

2 Corinthians Fundraising

Interpreting the Text:

1. Chapters 8 and 9 feel like separate sections rather than a part of 2 Corinthians. Professors Bartlett and Attridge believe that each chapter may be their own distinct letter, though their message is consistent. Can you identify patterns in these two chapters and evidence that they may be redundant? Does this affect your reading of this portion of 2 Corinthians?
2. Which of the appeals that Paul makes in these two chapters strikes you as the most effective in eliciting support? What about his language or approach seems the most compelling?
3. Professors Attridge and Bartlett discussed the concept of a “prosperity Gospel” referring to the idea that we will be rewarded for giving. Reading chapters 8 and 9, do you think Paul would agree with that interpretation?

Applying the Text:

1. Raising funds for the work of the church or other worthwhile charities can be a challenging but rewarding enterprise. If you have done so, what strategies have you found to be effective? Do they resemble the moves that Paul makes?
2. Paul seems to be chiefly concerned with generosity in these two chapters, though it can be read as trying to instigate competition between church communities. How can we ensure that when we read these chapters, we focus on the act of giving from a place of glorifying God and not on a place of ‘outgiving the church in Macedonia’ (or whatever your local equivalent is)? Are there other ways to encourage and inspire generosity, creating “cheerful givers”?