

Remembering the Poor

Galatians 2:9-10

Introduction: When Paul and Barnabas were in Jerusalem in Acts 15, it was agreed by the Apostles that Paul and Barnabas would work primarily among the Gentiles. However, it was stipulated that Paul and Barnabas should remember the poor (Gal. 2:9-10). Paul was eager to help the poor.

This lesson is about Paul and his efforts to provide for the poor saints in Judea.

I. Paul urges a general collection (2 Cor. 8:1-15).

A. The Macedonians were poor but gave. Jesus gave of himself that we might be rich. Shouldn't we likewise give of our means?

B. Remember this was written to the churches in Achaia (2 Cor. 1:1).

C. The churches in Macedonia had already given a generous amount for the Judeans.

D. In fact, the churches in Achaia were making ready for such a need a year prior (2 Cor. 9:1-2).

E. How was it that they were so well prepared (1 Cor. 16:1-2)?

II. Paul initially did not plan to take the money himself to Judea (1 Cor. 16:3-4). However, circumstances were such that he did deliver the money.

III. Paul was concerned about a problem in this effort to give money to the poor saints in Judea.

A. The Jews and the Gentiles were becoming more and more alienated.

1. In Acts 15, the Jews wanted the Gentiles to be subject to the old law. However, their pride and arrogance in the old law was squashed.

2. Regardless of the meeting in Acts 15, the Jews did not stop in their own efforts to have it their way. They continued to teach obedience to the old law (Gal. 1:6-7; 4:16-17, 21; 5:1).

B. Paul was also concerned that the Jews might not accept the moneys collected on their behalf.

1. Remember Paul is collecting money among the Gentiles. The poor saints in Judea are Jews. (Pride: Prov. 16:18; 13:10)

2. Paul solicits prayers from the church in Rome in this regard (Rom. 15:30-31).

IV. Paul explains what is accomplished in this effort to give to the poor saints in Judea (2 Cor. 9:12-15).

- 1) It helps the saint's financial needs.
- 2) It results in thanksgiving to God.
- 3) The Jews will glorify God for the Gentiles obedience to Christ.
- 4) It shows the Gentile's willingness to share financially.
- 5) The Jews will pray for the Gentiles; hence, ending any alienation between the Jews and the Gentiles.

V. This was so important to Paul; he was willing to forego an earlier visit to Rome (Rom. 15:22-33).

A. This was so important to Paul, that he knew he would have a confrontation with the Jews in Judea (vs. 31).

B. This was so important to Paul, that he went knowing he would be persecuted and might even die (Acts 21:10-14).

Conclusion: Paul delivered the money to the poor saints in Judea. By doing so, he mended hundreds of years of alienation between Jews and Gentiles. Afterwards, he was persecuted, beat, tried, chained, and imprisoned. All because Paul remembered and eagerly desired to help the poor saints in Judea. Paul shows us a lot of conviction and love in this story. How about us? Are we so convicted to Christ that we not only are willing to give of our means but to give of our life?

#536 "Oh, the Things We May Do"

#620 "Room in God's Kingdom"