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### The New Testament Financial System

Don Carlos Janes

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ADRIENE CHRISTIAN WARD

# THE NEW TESTAMENT FINANCIAL SYSTEM

TRACED OUT

BY

DON CARLOS JAMES.

Author "A Trip Abroad", "The Cedric Papers", "Our World Tour"  
"Where Christ Has Not Gone", Etc.



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# THE NEW TESTAMENT FINANCIAL SYSTEM

CHAPTER I

1

THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM

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## THE NEW TESTAMENT FINANCIAL SYSTEM.

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### How Workers Went to the Field.

In looking into the question of the scriptural support of the work of God on earth it is desirable to consider in the first place the manner in which the workers went to the field. We know that the original apostles were ordered to the ends of the earth by him in whom was vested "all authority." Their marching orders were given before the church was established. "An angel of the Lord spoke unto Philip" directing him on the journey which brought about the conversion of Queen Candace's treasurer. Acts 8:26. The Lord Jesus appeared unto Saul on the road to Damascus to appoint him "a minister and a witness" (Acts 26:16) and some years afterwards the Holy Spirit directed that he and Barnabas be separated for the work whereunto they had been called. Acts 13:2. The language seems to be addressed to certain prophets and teachers and the response is with prayer, fasting and the laying on of hands, which we are not required to believe was a secret or private service, as it is quite likely the church was convened when this solemnity occurred, and it is commonly said that Barnabas and Saul "were sent out by the church at Antioch." However it is written, "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit (which is not inconsistent with the former idea), went down to Seleucia." vs. 4).

In this connection, it is a significant fact that a certain worthy but anonymous brother "was appointed by the churches to travel" in the matter of the great collection for Palestinian famine relief (2 Cor. 8:19) and it seems sound reasoning to conclude that if two or more congregations may unite in appointing a brother to an important work, a single church might set apart a suitable man or suitable men for a similar undertaking; and this is confirmed by 1 Cor. 16:3, which says: "Whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem."

The Jerusalem disciples "were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles," by the "great persecution against the church" which arose the day Stephen was stoned. Acts 8:1. And these Christians "that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." v. 4. In the third epistle of John, we read of brethren who "for the sake of the Name \* \* \* went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles." v. 7. It is not said that they were sent, but we are told that they *went*. Titus, "being himself very earnest" "went forth unto



the Corinthians "of his own accord" to raise relief for the poor in Palestine. 2 Cor. 8:17. In conclusion, the Scriptures make two things very clear: (1) That all Christians in process of time "ought to be teachers" (Heb. 5:12; Acts 8:1-4; Rev. 22:17); and that "as we have opportunity" we should "work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith." Gal. 6:10.

### What God Ordained.

Coming now particularly to the matter of finances, it is plainly written: "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. 9:14. This is clearly the Divine plan. "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." 1 Cor. 9:9. "For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire." 1 Tim. 5:18. The preacher has a right to forbear working. The soldier does not go to war at his own charges. The man who sets out a vineyard, eats of the grapes, and the man who feeds a flock of goats partakes of the milk of the flock. "He that plows ought to plow in hope, and he that threshes, to thresh in hope of partaking. 1 Cor. 9:10. It is not therefore a great matter that those who sow spiritual things among us should partake of our carnal things. v. 11. Indeed they have "this right" even as the priests who served at the altar had "their portion with the altar." But a man may forego this "right" of support and Paul not only made it his aim to preach where Christ had not been previously named (Rom. 15:20), but gloried in making "the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full (his) right in the gospel." This doctrine, the great apostle very fully sets forth in 1 Cor. 9, and there are numerous sidelights on the subject in other portions of the record.

### Personal Support and Individual Gifts.

Knowing now that the natural and normal thing is for the worker in God's church to be maintained by his brethren, let us pay some attention to the matter of personal support. In Acts 18:1-4 we have a small-sized, but well-drawn pen-picture of this subject. Paul went from Athens to Corinth and found a Jewish couple who had been expelled from Rome by the imperial decree of Claudius; and because his trade and theirs was the same "he abode with them, and they wrought", labored with their hands at tentmaking. "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath." To the elders at Ephesus, Paul could say: "Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is

more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:34, 35. "We toil, working with our own hands." 1 Cor. 4:12.

The New Testament reveals something on the subject of individual gifts made directly to the person who is to profit by them. Lydia, immediately upon her conversion, invited Paul, Timothy and Luke to lodge in her home saying, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." Acts 16:15. And so urgent was she that "she constrained" them to accept her hospitality. Paul wrote to Philemon to prepare him a lodging (v. 22), which seems a case of accepting an individual gift. The beloved Gaius did "a faithful work in whatsoever (he) did toward them that (were) brethren and strangers withal: who (bore) witness to (his) love before the church," and John says: "Whom thou wilt do well to set forward on their journey worthily of God: because that for the sake of the Name they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." 3 John 5-8. This appears to be direct, individual giving. When Paul tells Titus to "Set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them" (Tit. 3:13) we have further teaching on this subject. Paul rejoiced "at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part (He preached "the gospel of God for nought" to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. 11:7) they supplied." 1 Cor. 16:17. They may have made personal gifts, or they may have been bearers of congregational gifts. Seeing a brother in need when you have the means to relieve his need constitutes an occasion for giving (1 John 3:17) just as the good Samaritan on the Jericho road, seeing a fellowman in need at once acted upon his commission which the occasion gave him by mercifully dressing the wounds, carrying the poor victim to the hotel, and becoming financially responsible for his care. Luke 10:25-35. The Roman captain of Capernaum, out of his love for the Hebrews, made them a gift of a meeting house (Luke 7:5) which is much along the line of the conduct of the Maltese barbarians of whom Paul says they "honored us with many honors; and when we sailed, they put on board such things as we needed." Acts 28:10. It is not said that these people had been converted during Paul's enforced visit to their island.

In the next place, let us pay some attention to the matter of support from the church. While we may agree that Barnabas and Paul were sent forth by the Antioch church at the direction of the Holy Spirit, we shall not be able to cite a passage showing that they bore the expenses of his trip. On his second great tour from Antioch, Paul established the church at Philippi and from there he went to Thessalonica where he tarried two or three weeks and made some converts. The new church at Philippi immediately co-operated with the missionary in this work as we are informed in Phil. 4:15: "And ye yourselves also know, ye Phi-



lippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my need." And we read that these Thessalonian brethren became an exemplary church. "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth." 1 Thess. 1:8. Continuing his tour, Paul went to Beroea and Athens and then to Corinth. In Athens some converts were made and in Corinth (where the preaching cost them nothing) a well-known congregation which included Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, "and many of the Corinthians" was started. At a later period, the missionary wrote of the monetary side of his work in their city informing them that he "robbed other churches, taking wages of them that (he) might minister unto (them)." To continue his language we have these words: "When I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia (supposably Silas and Timothy. Acts 18:5), supplied the measure of my want." 2 Cor. 11:9. Philippi and Thessalonica were Macedonian congregations and it should have weight with us to see them promptly taking up the support of Paul early in their experience as Christians. They did not wait till they had housed themselves and paid off the debt, but about ten years after Paul started the work in Philippi he wrote these commendatory words: "I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you. \* \* \* for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel *from the first day until now.*" Phil. 1:3, 5. (But there was a period when they "lacked opportunity." 4:10).

That the apostle expected financial assistance or its equivalent when he planned to visit Corinth is evidenced by his words: "I was minded to come unto you, \* \* \* and of you be sent forward on my journey unto Judæa." 2 Cor. 1:15, 16. What would we think of a preacher today who would send us word that he planned to stop a while with us and bless us with good and true words and by us be helped on to New York or St. Louis? If the preacher sending the word were a true Paul, it would be very well indeed. This, i. e., support by the church, seems to be the ideal when circumstances permit. The church is the acme of the Savior's constructive work on earth. The family existed long before Jesus came, even from the days of Adam. It was primarily an institution to "multiply and replenish the earth." Gen. 1:28. It is not the family, but "the house of God, which is the church of the living God" which Heaven has made "*the pillar and ground of the truth.*" 1 Tim. 3:15. Let us all understand distinctly that it is *the church* that is charged with the great, serious, solemn responsibility of upholding the truth, of spreading the gospel among all men. It is made on those lines and with



Paul, let us all heartily say: "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, \* \* \* unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever." Eph. 3:20, 21. This spoils all talk about glorifying God through missionary societies of human making. Giving cash through the church and paying it out from the church tends to shift the glory from the human giver to the Great Giver and to his ever-blessed Son, and to his blood-bought church. There is nothing better than this when circumstances permit. Indeed there is nothing else so good.

"But whoso hath this world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need," is not expected to say (if the case is urgent), "I will bring it before the church," but is, by inference at least, expected to open his compassion to him, the very thing "the love of God" would prompt. 1 John 3:17. Does not James also indicate that "If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food" (Jas. 2:15, 16) we should relieve the need without delay? The good Samaritan's example is commendable.

### Things to be Remembered.

But it should be borne in mind that on the part of the preacher, *evangelism* rather than *support* is the main thing. Let the preachers all bear in mind that if individuals or congregations do not bear their expenses it is highly scriptural for the preacher's hands to minister to his necessities and to them that may be with him. Acts 20:34. And it will be well to remember that the prince of missionaries knew what it meant to be imprisoned, to be beaten, to be shipwrecked, to endure sundry perils, to be in "hunger and thirst, in fastings often" and "in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:23-33) but he did not know the first thing about resigning or quitting. It took a Roman's sword passing between his head and his throbbing heart to stop him; and by the providence of God, even that did not stop him, for, beloved, Paul is more alive, more widely read, more potent for good this very hour than any day he ever lived and walked among sinful men.

And it should be carried in the mind of the members of God's church with much vividness that when they allow worthy, consecrated workers, true laborers in God's vineyard, to suffer lack of food, clothing and other necessities of life that they thereby automatically advertise their own lack of "the love of God" (1 John 3:17) to use a scriptural term; that they lack "religion" to use a more modern but very expressive word. We do ourselves no honor to belittle our pocketbooks and talk about being "few" and "poor" and all that. If we are few, it is much our own fault. If we are poor may it not often be due to lack of wisdom or lack of industry—things we should have no pride in advertising? But we are by no means so few as might be thought and we are far from being "as poor as Job's turkey." Our hold-



ings in stocks, bonds, etc., would make an immense total. The needless and unconsecrated jewelry we wear has no small value. The money cost of our tobacco and cigars, etc., is not insignificant. While we can have so many good homes, so many well-stocked farms, so many automobiles, and so many of the desirable though unnecessary furnishings for our homes, we can *if we will* have large sums for God and the church of the First-born. We imperil our standing before the court of heaven when we "withhold more than is meet," and we endanger our own financial standing for this "tendeth only to want." Prov. 11:24. It is very poor economy that consists in cutting down our contributions to God, especially when we consider that he controls every line of prosperity. Let us study the question of Mal. 3:8 with the words which follow in the next several verses, for our giving is much less than it could and should be.

### The System in a Nutshell.

The financial system of the New Testament church in a nutshell is found in 1 Cor. 16:2, but it is only in its most condensed form that it is recorded there and too much must not be built on this foundation. It will be interesting to gather up the threads scattered through the sacred writings and weave them together in order more fully to see this beautiful fabric which served the church so well in the long ago and only fails today by its professed supporters not knowing what the system really is or by refusing through neglect or other cause to allow it to have its perfect work.

The above-mentioned scripture has to do primarily with the raising of funds for relief of famine-stricken brethren in Jerusalem, but it affords a safe, sensible, scriptural and successful basis for all of our financial affairs as churches of Christ, and we do well to be quite familiar with the outstanding facts and teachings which are correlated with it. Perhaps we may as well preface our study of this rather complex matter by looking at a simple, condensed statement of handling famine relief at an earlier date.

About A. D. 43 or 44, Paul came to Antioch in Syria (north of Palestine) and spent "a whole year" with Barnabas "and taught much people." Acts 11:26. It was then that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." "Now in those days there came down prophets from Jerusalem," Agabus being one of the number, and he as spokesman "signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: \* \* \* And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." Acts 11:27-30. Here in this very short space we have several important points about New Testament finance. (1) A great need is foretold; (2) although it was to include Syria, the

Antioch brethren—every man—determined to send relief; (3) they purposed to give on the basis of “ability”; (4) they carried out their resolve; (5) the gift was sent by Barnabas and Saul, men whose integrity they knew; (6) and it was delivered to the elders, whose office is thus dignified.

### The System Amplified.

Now, just as we do not find all of “the plan of salvation” set forth categorically in one passage, it is needful to look to other scriptures for an amplification of the New Testament financial system which is in part set forth above. Reverting to our original text (1 Cor. 16:2), we have a passage which relates to provision for another famine, an event which dates about twelve years later. Let us attempt to get the genesis of this and as much of the details of the proceedings as possible.

The *initiative* of the operations in the famine of A. D. 44 was the going of prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch. In this second case, we are able to trace the beginning of operations to two men: Paul, who was “zealous” to remember the poor, and Titus who had an “earnest care” for the Corinthians in these days of stress. When Paul and Barnabas were in Jerusalem in A. D. 50 (14 years after his conversion), James, Peter and John extended to them the right hand of fellowship and expressed their desire that they should be mindful of the poor. Gal. 2:9, 10. Now in this famine period around the year 57, the great apostle to the Gentiles is diligent in securing relief for Palestinian poor to an extent which was without doubt very pleasing to the brethren in that stricken section. We know that Paul operated among “the churches of Galatia,” in Macedonia (where Philippi and Thessalonica were) and at Corinth—rather widely separated places—and he may have called upon other brethren to respond to the pressing needs of the times. The directions he gave both to Corinth and Galatia were for “each one” to “lay by him in store” “on the first day of the week” and according to his prosperity.

It is thought that the two Corinthian letters were written in the spring and fall of A. D. 57, and as Paul boasted up in Macedonia that Greece had “been prepared for a year past” (or in the past year), it seems that operations at Corinth had been begun ahead of Paul’s orders in 1 Cor. 16:2 and it is clearly stated that “Titus \* \* \* had made a beginning *before*.” 2 Cor. 8:6 from which we may conclude that this volunteer worker (v. 17) initiated the movement in that quarter. Anyhow, when the matter came to their attention, there was such “readiness” on their part that Paul could profitably tell of it among the Macedonian churches (2 Cor. 9:2). It appears that liberality was one of the marked characteristics of the early Christians; for did not the Jerusalem brethren voluntarily put their belongings into a common fund early in their experience as members of the church? And we



have seen how Antioch responded in the famine of 44. Now Corinth shows herself zealous and the same is true of the poor brethren who made up the churches in Macedonia. Paul speaks in very strong contrast when he says: "the abundance of their joy and their *deep poverty* abounded unto the *riches of their liberality*." They gave "according to their power, \* \* \* yea and beyond their power they gave of their own accord" and besought Paul "with much entreaty in regard of \* \* \* the ministering to the saints." 2 Cor. 8:2-4. But their willingness to give money is easily understood when we observe that "first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us." v. 5. Modern teachers could do a very great deal more for the promotion of the Lord's work if the members generally would first give themselves to God and to his sound and faithful teachers. So much more can be done when the membership *wants* more to be done.

### How Paul Raised Money.

A clear light on Paul's way of raising money is seen in the beginning of these two chapters (2 Cor. 8 and 9). He had already "given order to" the Corinthians to make this first-day-of-the-week offering. Now he comes at them telling how well the Macedonians in "their deep poverty" had done. The Corinthians were considered well-to-do. Macedonia had done better than was expected; had even given above what Paul considered them able to give; so much that it appears he had been reluctant about receiving it; but they would not be deterred for they besought him "with much entreaty" to receive it all (for such seems to be the sense of his language). In chapter 8:7, he plainly exhorts Corinth to "abound in this grace (of giving) also." He reminds them how that Christ "though he was rich" (v. 9) "emptied himself" (Phil. 2:7) that through his poverty they might become rich. After giving them credit for being "the first to make a beginning a year ago," he proceeds by saying, "But now complete the doing also." vs. 10, 11. He explains that God accepts gifts on the basis of what "a man hath, not according as he hath not." The Corinthian abundance would serve as a supply now for the Palestinian need, and later their abundance might become a supply for Corinthian want. He tells them how he had gloried among the Macedonians of their "readiness" and goes on to tell them that he had sent some brethren ahead of him to Corinth to make assurance more sure that they would without fail be entirely ready with their contribution when he came, so that if there were any of Macedonia with him neither he nor the Corinthians would be put to shame. This is good argument. Otherwise Paul would not have used it. And he tells us that this good report which he had borne to Macedonia about the church at Corinth had "stirred very many of them" (v. 2) or as the Greek has it, "the more part," the majority, we would say. I will

leave you, at least for the present, to continue his teaching on this important matter of giving for famine relief as he finishes up 2 Cor. 9 from the sixth verse onward. You will do yourself a favor to examine this with much care.

### The Pledge is Scriptural.

Aside from Paul's writings to raise money in this case, we find him exhorting Titus whose natural zeal had led him to take up this money-raising voluntarily ("of his own accord") to "complete" in the Corinthian church this gift or bounty which they had promised before ("your afore-promised bounty"), which gives the additional light that brethren may pledge, promise, in advance of giving. Indeed giving as one may prosper involves thought, consideration, before the gift is made. It is scriptural and binding for "each man (to) do according as he hath *purposed* in his heart." v. 7. Merely reaching in the pocket Sunday morning and getting anything that comes to hand is not sound practice. There is a mental process that goes before the muscular process.

But Titus was not sent to Corinth alone. Some good brother ("whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches") had been "appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace" (collection) and Paul sends him along. Not only so, but "We have sent with *them* our brother whom we have many times proved earnest in many things." And these three messengers or servants were not sent with insufficient endorsement and commendation. Paul says if anybody asks about Titus, "He is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward." v. 23. In what higher terms could he have described this zealous and earnest brother? "Our brethren (the other two), they are the messengers of the churches, *they are the glory of Christ.*"

### Avoiding Scandal.

And why had "the churches" appointed a man to travel with Paul in this financial affair? "To show our readiness: *avoiding this that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty* which is ministered by us: for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men." vs. 19-21. He did it, as some in our day have their missionary accounts examined occasionally, that his brethren might know he acted entirely honorably. Paul did not want to be accounted as a "grafter."

After the great meeting in Ephesus which resulted in the public burning of about \$8,000 worth of books on magical arts, "Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia (Greece), to go to Jerusalem." Acts 19:21. Then follows the great hubbub raised by Demetrius with the mob shouting "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," after which Paul



went through Macedonia and came to Greece, and spent three months. In the winter of 57 he writes Galatians from Corinth, and in the spring of 58 he indites Romans, saying: "Now I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. \* \* \* Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judæa, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; that I may come to you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest." Rom. 15:25-32. How needful those prayers were becomes manifest as we proceed.

### The Gift Delivered in Jerusalem.

As he was about to sail from Greece to Syria, he learned of a Jewish plot against him and "determined to return through Macedonia," and was accompanied as far as Asia by Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, (of Derbe), Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus and Luke. He worshipped one Lord's day at Troas; addressed the elders of Ephesus; tarried seven days with the disciples at Tyre; spent a day with the brethren at Ptolemais; and went on to Cæsarea where he refreshed himself some days in the home of Philip the evangelist. While there, Agabus came down from Jerusalem; and binding himself with Paul's girdle, declared: "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." After a tearful experience in which Paul told them of his readiness both to be bound and to be put to death "at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus", his friends refrained from further pleadings against his going, resigning themselves to the will of the Lord. Paul and his companions took up their baggage and, accompanied by certain of the local brethren (including Mnason with whom he was to lodge in the Holy City) proceeded to complete the last leg of the journey. "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly," but "Jews from Asia" stirred up a mob, and but for the timely action of the chief captain of the Roman cohort would likely have killed Paul. Luke's narrative proceeds on through Acts with its story of Paul's imprisonments, his various addresses before the authorities; his appeal to Cæsar; the final accomplishment of his anticipated trip to Rome (not as he had expected, but as an ambassador in bonds); and concludes with the great apostle in the imperial city with a hired house where for two years he preaches "the kingdom of God \* \* \* with all boldness, none forbidding him."

And thus we have a comprehensive view of how funds were

raised and handled in New Testament times by brethren acting in a church capacity. I have not attempted in this article to speak of individual giving nor of several other matters which are akin to the subject handled. Perhaps we will do well to have another study of the topic in which to summarize and condense the doctrine of the scriptures on this line.

### Matters Reviewed.

The scriptures clearly show that "They that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14); that "the fatherless and widows" are to be visited in their affliction (Jas. 1:27); and that when one section of the church is in distress, the "abundance" (2 Cor. 8:14) and even the "deep poverty" (v. 2) of brethren elsewhere, although they be in a foreign country, is to be a supply for their want, as Galatia (1 Cor. 16:1), Macedonia (2 Cor. 9:2), and Greece (1 Cor. 16:2) are, with apostolic sanction and direction, involved in relieving the suffering among the poor of the saints at Jerusalem.

A zealous brother like Titus may volunteer to raise needed funds, may go forth "of his own accord." 2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 17. It will not make him less efficient if he receives an exhortation from some one. v. 17.

"The churches" may "appoint" a worthy brother "to travel" on such business. Vs. 18, 19. It is apostolic that such a person should be well commended. v. 23. The brethren to whom these commended messengers come should show "unto them in the face of the churches the proof of" their love. v. 24.

Brethren have the right to "set (A. V. "addicted") themselves to minister unto the saints (1 Cor. 16:15) and we are apostolically instructed to "be in subjection unto such, and to every one that helpeth in the work and laboreth." v. 16. The great outpouring of Christian charity in Macedonia was preceded by the brethren first giving "their own selves to the Lord," and to Paul "through the will of God." 2 Cor. 9:5.

The regular and normal way of raising a fund is expressed in these words: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper." 1 Cor. 16:2. This calls for (1) regular, (2) individual, and (3) proportionate giving based upon ability, "according as a man hath, not according as he hath not." 2 Cor. 8:12. Remember the widow and her two mites. Mark 12:41-44.

At least one reason for making these contributions on the first day of the week was "that no collections be made" when Paul came along to get the gift. The inference is that special collections would be made upon his arrival if they were necessary.

Not only have the churches a right to appoint a man to go out in the interest of such a need as the Jerusalem famine constituted, but the congregation which makes a gift has a right to



"approve" brethren to transfer their gift to the place where it is to be used. 1 Cor. 16:3.

It is scriptural to promise a gift in advance of making it. And it is scriptural for brethren to go to a church that has given a pledge "a make up" their "afore-promised bounty." 2 Cor. 9:5.

It is apostolic and sensible to use the example of one church to stir up brethren elsewhere (2 Cor. 9:2) and it is not therefore necessary for a congregation to keep its good works secret, though individuals should not do their "righteousness before men, to be seen of them." "When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee." Matt. 6:1, 2. It is good to "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth." Prov. 27:2.

Reasonable precaution should be taken to avoid criticism for alleged misapplication of funds. We should "take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." 2 Cor. 8:21. The churches appointed a man to travel with Paul in the matter of the collection for Palestinian relief, and he had written Corinth indicating that they might approve two or more to bear their gift to its destination. 1 Cor. 16:4.

Funds sent to an organized church were delivered to the elders. Acts 11:25.

### Other Important Considerations.

Giving to God is neither throwing it away nor investing in a speculation, but is comparable to sowing grain and "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." 2 Cor 9:6. We should therefore give *bountifully*, and not *sparingly*.

"Each man" is to do "according as he hath purposed in his heart." v. 7. Correct giving is not the same as chance giving. It does not meet the requirements of scripture to wait till the collection is being taken and then reach in the pocket and give at random out of what may happen to be there. The giver is to "purpose" (Gr. "to intend considerably") which implies thought previous to the act of giving.

We may not give "grudgingly" Gr. ("of sorrow") or "of necessity" and expect the Divine favor for "God loveth a cheerful giver."

We need not worry about where our own supplies will come from if we give to missionaries and famine stricken brethren in a remote land for "God is able to make all grace abound unto (us) that (we) *having always all sufficiency in everything* may *abound* unto every good work." v. 8.

In this connection, note that the church at Philippi immediately after Paul went out from them (Phil. 1:5) began to fellowship him in his mission work and kept it up through many

years and at the end of the period are still working this line. Ch. 4:15, 16. And the apostle assures them that God would supply every need of theirs. v. 19.

Being involved in a need ourselves does not absolve us from our obligation to others who may be in greater need. When Agabus foretold a world famine at Antioch, "The disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa" (Acts 11:27-29) about two hundred miles away.

Returning to 2 Cor. 9, we find they are (like the Philipians) assured that God shall supply and multiply their seed for sowing and increase the fruits of their righteousness, and they will be enriched in everything "unto all liberality." Vs. 10, 11.

And these gifts scripturally given will accomplish three ends besides: (1) they will fill up the measure of the wants of the saints (at Jerusalem), (2) be the cause of many thanksgivings going up to God, and (3) cause those brethren to long after the Corinthians "by reason of the exceeding grace of God in (them)." v. 14.

### Four Kinds of Support.

It is scriptural for the preacher of the gospel to live of the gospel, but in the absence of support or full support from the brethren, it is apostolic for the preacher's hands to minister unto himself and those that are with him. Acts 20:34. He may "make tents." Acts 18:1-4. If he experiences "hunger and thirst," "cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:27) he should "Suffer hardship . . . as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. 2:3. But the brethren should know that no amount of patient endurance on the part of a neglected preacher will atone before God for their shortcoming and that "the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it." 1 Cor. 12:25, 25.

A congregation under the Holy Spirit may send out missionaries, (Acts 13:1-4) and the field on which they work may contribute to their support as Philippi did (Phil. 4:15, 16). He may labor with his own hands as we have seen, and he may receive gifts from those of whom it is not indicated that they had been converted. Acts 28:7-10.

The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch and the Antioch brethren selected him and Saul of Tarsus (in Asia Minor) to bear a gift to Jerusalem. Acts 11:30. The Antioch church at a later date sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to consult about the circumcision question and they were "brought on their way *by the church*." Acts 15:1-3.

But personal service and individual gifts are allowable. Titus was told to "set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them."



Tit. 3:13. Gaius was advised that he would do well in setting brethren "forward on their journey worthily of God." 3 John 5-8. Paul directed Philemon to prepare him a lodging. Philemon 22.

Seeing a need creates an obligation to minister to its relief. "Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" 1 John 3:17.

Knowing of a need, any faithful brother may exhort others to assist in relieving it. 2 Cor. 8:6. "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do." 1 Thess. 5:11. "Exhort one another day by day." Heb. 3:13. "I exhort you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation." Heb. 13:22.

The fact that famine relief was the object of the giving commanded in 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, does not indicate that we should have some other financial system for missionary work, building meeting houses, etc. The object for which the funds are to be used makes no change on the principles by which they are to be raised.

"He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy;  
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.  
When we've exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.  
His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus  
He giveth and giveth and giveth, again."

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