

(Through the Bible) 2 Corinthians 7-8

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon on 2 Corinthians 7-8 emphasizes the importance of godly sorrow leading to repentance and the unity of believers through mutual support.

Duration: 58:32

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:17

Topics: "Faith In Action", "Cheerful Giving"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking action and not just talking about it. He uses the example of Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea to illustrate this point. The speaker encourages the audience to perform the actions they have been discussing and not just pray about it. He also discusses the concept of giving and highlights the importance of giving cheerfully and without complaint.

Transcript

Shall we turn in our Bibles now to 2nd Corinthians chapter 7. The first verse of chapter 7 immediately refers us back to chapter 6, and so as we look at this, we realize that chapter 7, verse 1 of chapter 7, more appropriately belongs with chapter 6. This is one of those cases where I feel they made a mistake in their chapter separations. Originally, when Paul wrote his letter to the Corinthians, it was just a letter that they were to read straight through. In about the year 1300, in the 1300s, a scholar decided to divide the Bible into chapters.

And so they made chapter distinctions in the 1300s to help a person really in looking up a scripture. Oh, I know it's somewhere in Isaiah. Well, that's a pretty long book.

So, they divided Isaiah into 66 chapters so you can say, well, it's somewhere in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. Oh, well then you were able to find it more readily. Then in the 1600s, they came along and they divided the Bible up also into verses, divided the chapters into verses.

And so making it even that much easier to look up a particular passage of scripture. But this was done by man. Nothing about divine inspiration as far as the chapter divisions.

And so, though they overall did a very excellent job, in a few places I feel that they did make a mistake. And this is one where I feel there is a mistake in the chapter divisions. For obviously, as we begin chapter

7, we have a reference back to chapter 6 as he refers to the promises that he had just quoted.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved. What promises? In verse 17 and 18, Paul put together a collage of scriptures from the Old Testament. None of them quoted exactly accurately.

But in the latter part of chapter 6, and of course remember, Paul did not have chapters and verses. And so, he is quoting from memory, which they so often did. But let me share something with you now.

I do feel that there is a tremendous benefit in a lot of the new translations in that it has gotten us away from this kind of being bound to chapter and verse, or being bound to the exact wording of a scripture. The Holy Spirit is not really called the Spirit of chapter and verse. He is called the Spirit of truth.

Now, it is more important that you grab the truth out of the verse than the exact wording. The truth that is there is what will set us free. And so, Paul is free quoting, free translating, as he brings the essence of truth that was expressed through the Word.

And I think that this is great when we have the truth in our hearts, and we can express the truth, and we don't have to worry about getting the exact quotation. A lot of people are so bound because, oh, I don't know if it's in or on, you know. Oh, and I'm afraid to say it because I don't know if it's in or on, you know.

And I want to be so, you know, we grew up in Sunday school and the teachers, no, no, no, that was wrong, you know, because you made some slight mistake in a preposition or something. And so, we become fearful of quoting the scripture because we want to quote it exactly word for word. But the new translations, especially the Living Letters, Amplified and so forth, do help free us from that sort of bondage almost that we had to get the word just exactly right.

Get the truth right. That's what's important. The spirit of truth.

King James is an excellent translation. But the Bible wasn't written in King James. Paul didn't know anything about King James English.

And I can't quite go along with the fellow that says, well, I like the King James Bible because that's the one Paul wrote. And they're so bound, you know, to the exact words. So, Paul is freely quoting from several passages of the Old Testament.

And as he is freely quoting, he makes reference here to some of the glorious promises that God has made. First of all, God said, I will receive you. The end of verse 17.

And that in itself is something to be thankful for, something to rejoice over, the fact that God will receive me. You know, the President of the United States won't even receive me. Years ago, when I was in college, I went back to the Ford Motor Company.

I wanted to meet Henry Ford. That's the kind of a young man I was. And I went into the factory there in Detroit, Michigan.

And I said to the girl at the desk, I'd like to see your boss. And so she got me into her boss. And I said, I'm here.

I'd like to see Henry Ford. And the fellow said, well, I would too. I've been working here for the Ford Company for 30 years.

I haven't seen him yet, you know. He wouldn't receive me. But the Lord said he would receive me.

That's what is important. Not only that, he said, I will be a father unto you. Now, there are a lot of people who have difficulty in relating to God in the father image.

Because they did not have a good relationship with their own fathers. And unfortunately, we are finding this to be true more and more. As the fathers refuse to take their real role as a father within the home.

And thus, many times people have a hard time relating to God as a father. If indeed, you have a poor father image because of your own relationship to your own earthly father. Don't be afraid of the father image.

If you've had a good relationship with your father, then this becomes really glorious. As God says, I will be a father to you. And it has all of the right implications.

It should have, no matter what kind of a father you've had. It should have the right implications to you. Fortunately, I had a great dad.

And so this thing has all the right implications. I'm thrilled that God would say, I will be a father unto you. Because I had a great father.

My father was a real supporter and fan of his son. I could be playing football. The stands would be crowded with people.

And after I'd made a touchdown, everybody was cheering and yelling. I could hear my dad above them all. Always I could hear my dad.

That's my son, you know. Great dad. And so I have no problem with this father image.

And it's really something that's very meaningful to me that God would say, I would be a father unto you. Because it implies to me the love, the devotion, the attention, the provisions, the concern. All that my dad was to me.

And ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Glorious promises. Having therefore these promises.

That he would receive us. That we would be his sons and daughters. He would be our father.

Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. So, the call was, come apart and be separate, saith the Lord.

Touch not the unclean thing. The broader context is, be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath light with darkness? What concourse hath Christ with Belial? What part has he who believes with an infidel? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? So, come apart from idolatry.

Come apart from unrighteousness. Be separate, saith the Lord. Don't touch the unclean thing.

And if we will, then God will receive us. Be our father. We will be his sons and daughters.

And because of these promises, let us then really come apart. Cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of the flesh and of the mind. And there is both.

The filthiness of a man's flesh. The filthiness of a man's mind. As we perfect or we become complete in holiness in the fear of God.

The reverence of God. The awe of God. Again, I think it was Thursday night that we mentioned that whenever we talk about the fear of God, there are some people that have the wrong concept here.

When I was a child, I was afraid of God. I had heard a lot of preaching that caused me to be afraid of God. I was afraid that God was going to hurt me.

That He was just waiting for me to do something wrong and then He was going to hurt me. And as a child, I had this fear of God. God's going to hurt me.

That is not the fear of God that the Bible is encouraging. My fear of God has changed. Now I fear that I might hurt God.

I love Him. I appreciate His love. I don't want to do anything that would hurt Him.

And that's what the true fear of the Lord is. Afraid that you might hurt Him. God surely isn't going to hurt you.

And I surely don't want to hurt Him. Now Paul is talking in sort of a relieved way. Paul heard that there were problems in Corinth.

That there were divisions there. And so he visited the church and his visit was a disaster. Yes, there were divisions and they sort of polarized when Paul came.

So Paul left Corinth quite upset. He then wrote a letter to them and sent it by Titus. And after he wrote the letter, he worried about that letter that maybe he was too severe.

Maybe he laid it on them too heavy. And so he was really worried about what their reaction would be to the letter that he wrote because he was very firm in the things that he said. And he did rebuke them soundly in many areas.

And so Paul now is coming back to the previous letter. And Titus having met him, Paul was in Troas. Opportunities came to minister there but Paul couldn't rest in his spirit because he was so worried about the Corinthians and what their response might be.

The heart of the true minister. You know that at times it is necessary to rebuke. And yet, you're fearful because you don't want to hurt.

And so Paul said, receive us. We have wronged no man. We have corrupted no man.

We have defrauded no man. I don't speak this to condemn you. For as I have said before, that you are in our hearts to die and to live with you.

So Paul is now asking for acceptance by them. For he has been honest before them. And great is my boldness of speech toward you.

Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

For when we were coming to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest. But we were troubled on every side. Without were fighting.

Within were fears. Nevertheless, God, that comforts those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus. So Paul is telling now of his feelings, his love for them, and how concerned he was because he hadn't heard from them.

And he had sent this letter off. He didn't know how they received it. He didn't know, you know, just what the reaction was going to be.

And he had this real turmoil going on within him. The fighting on the outside, no rest. Within him he was filled with fear.

Until he finally caught up with Titus. And Titus told him of the positive response of the people in Corinth to the letter that he had written. And so, God that comforts those that are cast down.

I like that. God who comforts those that are cast down. If you're cast down in spirit tonight, God comforts those that are cast down.

But that comfort comes by getting our eyes on the Lord. Getting them off of those troubling things that have disturbed us. You see, our problem is that we so often become so completely involved in our problem that we lose sight of God.

The problem becomes overwhelming. We lose perspective. Our problem seems to be greater than God.

But God comforts those that are cast down. So we need to get our eyes upon the Lord this evening. If you're discouraged, if you're cast down, if you're worried about a pressing situation, get your eyes off of that.

And get your eyes on to the Lord. Just begin to worship Him. Tell Him how much you love Him.

Develop your relationship with God. And you'll be amazed how the other things will just smooth out. Jesus said, Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things will be taken care of.

Isn't it interesting how that our minds are so filled with these other things? All through Bible college, I was looking for that one that God had chosen to be with me in the ministry. Every year, when the new class came in, I sat in the front row looking them over. Graduation time came and I had never seen one that really did anything for me.

In fact, we used to say that 95% of the women in America were beautiful and the other 5% went to our school. And I was getting a little panicky. Graduation time has come.

I'm going to have to go out into the world by myself. But the Lord kept giving me the scriptures, Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things will be taken care of. Will be added to you.

So I just began to seek the Lord first. His kingdom. And one evening, in the most unexpected way, as I was sitting at a ball game, I had graduated, I had been out ministering as an evangelist.

I had come home for a time. My brother was playing on a ball team and we used to play together a lot. So I went out to watch his game.

And as I was sitting there watching the game, here came this beautiful gal who didn't want to sit down on the bench because it was dusty. So I just scooted across and said, here, I've dusted off a place for you. Right out of the blue, there she was.

So Paul said, I was comforted not by His coming only, but by the consolation wherewith He was comforted in you when He told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me so that I rejoice the more. Titus brought good news. Paul, the people have really repented.

They really love you, Paul. They really appreciate your love and concern for them. And they were grieving over these things that they'd allowed to become a part of the fellowship there in Corinth.

And so Paul speaks about the report of Titus and how he was just really rejoicing his heart. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent. Though I did repent, man, I was sorry for a while until I got Titus' word.

I was really sorry that I wrote that letter because I didn't know how the response was. And so at one time I really felt bad that I wrote it. Now I don't.

For I perceive that the same epistle or letter has made you sorry, though it was but for a season. Now I rejoice. Not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance.

For you were made sorry after a godly manner that you might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. And so Paul draws a distinction here between sorrow and repentance.

There is a sorrow that is a godly sorrow that works repentance. There is a sorrow of the world that brings death. Repentance brings a change.

True repentance is to change. We find in the Scriptures that Judas brought the money back that he had received from the high priest when he betrayed Jesus. And he said, take this back.

I've betrayed innocent blood. And they said, what's that to us? It's your problem. And so he threw it down at their feet and he went out and he said, now it's your problem.

And he repented and went out and hung himself. Judas was sorry for what he did. As many people are sorry for what they have done.

But if you're sorry and you keep doing it, that just brings death. If you're sorry and you don't do it anymore, that's repentance. Godly sorrow that leads to repentance.

Peter denied his Lord three times when the rooster crowed. Jesus looked at Peter and Peter remembered the words of Jesus that said before the cock crows, you will deny me three times. And he repented and went out and wept bitterly.

Never again did Peter deny his Lord. He repented. There was a real change.

And repentance always does signify a change. And the godly sorrow works repentance. I dare say if you would go to San Quentin prison and do a survey, asking the question, are you sorry for your crime? That you'd probably have a very high ratio of prisoners that would mark a yes, I am sorry for what I did.

But if they were totally honest and your next question said, are you sorry for what you did or are you sorry that you got caught? That if they were truly honest, most of them would then put, I am sorry I got caught. For when they get out, they go back and do the same thing over again, only they try and do it more cleverly so they won't get caught the next time. Now, make sure that you just don't have a sorrow that you've been found out.

A sorrow that you got caught. That's worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow brings a change, a changed life.

Godly sorrow works repentance to salvation, not to be repented of. For behold this selfsame thing, that you sorrowed after a godly sort. And what carefulness it wrought in you.

Yes, what clearing of yourselves. Yes, what indignation. Yes, what fear.

Yes, what vehement desire. Yes, what zeal. Yes, what revenge.

In all things you have approved yourself to be clear in this matter. So the things that Paul wrote to them about, their carnality, their allowing into the fellowship evil conditions. And there was a real repentance there in Corinth over these things.

And wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that had suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. So it was really for your sakes that I wrote these things, that you might know how concerned I am about you. Therefore, we were comforted in your comfort.

Yes, and exceedingly the more joyed for the joy of Titus because his spirit was refreshed by you all. So, I'm rejoicing because of the treatment you gave Titus and how joyful he was over what God had wrought in your lives. For if I have boasted anything to him of you, I am not ashamed.

And Paul no doubt told them what a tremendous church the Corinthian church was, what great people. But as we spake all things to you in truth, even so are boasting which I made before Titus is found to be true. And his inward affection is more abundant toward you while he remembers the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you received him.

And I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all of these things. So, Paul's report from Titus, his reaction and response to it, Titus' feelings concerning the church of Corinth and how that the hurts and the wrongs have now been corrected as the result of Paul's first epistle. Now as we get into chapter 8, towards the end, in fact the 16th chapter, the first epistle, Paul wrote to them in Corinth also on the first day of the week to set aside an offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem.

You remember when the church first started in Jerusalem there was an attempt at a communal type of living. The people were selling their possessions, bringing the money to the apostles and the apostles made distribution to every man according to as he had needs. They had a real equality.

But in time, when they had run out of funds, they had sold their homes, their properties. Now the money had been dissipated. The needs were still there.

And so the church in Jerusalem was in a very poor condition. The church in Jerusalem was made up basically of Jews who were suspicious of the Gentile believers. Not all of them were convinced that a Gentile could really be saved except he became a Jew.

There were many Pharisees and all who believed, but they brought in a lot of the Jewish practices and with it a general suspicion of the Gentiles. Paul being an apostle to the Gentiles is desiring to take to Jerusalem to the Jewish believers a good, healthy sum of money to help them in their poverty to sort of break down the feelings that existed in the Jewish believers towards the Gentile believers. He felt if he could bring to them a generous offering from the Gentiles that this wall of partition that more or less existed between them could be broken down and they would realize the oneness of the family of God as they received help and support from the Gentile believers, a token of their love and esteem for Jerusalem.

Now, it was from the church in Jerusalem that the Gospel went out. And so there was a debt in a sense of the Gentile believers to the church in Jerusalem, for it was the result of the church in Jerusalem sending out the apostles and all that they received the Gospel. So, Paul comes back now and spends the 8th chapter in the issue over the offering that he wanted them to take for the church in Jerusalem.

And in encouraging them to give, he first of all tells them of what the churches in Macedonia gave. Now, Macedonia was Upper Greece. The area of Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi.

And these churches in the upper part of Greece were rather poor. And yet they gave very generously. The church in Corinth was a wealthy church.

And so Paul is encouraging them to follow the example of the poor brethren in Macedonia. And so, moreover, brethren, we do you to wit, or we would bring to your remembrance, the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia how that in great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. And so, though they were impoverished themselves, they were extremely liberal.

They say that poor people usually give much more to the poor than do wealthy people. Because the poor people understand what it is to be poor. This is, I believe, true.

It has been our observation through the years that the most generous people within the church are not the wealthiest people, but the poorer people seem to be more liberal. Now, giving to God can never be measured by the amount. God doesn't measure the gift by the amount.

God measures the gift by the cost to the giver. You see, if you're making a million dollars a year and you give God a hundred thousand dollars tithe, you're not really giving very much. It doesn't really cost you much.

Look at all you've got to live on. If you make ten thousand dollars a year and you give God a thousand dollars, that's giving a lot because you don't have that much left to live on. What did it cost you? Jesus was with his disciples standing in the temple watching the wealthy people as they were coming along and putting their gifts there at the altar with all of their show and ostentation.

What Jesus was referring to in the Sermon on the Mount, he said, and when you give, don't be like the Pharisees who like to get a trumpet band going in front of them. Fanfare, everybody, here I am. Here's how much I'm giving.

Da-da-da-da-da, you know. Fanfare, you know, you make a big thing out of it. One little lady came in and dropped in a mite, which was a half of a penny.

And Jesus turned to the disciples and he said, that little lady gave more than all of the rest. For they all had given out of their abundance, but she gave her very substance, all she had. So, God has an interesting way of accounting and of keeping accounts as far as what you give.

For God looks at what it costs you to give. And that is the measurement whereby God measures our gifts. So, the church in Macedonia, they gave out of their deep poverty, yet they were so liberal in their giving of their offering.

For to their power I bear record, yes, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves, praying us and begging us that we would receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. So, the church in Macedonia, Paul was probably reluctant to take the money. He said, oh no, you guys need this.

And he was reluctant to take their money because they had made such a liberal offering and they had needs themselves. But they insisted, they intruded, Paul, take this money because we want to share. We want to have this koinonia.

We want to have this, well the word koinonia was translated one place, all things in common. We want to have this total sharing with the church. And this they did.

More than what we had hoped actually. But they first gave their own selves to the Lord and then unto us by the will of God. Now, of course it is important that you give yourself.

God is far more interested in you giving yourself than He is your giving your money. In fact, if you don't give yourself to God and just give your money, it's not going to do you any good. They gave first of themselves and then unto us by the will of God insomuch that we desired Titus that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

Therefore, as you abound in everything, now this was the poor saints there who were in Macedonia. They gave liberally. Now, you abound in everything.

You abound in faith, in the utterance of the Word. You abound in knowledge. You abound in diligence and in your love to us.

See that you abound in this keros also. In this giving. The word keros is an interesting Greek word.

It means everything that is beautiful, lovely, glorious. Keros translated grace. I speak not by commandment.

I'm not ordering you. But by occasion of the forwardness of others to prove the sincerity of your love. Now, having used first of all the church in Macedonia as an example of giving through grace, he now refers to even a greater example.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich. And so, calling upon first of all the Macedonians as the example of giving, now a more dramatic illustration. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, the universe is his.

All that is in it. The world is the Lord's in the fullness thereof and all they that dwell therein. Yet for your sake he became poor.

In order that through his poverty he might make you rich. And herein I give my advice, for this is necessary for you, who have begun before not only to do but also to be forward a year ago. Now, we've been talking about this, Paul says, for quite a while.

Now therefore, we've talked about it, now therefore perform the doing of it. You've been talking about it for a long time, now do it. There comes a time when we need to quit talking and we need to start acting.

Start doing it. There's a time when really you need to quit praying and start moving. When Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt and they came to the Red Sea and they had camped there near Pihahiro and they looked behind them and the Pharaoh had come with his chariots and his army.

It says, Moses fell on his face and cried unto the Lord. And God says, Why are you crying unto me? Get up and get moving, Moses. Now is not the time for a prayer meeting.

Now is the time to move. Take your rod, stretch it forth over the sea and all. And so there comes the time for action.

We can talk about something for a long time, but then the time comes we've got to move upon it. And that's what Paul is encouraging them here. Look, you've been talking about it for a long time, now do it.

Perform it. The doing of it. That as there was a readiness to will or you were willing to do so, so there now may be the performance also out of that which you have.

For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that which he has not. It's your willingness to do. Now, Paul will go ahead and talk further about giving in chapter 9. Actually, this whole thought of giving goes on through into chapter 9. And in chapter 9, he says that your giving should not be from pressure, should not be from constraint, nor grudging.

In other words, don't give if you're going to complain or gripe about it. Better not to give. God doesn't like a griping giver.

Who does? God loves a cheerful giver. The word in the Greek is hilarious. The offering should be the most hilarious time of the whole service.

And if you can't give with hilarity, you shouldn't give. You know, if when you give you're like, oh man, I could go to Bob's and get a big boy and a malt, you know. No, I can't because I'm giving it.

It would be better that you go get your big boy and a malt and get your indigestion and all than to give it in a grudging way to God. God doesn't want you to begrudge what you've given to Him. And that's not only in money, that's in anything, in service of time or whatever.

What I give to God, I ought to give out of a willing heart, out of a loving heart, without begrudging or griping about what I've given or done. That completely spoils the gift when someone then begins to complain or gripe about it. So, there was first of all a willing mind.

That's great. That's accepted. God accepts the willingness of your mind according to what you have.

You don't have to give what you don't have. For I mean not that other men be eased and you be burdened. I don't want to lay the whole burden on you.

But there should be an equality that now at this time, your abundance may be a supply for their needs, that their abundance also may be a supply for your needs, that there may be an equality. And so, this is what Paul is calling for within the church, an equality. Now, there are places today in the world where the church is really suffering.

And that is why we have mission projects. That is why we send thousands of dollars to the Christians in other areas of the world every year. That is why we send out free tapes by the thousands all over the world to various missionary groups.

That there might be an equality. God has blessed us abundantly, which lays upon us the responsibility of sharing then with those churches that have not been as blessed, that there might be this equality within the body. Who knows? Maybe someday we'll need help from them.

As it is written, he that had gathered much had nothing over. This is when God had sent the manna to them in the wilderness. And he that had gathered little had no lack, the equality that was there.

Now, Paul is going to send some messengers down there to collect this offering. But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. Titus feels for you just like I do.

The same feelings. For indeed he accepted the exhortation, but being more forward of his own accord, he went unto you. And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches.

Now, just who this brother is that went with Titus, I don't know. But Titus was wanting to go back and to take this other letter of Paul back to them. And there went with him another brother who was well spoken of in all of the churches.

There are those who believe it was probably Luke, but we don't know for sure. And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, or with the money that you send, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord and declaration of your ready mind. So, he was chosen to take this offering with us.

So, Paul is not going to be solely responsible for seeing that this gets back to Jerusalem. But these trusted men are going to be going with Paul in taking this money to the church in Jerusalem. Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in the abundance which is administered by us.

Paul wanted to be very careful in the money matters. Recognizing that it's the Lord's money given by the Lord's people, he thought to be very careful that there was a proper accounting of the money, lest there would be suspicion upon him that he had been taking the Lord's money. Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of all men.

An honest accounting of the funds that have been given. I think that this is so vital for the church to keep an accurate accounting of the monies that have come in and how they've been dispensed. And our church books are open to anyone who attends here and who supports the church.

If you want to know how your monies are expended, the books are open and you can look at the books and you can see how the monies are expended. You have a right to know. If you don't give, it's none of your business.

Some people want to come in and look at the books and they're total strangers. We don't open up the books. It's none of their business unless they give.

If you give, then it is your business. And we're happy to provide you with an accounting. We feel that we need to provide things honest in the sight of all men.

And so we have sent with them our brother whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now the more diligent upon the great confidence which I have in you. So whether any inquire of Titus, he is my partner. He's a fellow helper concerning you.

And our brethren, be inquired of. They are the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ. Wherefore, show to them and before the churches the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf.

So go ahead and give a generous offering and show to them, prove to them what I said about you was true. That you're just good people and generous people. So, Paul is sending now these men to collect the offering from them that he might, when he goes to Jerusalem, take it to them.

And he will continue in the next chapter this thought on their giving before he moves on to the vindication of his apostleship in chapter 10. I would like to commend you for going through chapters 7 and 8. They are not the most inspiring chapters in the Bible. Paul is dealing with local issues in the church of Corinth.

However, there are basic principles which we have sought to bring out because the principles remain though the situations change. And so, though this isn't the most inspiring portions of the Scriptures, yet there are important principles to be gained in this session. I will frankly confess there are many other areas of Scripture where I find much more inspiration.

And yet, we don't want to skip this because we might skip some principle that is very necessary for us. Father, we thank You for Your Word. A lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path to guide us through our journey through this life.

Now, Father, help us to fix our eyes upon the goal, looking unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith, that we might run with patience the race that is set before us, that we might be faithful servants doing Your will, living for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen. The Lord be with you and bless you abundantly.

We look forward to seeing you when we return from Israel in a couple of weeks. In the meantime, you pray for us as we will be praying for you. The Lord will just minister to you of the abundance of His grace, His mercy, His love through Jesus Christ our Lord, that you might be blessed through the work of His Spirit in your inner man, making you strong, bringing you victory.

May the Lord guide your life, keep your life, and use your life for His glory. In Jesus' name.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/through-the-bible-2-corinthians-7-8/>

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