to withdraw oneself, as in 2 Thess.3:6; to guard against something. Loc. cit.

concern and anxious care⁸ for the treasury of the Lord.

Where other people's money is in question, one cannot be too careful. For this reason it is necessary to set up a system in planning for a collection. Paul's method can clearly be seen to be workable, but he does not demand that this is the only way; only that the principle be there in every program--that blame be avoided and care be taken that everything is done honestly before God and men. It is noteworthy that Paul, by setting up this system, put a check upon himself. The higher the station, the more careful must a person be. Even such a great man as Paul did not deem it under him to subject himself in this matter to representatives of the churches.⁹

Understanding the need for a system, as afore-mentioned, one can easily infer other aspects of that system. A manner of giving can be established, as Paul suggested in his first letter to the Corinthians (16:2): "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be gatherings when I

⁸Προνοέω (8:21)--quite similar to ἐπιμελίνομαι: to take thought of, care for, make provision for. J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), pp. 240, 540.

⁹John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. by J. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans publishing Co., 1948), II, 301.

come." To handle these gatherings, and at the same time keep everything honest before men, we could imply that financial accounts must be kept. Could it be possible that they chose an auditing committee and even sent out quarterly statements? Not likely, but the Apostle leaves that avenue open for the modern day stewardship program. However it is worked out in the accepted practice of a church, it must not be forgotten, that the reason for any system is that everything honest may be provided before God and man.¹⁰

A final word on the administration of a program for giving is found in 8:23. Here Paul declares that administrators are the glory of Christ. On this phrase Robertson in his commentary exclaims: "Financial agents, please observe!"¹¹ In the actual working of such a program, this fact is often forgotten. Yet it shouldn't be. For if a stewardship project is properly administered, it should redound to the glory of God. The people of the church must keep this in mind also, that they remind the administrators of the goal, so that the money that is given is actually

¹⁰Robertson adds an interesting note: "It is not enough for one's financial accounts to be honorable as God sees them, but they should be so kept that men can understand them also." A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), IV, 246.

¹¹Loc. cit.

employed in such a manner that God may be glorified.

Two principles are held in balance, as Rolston¹² interprets Paul's remarks. One, the goal of all administrators of church funds is the glory of God. Two, they must provide for things honest in the sight of God and man, so that men do not lose confidence in the handling of God's money. The application of this is simple: a) accounts should be open to the public, audited and everything done in a business-like manner; b) the givers must be certain that their money is used to the glory of God. The thoughts are simple, but so helpful, even for the modern day financial program.

A group of workers were erecting a new building, when a passerby observing the construction asked three of the men what they were doing. He was greeted by three different answers. The one said: "I am making a living." The second replied: "I am cutting stone." The third answered: "I am building a beautiful cathedral."¹³ Some people cannot see beyond the immediate, they can only see that they are giving up money, and they have no conception of what that money is to do. For this reason it is necessary in a

¹²H. Rolston, Stewardship in the New Testament Church (Richmond, Va.; John Knox Press, 1946), p. 67.

¹³Karl Kretzschmar, The Stewardship Life (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), p. 41.

successful performing of a program, that the goal be concisely and continually set before the people's eyes. This Paul did when he designated the need of the saints in Jerusalem as the goal of their giving. It should be noted that the Apostle did not dwell on their pitiful condition, so as to make them feel sorry for the poor, and thus urge them to give out of sympathy. No, the motive is still the love of God in them, but he directs that giving to a needed goal.

The quotation from Ps.112 implies this very thing (9:9). For the idea of scattering, as a sower does when he seeds the field, is not that he throws the seed at random, not caring where it lands. But rather he scatters the seed, trying diligently to have it land on fertile ground, but still scattering it that all the fertile ground might have some. Consequently, this picture presents two aspects that must be considered when a goal for giving is placed before Christian people. There must be care that the goal is one which all the members of the church can visualize as being a needed one, for many Christians--and rightly so--are on their guard against the misapplying of benevolences. On the other hand, the goal should be comprehensive, that all who are in need are aided. It is possible to infer from 8:11, that the Corinthians also set a goal of the amount they had thought of giving. Now they had to perform the doing of it.

Verse seven of chapter nine reads: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give." Because the idea of deliberate choosing¹⁴ is conveyed in this passage, Robertson suggests¹⁵ that this could easily be referred to the present day practice of the pledge. It is unlikely that the Corinthians had the elaborate systems of pledge cards or sealed pledges as today, but at least the Corinthians made a pledge to themselves. They had decided ahead of time what they were going to do.

However, the closing portion of that verse (9:7) gives a few warnings. These pledges, if they may be called such, must not be given with grumbling or from being pressured into them, because love should always be the motive for giving. God does not tell us the sum we are to give. In the Old Testament there was the tithe, but in the New Testament it is purely out of love (8:8). So a pledge made because of force of circumstances--even if a generous amount--is not a pledge God desires. But God does say that all who are truly moved by God's love and forgiveness are to give as they are able, as is mentioned in 8:12. He does not call for what is beyond their power, but he does say that

¹⁴Προαιρέω (9:7)--used only here in the New Testament. To bring forth from oneself, to choose for oneself. Thayer, op. cit., p. 537.

¹⁵Robertson, op. cit., p. 244.

they are to give as they are able. An interesting parallel from the book of Tobit (4:8) clearly states this: "If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly; if thou have but little, be not afraid to give according to that little."

Once a program for Christian giving is in motion, it would be harmful to leave it undone (8:10,11). It is possible that Paul saw not only the amount of his collection being hurt by incompleteness, but he was concerned about the stewardship life of the Corinthian Christians. If this collection had not been finished in Corinth, it might well have defeated Paul's preaching, not only in this matter, but in others also. For the Apostle saw the clear principle that Christian living is not only the expressed desire to do the will of God, but the doing of it.

So Paul urges the completion of this collection and sends Titus (8:6) to bring to a successful close (ἐπιτελεῖν) the work that had already begun.¹⁶ In the opening verses of the ninth chapter he warns them again to complete their work, that he might not be ashamed when he comes (9:3). As Robertson says: "He literally rubs it in that the pledges were overdue."¹⁷ Paul's extreme concern for the completion

¹⁶Bernard, op. cit., p. 86.

¹⁷Robertson, op. cit., p. 248.

of this collection was, that all these Corinthian Christians might experience the joys of true giving to the Lord.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING

It would be impossible to administer a program of Christian giving and expect success, if education of the people was neglected. A marvelous system may be established, trustworthy people in charge, the pastor taking active leadership, a goal clearly in mind, and all the rest, but if the people who are to give do not realize why they are giving, all the planning will go by the board. The Apostle evidently believed this. For although he does not declare outright that education is necessary, his procedure implicitly infers such a rule.

The subject of Paul's stewardship education was the principles of giving. This meant that the Corinthians needed instruction in what God desired as the motive for giving. On account of this the Apostle spoke of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (8:9), and of the grace that was bestowed on the churches of Macedonia (8:1), and of the unspeakable Gift (9:15). Again and again he mentioned the grace of giving--that power God had put into their hearts through Christ Jesus, whereby they were moved to give to the Lord. This was the center of Paul's education program and so it must be the Church's today. As Dr. Pieper declared:

If we then confine ourselves to persuading and urging Christians into diligent and untiring giving for the Gospel by presenting to them the wonderful love of God in Christ, we are not employing impotent 'generalities,' but are urging upon our people the strong, divine motives which will always awaken responsive love and fan it to a bright flame. The contemplation of the thorn-crowned head of the Savior (2 Cor.8:9) will produce the right quality and the right quantity of their gifts for the Gospel.¹

Important as is the education in principles of giving, it does not follow then, that they may be communicated in an arbitrary manner. Paul's example is to be followed in bringing this message, so that it gets the attention of the people.² Paul did most everything in his power that these Corinthians might be instructed in this foundation work of giving--he wrote, he taught, he no doubt preached to them, he sent Titus to proclaim the message, everything he said and did was permeated with the testimony of Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor.2:2). Today's educational planning in the Christian congregation ought to take its cue from Paul, if there is to be Christian giving. What opportunities for such education--from the pulpit, in Bible classes, Sunday schools, Christian day schools, by printed

¹Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), III, 51.

²Γνωρίζω ἑμὲ (8:1) intimates that what he is about to communicate deserves attention (1 Cor.12:3; 15:1). Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 232.

material, by personal contact, even by movie and play. Every method can be utilized that the principles of Christian giving be made known to all Christians everywhere.

One of the means by which Paul educated his Corinthian congregation in Christian giving was by impressing upon them the principle of equality. In verse thirteen to fifteen of the eighth chapter we read:

For I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there be an equality. As it is written, he that gathereth much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

As this equality is explained here (8:15), it is clear that its primary meaning is not that there should be an equality between the gift and the ability of the giver. Verse twelve preceding brings that thought forth. It also does not suggest that everyone should give the same, that those in need end up having the same as the giver. Such an interpretation would sound well in communism, but not in Christianity. But rather the meaning is that no portion of the people was to have a superfluity while another portion was destitute.³

³C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 143-144.

A case in point was the Corinthians and the church at Jerusalem. The Jews were in deep poverty, while those Christians in Corinth were relatively wealthy. To follow the principle of equality, these Corinthians, who had more than sufficient, were instructed to give to the Jews in Palestine that they might no longer suffer from want. In the future the shoe may be on the other foot.

In the fifteenth verse is the example of the children of Israel in the wilderness. When manna came down from heaven, they were instructed to gather only enough for their own needs. For those who were greedy and took too much, the manna spoiled. In the case of those who were unable to gather enough, the Lord made it increase to the needed quantity. The Apostle wished to instruct the Christians by this illustration that the principle still held. Each church should have enough for its necessities, not its luxuries.⁴ The superfluous amount should be used where it is needed elsewhere. Plummer⁵ considers this to mean that the Corinthian Christians should spontaneously secure themselves against getting more than their share of the world's

⁴J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1900), III, 88.

⁵Plummer, op. cit., p. 245

goods by giving to the Jerusalem Christians before there was need to require help from them.

It is clearly evident from this principle, that Paul emphasizes the duty of the Christian church everywhere in all ages to be alert to the needs of their brethren, that the superfluous means of the church may be rushed there to bring about an equality. As Paul employed this picture to urge his people forward, the present day Christian can be educated to the needs of charity and missions by the principle of equality. Luxury is to be employed to fill needs. While on the other hand, the small or poverty-stricken congregations, which receive such help as they struggle in famine or childhood, should look with eagerness to the time when they may in turn be able to be of service to others.

Paul avails himself of yet another method of educating the Corinthians--the use of examples. Probably the most striking is that in verse nine of the eighth chapter. Although the Apostle in mentioning Christ speaks primarily of the motive for giving,⁶ he does wish also to point to Christ as the highest illustration of love and self-sacrifice for others. Christ, who was rich in power and glory, set this aside and took upon Himself the form of a servant for the

⁶Supra, Pp. 21 ff.

salvation of a rebellious race. Such giving makes the most self-denying charity of a Christian look insignificant. But motivated by love and seeing the example of His Lord, every Christian should desire to follow after his Master and give in such a measure as he is able, as his Savior gave in the overwhelming manner that He was able.

Quite obvious is Paul's use of examples of other Christians in his attempt at spurring the Corinthians on to Christian giving. In the first five verses of the eighth chapter the Apostle tells them about the liberality of the Macedonians. As has been noted,⁷ he gives quite an extensive picture of their economic condition and their great desire to contribute. Interestingly enough, in 9:2 Paul turns around and tells the Corinthians that he has used their desire to do something as the spurring factor for the Macedonians. He even boasted to the Macedonians of their zeal. Another instance is in 1 Cor.16, where the Galatians are the example that they were to follow.

It is very evident that the use of examples to foster Christian giving is a valid method of education. However, Paul is quite aware of its dangers--that of pushing the example beyond the point of comparison. In 8:11 he puts a

⁷Supra, pp. 24, 31, 33.

curb on the idea that because the Macedonians gave beyond their means the Corinthians were to give beyond their means. The point of comparison is the Macedonian's eagerness. It is the zeal of the Christians to the north that he wanted these brethren to notice and by their example be stimulated to a similar zeal. Notice the emphasis that Paul brings in the very first verse where he speaks about the Macedonians. He directs their attention to the grace that was bestowed upon them--the important factor.

There is a touch of provincial rivalry in Paul's use of examples, and seemingly he figured that it was legitimate. Possibly today similar attempts at rivalry to spur Christian giving would be approved by the Apostle. Would he also permit such a thing as an open congregational report of individual giving? As a guideline it must be remembered Paul's purpose in his use of the example. He desired to show men the working of the grace of God in others, so that they might go to Him who bestows that grace on all His children. If this is the professed and workable purpose of these modern methods, then it can only be said that the example of others are usable and useful as educational methods of Christian giving.

Education is not just a preparatory step for stewardship, but an on-going process. For instance, the Corinthi-

ans had begun the collection long ago, but their performance did not correspond to their proposed willingness (8:10,11).⁸ So it was necessary that they be further educated and summoned to do their duty (8:7). The flesh is ingenious in finding subterfuges. The excuses come flooding forward from members for not doing their part. Some plead that they have a family and cannot give much; there is the modern day excuse of the high cost of living; others in whom the light of faith is just flickering might even outright refuse. All such excuses Paul removes when in 8:11 he advises them to give according to their ability.⁹ Again and again Christians have to be pointed to their motivation in a continued educational process.

In his continued urging Paul says he is advising (8:10). There was a reason, as Kling states:

By means of *συμφορά* he intended to say that this advice was better for them than a command would have been, inasmuch as they had for some time shown themselves willing to act as he wished without a command.

⁸The strange order (not only to do, but will--8:10) is explained by verse five. It was the goodwill of the Macedonians, upon which he had dwelt, and he recognizes that not even in goodwill had the Macedonians been in advance of the Corinthians. H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 83.

⁹John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. by J. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), pp. 292-293.

Such persons could derive greater moral advantage from a word of counsel than from any injunction.¹⁰

So will the pastor see it work in his modern day congregation. The majority of Christians desire to do something, but they need guidance in their Christian giving.

It is often noted that some Christian congregations respond much more quickly to their pastor's urging than others. In many cases the reason is that the more enthusiastic response is due to the encouragement they receive. Christians who labor diligently at improving their giving find reward--in a good sense--in hearing that because of God's grace they are progressing in the stewardship life. The Apostle did not think it unwise to encourage the Corinthians. In 9:2 he praises them for what they had planned to do and tells them that he even used them as an example for the Macedonians. It was not that Paul deliberately gave the Corinthians praise which they did not deserve in order to induce them to be liberal. No, Paul only praised them for what they had actually done. Well-deserved praise, the Apostle implies, as a good method of encouragement deserves more employment in educational programs.

Education is a very important part of the practical application of Christian giving. To instruct children of

¹⁰Kling, op. cit., p. 142.

God in this task correctly with Christ as the true center must not be forgotten. An educational program which is guided by Paul's principles will bring results. Paul was confident of this (8:22). He was certain that when he came, a liberal offering would be waiting for him, because he was confidently certain that where the Spirit of God was working, there had to be results. With what greater spirit could a man conduct his program of education for Christian giving than with such a confidence in God.

CHAPTER VII

RESULTS OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

It would not be proper to conclude a discussion of this topic, especially Paul's presentation in these two chapters, without mentioning the blessings of Christian giving. That Christian liberality can be considered a blessing is evident from Paul's speaking of the collection as an *εὐλογία* (9:5).¹ The Apostle could not conceive of abundant benefits being offered by children of God without the good Lord showering them with many blessings. He even portrayed the idea of harvesting blessings (9:6).² In speaking of these results of stewardship the Apostle seems to point up the similarities in blessings. These will be kept in mind as a differentiation is made for clarity's sake between spiritual and temporal blessings.

Spiritual blessings are probably the grandest results of Christian giving, for they mean a growth in knowledge, love, strength, and devotion. All of which bring the people of God closer to Him who causes them to give. For instance, the child of God who has been a good steward of his

¹See Appendix B.

²See Appendix E.

substance will find himself obtaining a clearer focus of God as his preserver. It is the Almighty hand of the Father that sees we have enough to eat and live, who cares for us when sickness, poverty or affliction strike. Moses, no doubt, felt this distinctly when God sent manna from heaven (8:15). Man does not live by bread alone (Matt.4:4). The Christian who has given himself first to the Lord and His Church, finds a rich blessing in this marvelous, confident knowledge.³

Even more treasured is an increase in the realization that God loves His children who give. "For God loveth a cheerful giver"(9:7). There is no purer bliss than of possessing the love of God. In this love is His mercy, His goodwill, His never-changing, eternal faithfulness. And since this love is promised the cheerful giver, the faithful steward, we assert that the love of God is the most precious of all blessings.⁴ In this knowledge we gain added confidence in His mercy.

With this blessing of love comes the strength to battle the Old Evil Foe. The Apostle was concerned about the

³John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. by J. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), II, 296.

⁴Karl Kretschmar, The Stewardship Life (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), p. 196.

influences of sin in our stewardship life, for he mentions the danger of giving grudgingly (9:7) and covetously (9:5). But the Christian giver discovers that as he grows in the grace of giving, he comes closer to the Word, and in that Word he finds power to overcome these attacks of the flesh.

An interesting story is told of a rich Christian who was listening to a stirring mission sermon. As the appeal became stronger, he mentally increased the amount he was to give. When the sermon came to an end, he discovered that the sum he had decided to give now was quite high. Then his flesh began to demand. As the offering was about to be taken, his resolutions began to wane. Slowly down the scale came the amount until it was almost back to what he had first considered to give. Suddenly he realized where this was leading him. As the plate drew near, this inner struggle grew. When the offering basket passed him, he quickly threw his entire pocketbook onto it and cried, "Now squirm, old nature!"⁵ However true this tale may be, nevertheless it is certain that one of the blessings that God showers upon the Christian giver is a greater desire to battle the evil flesh and do more for His Kingdom.

Finally, one of the finest spiritual blessings that

⁵Charles Pflueger, Sowing and Reaping (Columbus, O.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1921), pp. 76-77.

come from giving is the realization that all Christian giving is to the glory of God (8:19). As we grow in liberality, we grow more and more like God. This means that more and more self is pushed to the side. My interests and my needs are completely secondary to the interests and needs of God. When the world sees such selfless devotion in the stewardship life, they must cry, there is a child of God. Indescribable is the uplift of spirit at the knowledge that the glory of God is through our deeds being broadcast.

Although every Christian who has learned to be a cheerful giver has daily received spiritual blessings, not all have experienced them in the concrete form of prosperity. Yet the Lord does include temporal blessings also when He speaks, as in 9:6 ff. A parallel of verse six in Prov.11:24,25 applies this reaping to temporal blessings. The classic example of such increase in prosperity is that of Colgate. At an early age he learned proportionate giving, increasing the percentage until when he reached the height of his money-making power, all was given to the Lord.⁶ As his liberality expanded, so did the blessing of prosperity. He was not giving only to get more in return for himself. His very action of finally giving all to the Lord manifested the true motives of his liberality. Prosperity was a

⁶Pflueger, op. cit., pp. 69-71.

blessing of God.

However, blessings need not be in the form of great financial prosperity. As 9:8 suggests, the blessing may be in having all-sufficiency.⁷ This signifies contentment--subsistence enough for bodily comfort.⁸ Such contentment fosters the realization that God supplies all that we need. He it is who gives seed that we might have bread and other temporal needs (9:10). From the Lord of creation come all blessings of bodily comfort.

Why are Christians even blessed with financial prosperity? Paul answers (9:8,10), so that the liberal giver might have equipment for further service. This is what Colgate saw in his blessings--a means for giving more to the Lord. It is this point that is to be kept in mind when Scripture tells us of the blessings which God sends upon us. Gifts of God are to be used by His children.

⁷Use of ἀτάρκειαν shows Paul's acquaintance with Stoicism. Paul takes the word of Greek philosophy and applies it to the Christian view of life as independent of circumstances. But he does not accept the view of the Cynics in avoidance of society. A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), IV, 248-249.

⁸C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 155.

The thought of blessing always leaves with it the connotation of reward. This is quite distinctly implied, especially in the sixth verse of the ninth chapter. The idea of harvesting blessing⁹ puts before the eyes of the Christian giver the prospect of a rich reward. Reward is a legitimate Biblical thought, but should never be associated with merit for justification, as our Confessions declare:

But as often as mention is made of merit, the adversaries immediately transfer the matter from other rewards to justification But works and afflictions merit, not justification, but other remunerations, as the reward for the works in these passages: . . . 2 Cor. 9:6. Here clearly the measure of the reward is connected with the measure of the work.¹⁰

Obviously, the rewards for giving cannot mean the reward of heaven, but blessings of another nature.

Reward comes as such only to the sincere. It is not the man who pretends to deny himself and give liberally who is rewarded (Acts 5:1-10). Only the sincere are preferred. No deed should be done for the sake of return in kind (Mark 10:30; Matt. 10:42). Thus it should not be the intention of the Christian giver to expect more money for the money given or kindness for kindness offered. The real rewards of

⁹See Appendix E.

¹⁰"Apology to the Augsburg Confession," Concordia Tri-
glotta (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p.
221.

goodness are in the spirit, the increased capacity to love. The temporal rewards are only incidental and only for the purpose of greater use for the Lord.

Such expectation of only spiritual blessings as reward was exhibited by a wealthy man in New York City, who gave \$25,000 for the erection of a church. Shortly afterwards he lost all his wealth. A friend approached him one day and exclaimed, "If only you had that money you gave to the church!" "No," the man replied, "that \$25,000 is the only money I have really saved; it is the only part of my fortune from the use of which I have had any reward. If I had not given it there, it would have gone with the rest. As it is, it is yielding me a return which will cease to accumulate only when the knell of time is sounded. And in the ages of eternity there will be poured into my bosom the blessed consolation that hundreds have bowed at the altar erected with my money and have found their Savior there."¹¹

Although there is reward in this life, the overtones of verse six chapter nine are that of a harvest at which the return for sowing will be reaped at the end of the world (Matt, 13:39) and the return--good or bad--will be bestowed by Christ (Gal. 6:7; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:25). The re-

¹¹Kretschmar, op. cit., pp. 190-191.

turn shall be as the sowing is (9:6). He who does good sparingly, shall have a corresponding recompense, a participation, but sparing, in the blessings of salvation.¹² So shall be the reward to him that gives as a child of God--the results of Christian giving.

The blessings or reward bestowed on the giver has been the chief consideration to this point. But Paul hints at results on the part of the recipients also. One of these blessings is the desire to thank God (9:11,12). The natural cause for thanksgiving would be that needs were supplied. No doubt recipients as the Jerusalem congregation, or mission churches today, charity organizations within the church sing their thanksgivings to God for benevolent gifts of Christians.

However, the dominant basis for the thanksgivings of the recipient is their perception of this liberality redounding to the glory of God. What would manifest the glory of God more than despondency changed to joy because of aid from Christians. In the case of the Jerusalem church there was an added occasion for thanksgiving at this collection. It showed the loyalty of the Corinthians to the Gospel. One can visualize similar circumstances in the

¹²Kling, op. cit., p. 154.

modern church. What greater proof does a foreign mission need of others' loyalty to Christ than the constant flow of support? Ought not this cause many a song of praise and thanksgiving to ascend to the throne on high?

With the songs of thanksgiving go the prayers of the saints (9:14). Prayers of gratitude will arise, but even more so, the prayers of fellowship. Verse fourteen suggests that the Jerusalem Christians would long after the Corinthians, because they would realize more clearly their status as fellow members in the body of Christ. As fellow members, daily their prayers would assault the throne of God for His protection and guidance upon their benefactors. A charming poem beautifully illustrates this point, that giving brings forth affectionate prayer in the recipient:

There was a man who loved to give -
 Oh, may his tribe increase and live!
 While others sought to hoard and save,
 The more he had, the more he gave.

The misers ne'er could understand
 The secret of his lavish hand;
 The more he gave, the more he had -
 It made their itching fingers mad.

But yonder near the market place,
 Where lonely orphans knew his face,
 Arose each night from every bed
 A blessing on the giver's head.¹³

We may sum up the blessings of Christian giving in

¹³Pflueger, op. cit., p. 89.

three points: 1) it is the tendency of the righteous to produce blessedness; 2) God's providence as a general rule blesses the righteous; 3) righteousness produces a hundred-fold more good in such things as happiness in sickness and poverty.¹⁴ These are the principles of blessedness. There may be included the manifestation of blessing on the recipient in thankfulness and praise. The important note is, that blessings of all kinds are purely from God's grace. On account of this the results of Christian giving glorify His name.

¹⁴Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1859), p. 221.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

One cannot mistake the wealth and profundity of Paul's message for Christian giving. A thesis such as this does not do justice to the full significance of these words, but just skims the surface. The principles and suggestions of the Apostle deserve much more serious and concentrated study. At the same time the implications of his teaching break forth into such a diversity of applications. However, this work attempted but to scratch the surface, and it is hoped this was accomplished in some measure. The concluding summary might reveal to a certain extent the degree in which this was done.

In Paul's entire discussion of Christian giving (2 Cor. 8 and 9), it is quite evident that grace pervades every aspect. The Apostle begins and ends with the thought of grace, speaking first of the grace bestowed on the Macedonians (8:1) and ending with thanks for the unspeakable Gift (9:15). Grace is related to every phase in some manner or other. God's favor is the cause of Christian giving, it is the reason for it being a liberality and a cheerful giving. Even when Paul offers his administrative advice, he declares that this work is to the glory of God.

As was pointed out, the use of the word "grace" is predominantly that of the derived meaning. The loving kindness of God whereby His own Son was sent as a propitiation of the world is the chief sense in a few instances. However, the bulk of its usage lent itself to view it as God's love manifesting itself in the Christian as Christian giving. Its basis is certainly the grace of forgiveness, but the accent is on the use of that gift in Christian living, especially in giving to the Lord.

The Apostle's emphasis on grace has its implications for the modern Christian and his giving. In every matter of giving to the Lord the grace of God must be the focal point. Paul could have figured that the Corinthians knew all about the grace of Christ; but he took nothing for granted. He wanted to impress upon them that even in the matter of a collection, it was grace that prompted it. He knew the dangers of the flesh, which continually desires to place the credit for such things inside of man. Thus he accented grace. The need for such an emphasis today is undebatable.

Christian giving is a matter of growth. If it was not, it would have been unnecessary for Paul to have written this second letter to the Corinthians and to have sent Titus to complete what had been begun. The Corinthians were

babes yet when it came to stewardship; they needed much urging to grow in that grace of giving. So it was that Paul set up goals for them to attain--the characteristics of giving as Christians. The fully grown Christian giver would give with great joy, would give liberally as he was able, would desire the fellowship of the saints and the greater glory of God. But Paul knew, as does the modern pastor, that many Christians fall below this standard, and the child of God attains only that level of giving that is relative to his growth in faith and life. Continual training in Christian giving is a necessity for children of God.

Another noteworthy side of Paul's consideration is his advice on the practical side. Although these matters were not by command, as he said, yet underneath these suggestions are the guiding principles for the administration of a stewardship-of-giving program. The ministry, as they are the servants of Christ, ought to be leaders in the guidance of congregation giving. This is the first point in executing the practical phase. Secondly, in order that there be no blame in the handling of funds and that all be done to the glory of God, trustworthy people and a blameless system should be chosen. This suggestion of Paul provides for security against dishonesty and dissatisfied grumbling of which the flesh may be the cause. Such a system of administration ought to provide a clear, useful goal, so that the

the funds be not misapplied and wasted. Finally, such a program of giving must never be left incomplete, for it may cause tragic injury to Christian habits of giving. All these suggestions are made by the Apostle, so that a financial effort among Christians may always be to the glory of God.

To complement the administration of a program, education is a necessity. The principles of Christian giving, motives, the goals to strive for, must be presented, taught and brought clearly to the people. Paul did this in his letter to the Corinthians, and by doing so, offered some methods of accomplishing such education. The Apostle impressed upon his people the principles of giving by utilizing a picture of equality. He wanted all Christians to realize their duty of using their prosperity to fill the wants of the brethren. This concept of equality lends itself to instruction of this principle. As an auxiliary method of instruction Paul emphasized his points with example and comparisons with other Christian congregations where such grace was clearly working. Paul never forgot the working of the flesh, so his urgings are continual, as education for Christian giving must ever be. Education is important, for it is the avenue of raising the giving of Christians to the heights that God has set.

The blessings of Christian giving are not to be forgotten. For they provide an atmosphere of joy and growth in that giving. The Christian finds joy in the knowledge that he is helping his fellow Christian. He experiences happiness in the realization that by his giving God is being glorified. The child of God obtains a peaceful serenity in contentment, knowing that God will supply him with all, so that he may give liberally to the Lord. Giving to the Lord, he desires to grow in that habit, to work for that cause. And the Lord blesses him even the more by giving him the means whereby he may express his liberality more abundantly.

The thought of praise and thanksgiving rings throughout Scripture, for great is the God of whom the prophets and apostles tell. Praise is not a foreign note to Christian giving either. It is to be expected that wherever Christian people are receiving the benefits of Christian liberality, there hymns of thanksgiving rise to the skies. For this is the work of the Lord. The student of the Bible and of Christian giving cannot miss Paul's note of praise. It brings him to his knees in thanksgiving to God for giving him such a guide for his life of stewardship. But even more so, it points him to that grace. And there he marvels and exclaims as Paul did, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift." With this thought permeating the entire

subject, this thesis concludes.

APPENDIX A

THE UNNAMED BRETHERN OF 2 COR. 8

Two brethren are mentioned as companions of Titus in the mission to aid Corinth in their collection (8:18,22). Paul has not identified them and consequently as to who they are, conjectures have been made from the earliest time until now. Some of the names include: Mark, Luke, Epenetus, Trophimus, Silas, Barnabas, Tychicus, and Apollos. The second brother mentioned in verse twenty-two could be interpreted as the personal brother of Paul, but this is hardly considered a good interpretation.¹

The earliest assertions favor Luke and Barnabas. A few manuscripts add a subscription to Second Corinthians which reads: εγγραφη απο Φιλιππων της Μακεδονιας δια Τιτου Βαρναβα και Λουκα.² This passage is found in a small number of Eastern manuscripts usually omitting "Barnabas." The chief majuscules are those designated as K and L--both ninth century Constantinopolitan manuscripts. Barnabas is added in a few minuscules, the chief of which is 205, a

¹A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), IV, 246.

²D. E. Nestle, Novum Testamentum Graece (20th edition; Stuttgart: Privileg. Wuertt. Bibelanstalt, 1950), p. 478.

fourteenth century copy.³ The Harclean and Bohairic versions also include the Luke subscription.⁴ These manuscripts have no authority, but it does show an early tradition, especially for Luke.

Probably the strongest case for any identification is that for Luke being the first brother mentioned. The ground for this claim is based on the early references of this brother's recommendation (8:18) to Luke, as in the Collect for St. Luke's Day. This prayer begins: "Almighty God, who calledst Luke the Physician whose praise is in the Gospel" ⁵ The Roman Catholic Missal includes 2 Cor. 8: 16-24 as the Epistle Lesson for this day also. ⁶ The idea was no doubt derived from Jerome's judgment on the matter. ⁷ In a volume explaining the Roman liturgy this passage is quoted as that of Jerome's: "He also wrote a Gospel; where-

³Ibid., pp. 15-16, 68.

⁴J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1900), III, 119.

⁵Book of Common Prayer (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1843), p. 182.

⁶Gaspar Lefebure, Saint Andrew Daily Missal (St. Paul: E. M. Lohman, 1936), pp. 1516-1517.

⁷Jerome, "Letter to Paulinus," A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, edited by Schaff and Wace (Second series; Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmann Publishing Co., 1954), VI, 102.

fore the same Paul says of him: We have sent also the brother whose praise is in the Gospel."⁸ The fact that commentators such as Bernard⁹ and Goudge¹⁰ show that the phrase of 8:18--whose praise is in the Gospel--does not mean a written Gospel, but a preached Gospel does not detract from the early church's conjecture that Luke was the first brother. Bernard¹¹ suggests Trophimus as this brother.

As to the other brother's identity the guesses are even more numerous. It was described above on what basis Barnabas is considered. The manuscripts that contain his name are much later and quite few in number to be authoritative. Yet there are some of the early fathers as Chrysostom¹² who suggest it was Barnabas. Calvin¹³ agrees with

⁸Gueranger, "Time after Pentecost," The Liturgical Year (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1949), V, 419.

⁹Bernard, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁰H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 84.

¹¹Bernard, op. cit., p. 89.

¹²Chrysostom, "Homilies on Second Corinthians," A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, edited by P. Schaff (First series; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), XII, 363.

¹³John Calvin, Commentary on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, trans. by J. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), II, 299.

Chrysostom. Plummer¹⁴ discourages this interpretation because he claims that συνέκδημος, which is used to describe the two associates (8:19), connotes subordinates and not a colleague like Barnabas. Thus the conjecture as to this second companion of Titus is even more questionable. A few commentators express their pet ideas about these men, and especially about the latter. For example Bernard¹⁵ guesses Tychicus, while Robertson¹⁶ thinks he was either Tychicus or Apollos. Whoever he was, Paul sent him on his way with a fine recommendation.

¹⁴Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 249.

¹⁵Bernard, op. cit., p. 90.

¹⁶Robertson, op. cit., p. 246.

APPENDIX B

PAUL'S USE OF WORDS FOR THE COLLECTION

It is interesting to note that the Apostle Paul uses seven different words for the collection. Except for λογία which is peculiar to 1 Cor.16:1, they are all found in this 2 Cor.8 and 9 section. The other six are: χάρις, κοινωνία, διακονία, ἀδρότης, εὐλογία and λειτουργία. It is significant that nowhere in Paul are the terms "gold" or "silver" employed in this sense.¹ This is probably the Apostle's attempt at elevating this phase of Christian living above the world's conception of a drive for funds. Each of the seven words throws a different light on Paul's idea of Christian giving.

Λογία as stated above, is found only in 1 Cor.16:1, where this very collection is the topic of Paul's discus-

¹According to the concordance ἀργύριον is found only in 1 Cor.3:12 of Paul's writings and the context is not one of Christian giving. Ἄργυρος is not used by him. Ἀργυροῦς is in 2 Tim.2:20 where vessels are spoken of as made of silver. Χρυσίον is used in the 1 Cor.3:12 passage in like manner as above. This word is also in 1 Tim.2:9 where women are exhorted not to adorn themselves with gold. Χρυσός is not found in Paul's epistles, while χρυσοῦς is found alongside of ἀργυροῦς in the 2 Tim.2:20 passage in the same context. Alfred Schmoller, Concordantiae Novi Testamenti Graeci (Tenth edition; Stuttgart: Privileg. Wuertt. Bibelanstalt, 1953), pp. 62, 528-529.

sion. It is translated by the Vulgate by collecta and by the RSV with "contribution." It is derived from λέγω, which in its earliest use in Homer means "to lay." From this classical writers formed the meaning "to collect." Thus it has come into the New Testament and is used by Paul, as that which is layed up--a collection.²

Reading through these two chapters, quickly the reader will notice the frequent employment of χάρις. Its frequency is not so astonishing as its employment in reference to and its use as the collection. To understand this usage it will be necessary briefly to trace its meaning. χάρις was available to the classical writers from Homer down. It is equivalent to the Hebrew חן.³

Properly, its basic meaning is: that which affords joy and pleasure. Thus it was used by Homer and the intertestamental writers. This could also be the interpretation of the word in Eph.4:29 and Col.4:6. The word then took on the meaning of loving kindness, favor. Second Corinthians 8:4 could be taken thus, as an act of favoring. In regard to the favor of God Scripture, and especially Paul, loaded this term. As χάρις is used in 2 Cor.8:9, it is the kind-

²J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), pp. 373, 379.

³Ibid., p. 665.

ness of God in showing pity on men by procuring salvation for them. This is the central usage when it is referred to God.⁴

However, a derived connotation is also found where the word becomes a token or proof of grace--a gift of grace, a benefaction or bounty. Thus it is used of alms in 1 Cor. 16:3 and 2 Cor.8:6, 19.⁵ In these instances *χάρις* could be substituted for the word "collection," but with the suggested significance that this giving of money is an outward manifestation of the inner workings of the kindness of God in the forgiveness of sins.

Two other instances are found in our two chapters where *χάρις* is used not directly as an explanation of collection, but somewhat in relation to it. Second Corinthians 9:8 states clearly the source of earthly blessings. It is due to the divine goodness. Thus the Christians having these blessings by grace may exhibit the grace of Christ in them by using these gifts to abound unto more good works. Even closer to the point of the former paragraph is the usage of *χάρις* in 2 Cor.8:1. Here it is an obvious explanation that the desire for Christian giving is the direct con-

⁴Ibid., p. 666.

⁵Loc. cit.

sequence of the grace of God.

Κοινωνία is another term frequently used, but here by Paul it is employed in a unique and significant manner. This word in its basic meaning is similar in both classical and New Testament Greek. It is derived from the adjective *κοινός*, meaning "common"--thus belonging to several. Consequently, the basic meaning of *κοινωνία* is the share which one has in anything, participation.⁶ Scriptures primarily utilize this term doctrinally in regard to the Body of Christ or the Church. As a result, this fellowship is first the sharing in the Body of Christ (1 Cor.10:16; Phil. 2:1; Cf. 1 John 1:3) and then the sharing of the blessings of this fellowship with our brethren in that Body of Christ (Gal.2:9; Phil.1:5; Cf. 1 John 1:7). It is in this connection that 2 Cor.8:4 could be interpreted. This "fellowship of the ministration" conveys the thought of the many Christians "taking part" (RSV) in this collection, working side by side with other Christians to fill the wants of the saints.

From the foregoing idea it is simple to discern Paul's purpose in utilizing *κοινωνία* as a collection. For it seems, in at least two cases, the sense of this word is

⁶Ibid., p. 352.

that of a benefaction jointly contributed as exhibiting an embodiment and a proof of fellowship.⁷ Thus the RSV can translate *κοινωνία* in 2 Cor.9:13 and Rom. 15:26 as "contribution."

The fourth term used by Paul concerning the collection adds another thought to the idea of Christian giving--that of service. *Διακονία* is of uncertain origin, and perhaps had the basic meaning of executing the command of another. From this is then derived the Scripture usage. Paul often employed the term in describing those who by the command of God proclaim and promote the Gospel among men (2 Cor.4:1; 3:8,9).⁸

But in speaking of the collection for the saints, the Apostle utilized this term to express the thought that giving would be a service to their fellow brethren--an exhibiting of true Christian affection in all humility.⁹ In his first letter to the Corinthians (16:15) Paul speaks of this "service to the saints" in general terms. But in the second letter he makes this service specific in declaring that their contributions would be serving their fellow

⁷Loc. cit.

⁸Ibid., p. 137.

⁹Ibid., pp. 137-138.

Christians. It is interesting to note the different translations the RSV gives for *διακονία* in our two chapters. In 2 Cor. 9:12,13 the translators employ "service," while in 8:4 *διακονία* is explained as "relief" for the saints, and in 9:1 "offering" is used. If Rom. 15:31 may be interpreted as referring to the collection, then here would be another instance of *διακονία* employed in this manner.

ἄσφοδρος is significant not only in the information it gives us on Christian giving, but for the fact that in our passage is the only time it is used in the New Testament. It is derived from the adjective *ἄσφοδρος*, which means thick, stout, strong, rich. Thus it is used in the Septuagint (Cf. 2 Kings 10:6). No doubt the noun, as used here, brings with it basically the idea of the adjective. Consequently, in the context where Paul makes use of it--2 Cor. 8:20--the word could be translated by: bountiful collection, or great liberality.¹⁰ The chief thought that is added with this term is the Apostle's confidence and exhortation that this collection be a large one to show the true liberality of these Gentile Christians.

That this collection is a blessing, Paul brought home by employing the word, *εὐλογία*. This term in Scripture us-

¹²Ibid., p. 12.

age has many different aspects, but Paul uses only a few of the shades of meaning. *Εὐλογία* has first of all the connotation of praise. In this sense Paul does not use it (Cf. Rev.15:12f.). Rom.16:18, in the opinion of many, gives us a rare usage of the word, where it conveys the meaning of polished language used to captivate the hearers. Another use is as an invocation or benediction. Heb.12:17 thus employs it, but it is not in the Pauline epistles. The Apostle does use it in speaking of a concrete blessing, a benefit.¹¹ It is in this sense that 2 Cor.9:5 can be interpreted. For the gift the Corinthians were to give is called here *εὐλογία*--a blessing both to the giver and to the receiver. Notice that the RSV translates *εὐλογία* as "gift." The following verse again has the word, although it is used in a slightly different sense.

The final word which Paul employs--*λειτουργία*--is derived from *ἐργάζομαι* and *λῆϊτος*, related to *λαός*. Its basic meaning would be "a public service," where there was no compensation. The Scripture usage makes this a service to God or to the fellow Christian. Thus Epaphroditus almost died in his work for Christ, completing the Philippians' service to Paul (Phil.2:30). In the instance of 2 Cor.9:12 this free-will service is in the helping of the

¹¹Ibid., p. 260.

saints and may be translated, gift or benefaction.¹² An interesting aid in the interpretation of this word is that in the Confessions. In the "Apology"¹³ Melanchthon discusses the meaning of the word λειτουργία as the adversaries derived it and then the correct derivation. Second Corinthians 9:12 becomes an example for the writer.

In summing up this study, there is discovered in each of these words a different characteristic of this collection. This effort is first of all a collecting of funds (λογία). But it is more than this, because it exhibits in the Christian the loving kindness of God (χάρις). At the same time this work is the manifestation of the fellowship of the saints (κοινωνία). Not to be forgotten is the humble servant idea that accompanies giving (διακονία). Although a humble attitude is necessary, Paul is not expecting a humble amount, but rather a liberal sum (αδρότης). This giving is to be a free and willing service (λειτουργία) as it shows the blessings of God both upon the giver and the receiver (εὐλογία). Quite distinctly St. Paul provided his people with a bird's eye view of Christian giving, just in these seven different terms he utilized.

¹²Ibid., p. 376.

¹³Melanchthon, "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," Concordia Triglotta (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), pp. 411-413.

APPENDIX C

ΠΤΩΧΕΥΩ AND ΠΤΩΧΕΙΑ

A study of the word πτωχεύω and its companion πτωχεΐα in 8:9 will doubtlessly aid in the interpretation of the passage. The verb is found only in this passage in the New Testament, and the noun finds its way into New Testament usage elsewhere in Rev.2:9 and verse two prior to the passage in consideration. However, the adjective πτωχός is utilized quite frequently.¹

All these words may be derived from πτώσσω which means "to be thoroughly frightened, to cower down." This often involves the idea of roving about in wretchedness. Thus these words denoted beggary in classical Greek, as also πτωχός does in Luke 14:12,21; 16:20,22.²

The Septuagint used the verb πτωχεύω first for שָׁרַף -- to be weak, afflicted (Judges 6:6). Proverbs 23:21 also uses the verb for the Hebrew שָׁרַף -- to be reduced to want. שָׁרַף in Ps.33:11 is translated by πτωχεύω and has here the

¹Alfred Schmoller, Concordantiae Novi Testamenti Graeci (Tenth edition; Stuttgart: Privileg. Wuertt. Bibelanstalt, 1953), p. 444.

²J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 557.

meaning of being in need.³

From this use in the Septuagint we find the most common usage in the New Testament, where the words denote poverty, need, destitution. Such would be the sense in 2 Cor. 8:12. This destitution in most cases refers to lack of wealth, but may be used in a broader sense of destitution of position, honor or influence (Matt.11:15).⁴ In this relation Matt.5:3 may be understood. The use of "poor in spirit" is changed from a connotation which is derogatory and ennobled by Jesus to picture the humble, dependant state of the child of God.

Considering the basic meaning of these words, but especially the development of its New Testament usage where they become enriched in Gospel thought, the sense of πτωχεύω and πτωχεία in 8:9 becomes clearer. There is a hint of the idea of wretchedness and beggary in the background of the passage, for what Christ did on behalf of mankind was to make Himself wretched for us. But the word's comparison with πλούσιος would rather suggest poverty, destitution. This is the significance of πτωχεύω. However, as Kling points out:

³Loc. cit.

⁴Loc. cit.

The word itself has reference neither to the comparative nor to the absolute poverty of Christ during His earthly life (Matt.8:20), but to the relation which the human life He then entered upon bore to the life of glory which He was leaving.⁵

The significance of the Lord's setting aside the richness of divine power and majesty for the life of earthly service under the Law is further clarified by the parallel passage in Phil.2:7. Here the humility of Christ is declared to lead also to an obedience even unto the cross and death for mankind. The intent of the Apostle in using $\piτωχεύω$ and $\piτωχεία$ is to portray the entire mission of the Suffering Servant for his people.

⁵C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scripture, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 142.

There are a variety of words in the New Testament which are translated "gift."² The usage of these words may be divided into two groups, with only a few instances of overlapping. The first group may be characterized as those words which refer to a substance, a thing received, often times from God. In such a manner are used $\deltaωρεα$, $δωρον$,

¹J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1909), p. 122.

²Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (22nd American edition, New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1936), p. 390.

APPENDIX D

INTERPRETATION OF 9:15

The interpretation of the last verse of chapter nine has occasioned much debate among commentators. The contention centers upon the word *δωρεά*, what it refers to. Some think it should mean the gift of Jesus Christ for the redemption of mankind. Others say, no, the context of the foregoing points to its signifying the gift of the grace of giving. Both schools of thought have a basis for their interpretation.

To obtain a clearer picture, the word *δωρεά* and its use should be studied. This word is derived from the verb *δίδωμι* --to give, so its natural meaning would be "gift."¹ There are a variety of words in the New Testament which are translated "gift."² The usage of these words may be divided into two groups, with only a few instances of overlapping. The first group may be characterized as those words which refer to a substance, a thing received, often times from God. In such a manner are used *δώρα*, *δωρίσ*,

¹J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 161.

²Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (22nd American edition; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1936), p. 390.

δῶρον,³ and ἀνάδωγμα.⁴ The chief exceptions are found in Eph.4:8 and 2:8. The second category of words are used almost exclusively of gifts of God in regard to a power or disposition. Here are included μερισμός,⁵ δωρεά⁶--the word of our text--δύναμις,⁷ χάρις,⁸ and χάρισμα.⁹ So definitely, we must interpret δωρεά in 9:15 referring in some manner to a gift from God which gives children of God power and abilities.

The difficulty lies, however, in whether to consider this word as expressing the grace of redemption in Christ, or the grace of giving. To aid here, there should be a study of the use of δωρεά in the New Testament. There are nine passages in the New Testament other than the one in consideration in which this word is employed.¹⁰ In four of these cases (John 4:10; Acts 2:38; Rom.5:15,17; Heb.6:4) it

³Thayer, op. cit., p. 155.

⁴Ibid., p. 38.

⁵Ibid., p. 400.

⁶Ibid., p. 155.

⁷Ibid., p. 161.

⁸See the study in Appendix B.

⁹Thayer, op. cit., p. 667.

¹⁰Alfred Schmoller, Concordantiae Novi Testamenti Graeci (Tenth edition; Stuttgart: Privileg. Wuertht. Bibelanstalt, 1953), p. 136.

could be said they refer to the redemption in Christ. For example, Rom.5:17: "Much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ" (RSV).

On the other hand, the other five passages (Acts 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; Eph.3:7; 4:7) would convey the thought that God has given power to do something as a Christian. God offers His power of special gifts (Acts 10:45), the gift of being a minister (Eph.3:17), all of which Christ measures out (Eph.4:7). It is to be noted that a passage like Acts 11:17 might be interpreted according to the former manner.

As far as consistent usage is concerned, *δωρεά*' has been employed equally one way as the other. Consequently, the context must be the chief factor. It is on this basis that the commentators who favor *δωρεά*' as referring to the grace of giving take their stand. Calvin, Hodge says,¹¹ believed "gift" was the good effect anticipated from liberality. Kling¹² figured Paul had the gift of redemption in

¹¹Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1859), p. 227.

¹²C. F. Kling, "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, edited by J. P. Lange (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), VI, 158.

mind, but partly the gift was the fortunate result which God had brought about by means of the collection. However, it is Plummer who definitely objects to *ὑπερ* as signifying God's gift in sending His Son. As he says: "A thanksgiving for that has only a very far-fetched connection with the context."¹³

It is true that the verses before are directly talking about the "liberal distribution" (9:13). However, the fourteenth verse speaks of the Jerusalem brethren praying for their benefactors, especially for the grace of God in them. Granted, this is the manifestation of the grace of Christ in deeds of love and mercy, but the very thought of it would naturally bring to Paul's mind the gift of redemption, which is the cause of this contribution. The thought of Christ as God's gift to men pervades the New Testament (John 3:16; Rom.8:32; 2 Cor.8:9; Eph.5:1).

It is not unusual for Paul suddenly to break into phrases of thanksgiving and exclamation when something suggested the marvels of God's wisdom (Rom.11:33), or His blessed concern for His children (Rom.1:25; 9:5), or our victory over death through Christ (1 Cor.15:57), or His

¹³Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 268.

power and majesty (Gal.1:5; Eph.3:21; 1 Tim.1:17). And as we see in Rom.11:33, Paul also availed himself of strong terms--ἀνεξερεύνητα.

The use of the adjective ἀνεκδιήγητος adds to the probability that this gift refers to God's gift of redemption in Jesus Christ in spite of Plummer's¹⁴ argument to the contrary. This descriptive word--used only here in the New Testament and the Septuagint¹⁵--can be defined as "unspeakable, indescribable."¹⁶ To Paul the indescribable always centered in God, especially in His Son's sacrifice. The words of 8:9 show that this was in his thoughts during this discussion of giving. Certainly this exclamation does not stand completely independent of the foregoing, but takes a secondary place to the chief thought of the verse. For the Corinthian giving is expected to be the token of their faith in Christ's forgiveness, and for this salvation--the results of which show forth in Christian living--Paul

¹⁴"It is rash to say that so strong a word could not be used by St. Paul of anything less than God's supreme gift in sending His Son for man's redemption." Loc. cit.

¹⁵The word is found, however, in Clement of Rome, ca. 95 A.D., in his letter to the Corinthians (20:5). J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, edited by J. B. Harmer (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1926), p. 16.

¹⁶Thayer, op. cit., p. 44.

APPENDIX E

INTERPRETATION OF 9:6b

The AV translates: "and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The RSV is very similar. Although this could be the correct translation, it does not fully bring out the original. The Greek phrase reads: δ σπείρων ἐπ' εὐλογίαις ἐπ' εὐλογίαις καὶ θερίσει.

First to note is the use of εὐλογία.¹ Its basic meaning is "blessing." This thought of blessing may imply a large amount, bountiful or generous rewards. But there is more to it than this. A blessing is primarily a concrete thing in this usage, a benefit.² It is often used of the blessings of Christianity--the Gospel (Rom.12:29) and even of the salvation that was to come to Abraham (Gal.3:14). However, in just the verse preceding, εὐλογία is used for a benefit, that is, a blessing which originates in the grace of God and expresses itself in this collection.

What possibly guides the interpretation more than anything would be the use of ἐπί and the case following it.

¹See Appendix B.

²J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 260.

Ἐξλογίαις is locative case. This case connotes a location, a point within limits, the limits being determined by the context. Hence with this case are the ideas of in, on, at, amid, among and with.³

The ground meaning of ἐπί is "upon." It implies a real resting upon and not merely over. There are many different uses of this preposition, but the only safe way of interpreting is holding to the root idea of ἐπί and working out from there.⁴

Combining these two ideas--the root idea of ἐπί and the locative case--plus the context, we can obtain the only satisfactory explanation.⁵ Plummer translates it on this basis: "on the principles, or on the condition, or for the purpose of blessing."⁶ Cf. Phil.3:9 ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι. Thus the sowing would not only be bountiful, but on the principle of blessing, which is the motive of giving. And in like manner the reaping of blessing would be from the grace of God.

³A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Third edition; New York: George H. Doran Co., 1919), p. 520.

⁴Ibid., p. 600.

⁵Ibid., p. 258.

⁶Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 258.

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