

Digging Deeper...

A Study of II Corinthians 9:13

1. Explain II Corinthians 9:13 in its context. The context begins back in chapter eight. Paul begins that chapter by telling the brethren in Corinth about the grace that God had given to the churches of Christ in Macedonia. That gift was the opportunity, even in a time when they were suffering, that they took upon themselves, according to their ability, to **have fellowship in ministering to the saints** not as planned, but first unto the Lord they gave themselves then to the request of Paul and company (**II Corinthians 8:1-5**). We can go back to the letter to the church of Christ in Rome to get the specifics (**Romans 15:26-27**). (We might do well to take notice of the word “distribution” in what Paul wrote to Rome in the aforementioned text as it is part of our word study in this lesson).

Now, Titus is going to carry through with what had begun in Corinth. We should recall that Corinth had been previously instructed to take a collection for the **poor saints in Jerusalem** (**I Corinthians 16:1-2**). Now, because of others, Paul is going to test them to see if they will abound in their giving as they abound in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in their love for Paul and his companions. (We must remember this when we come to **II Corinthians 9:13** to discuss who they were proving their willingness to give to). Paul then set a standard of giving by reminding the brethren how much the Lord had given in leaving Heaven for us (**II Corinthians 8:6-9**).

Now, Paul advises that it is time for the brethren in Corinth to provide this aid that they were willing to give a year ago. This is not to burden the brethren in Corinth, but to bring about equality through their abundance supplying the **needs of the brethren** in Jerusalem as they are capable to do so (**II Corinthians 8:10-15**).

Titus and a couple of brethren are now coming to Corinth. Titus because of his care for the brethren in Corinth is coming. Another brother is coming who was **chosen by the churches** to account for the funds collected. Another brother who is of a good reputation will be acting as another **messenger to the churches** so that they might hear that Corinth has fulfilled their obligation. Now the brethren in Corinth are to **show Titus, the brethren with him, and the churches who** will be reported to by those brethren the evidence of their love of which Paul had reported to them (**II Corinthians 8:16-24**).

It is more than necessary that Paul writes the brethren in Corinth about the **ministering to the saints**. Paul affirms that he knows their willingness to aid and establishes that he boasted of them to other brethren. This boasting encouraged others to aid the brethren in Jerusalem as well. Yet, even though his confidence is high, he is sending Titus and the other brothers to make sure they are ready less those of Macedonia find them unprepared when they come with Paul. Paul strongly reminds them of their promise and that this should be done of generosity rather than obligation (**II Corinthians 9:1-5**).

Now, Paul is sure to remind the brethren that those who sow sparingly can expect to reap sparingly. Those who will give abundantly can expect a reward like their giving. He reminds them that this giving needs to be as purposed, not of obligation. Giving should be because we

want to, not because we are forced to. Paul reminds the brethren in Corinth that God is the giver of all things. We should be reminded that the means we give of has been provided through the hands of our Creator. So is the abundance of the blessings we have from the good that we do with those blessings (**II Corinthians 9:8-11**).

Now, this service of giving **to the saints** not only takes care of their needs, but it will also abound unto God in producing many thanksgivings. Thanks will come because the brethren in Corinth will show the evidence of this service of relief. Now, who was going to be looking for the proof of the aid that Corinth was to provide? Was it not Titus and the brethren who were coming with him (**II Corinthians 8:24**)? Who would be thankful, aside from those who would be receiving the aid of course that Corinth was helping, would it not be Titus, the brethren with him, and the churches that would receive report of this? Thus, Corinth is now going to prove their fellowship in aiding the saints to Titus, the brethren with him (that would be them) and then before all (that would be the churches). Finally, there would be prayers offered on behalf of Corinth by those who saw the evidence of their aid. We must recall that prayer is a privilege for Christians (**John 9:31** and **I Peter 3:12**), this too is evidence that it is not the world at large who Corinth was going to assist in relieving. Paul concludes with thanks to God (**II Corinthians 9:12-15**).

2. Do a word study on the following words in this verse:

- Experiment (KJV): Strong's number 1382; "dokimē": "approved, tried character exhibited in the contribution" (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*; page 154). "The state of disposition of that which has been tried and approved, approved by character or temper" (*The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*; Wesley J. Perschbacher; page 105). "Proof, trying" (*Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible*; page 319).
 - Other translations: "proof" (NKJV); "proving" (ASV 1901).
 - Tyndale's Word Study Concordance shows "dokimē" in the following verses (page 160): **Romans 5:4** (experience; *twice*); **II Corinthians 2:9** (proof); **II Corinthians 8:2** (trial); **II Corinthians 13:3** (proof); **Philippians 2:22** (proof).

- Ministration (KJV): Strong's number 1248; "diakonia": "The ministration of those who render to others the offices of Christian affection especially those who help meet need by either collecting or distributing of charities" (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*; page 138). "Relief, aid" (*The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*; Wesley J. Perschbacher; page 92). "Ministration" (*Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible*; page 663).
 - Other translations: "ministry" (NKJV); "ministration" (ASV 1901).
 - Tyndale's Words Study Concordance shows "diakonia" in the following verses (page 1253): **Luke 10:40** (serving); **Acts 1:17** (ministry); **Acts 1:25** (ministry); **Acts 6:1** (ministration); **Acts 6:4** (ministry); **Acts 11:29** (relief); **Acts 12:25** (ministry); **Acts 20:24** (ministry); **Acts 21:19** (ministry); **Romans 11:13** (office); **Romans 12:7** (ministry); **Romans 15:31** (service); **I Corinthians 12:5** (administrations); **I Corinthians 16:15** (ministry); **II Corinthians 3:7** (ministration); **II Corinthians 3:8** (ministration); **II Corinthians 3:9** (ministration; *twice*); **II Corinthians 4:1** (ministry); **II Corinthians 5:18** (ministry); **II Corinthians 6:3** (ministry); **II Corinthians 8:4** (ministering); **II Corinthians 9:1** (ministering); **II Corinthians 9:12** (administration); **II Corinthians 9:13** (ministration); **II Corinthians 11:8**

(service); **Ephesians 4:12** (ministry); **Colossians 4:17** (ministry); **I Timothy 1:12** (ministry); **II Timothy 4:5** (ministry); **II Timothy 4:11** (ministry); **Hebrews 1:14** (minister); **Revelation 2:19** (service).

- Distribution (KJV): Strong's number 2842; "koinonia": "A gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship" (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*; page 352). "Fellowship, partnership, participation, communion, aid, relief; contribution in aid" (*The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*; Wesley J. Perschbacher; page 242). "A sharing, participation" (*Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible*; page 260).
 - Other translations: "sharing" (NKJV); "contribution" (ASV 1901).
 - **Acts 2:42** (fellowship); **Romans 15:26** (contribution); **I Corinthians 1:9** (fellowship); **I Corinthians 10:16** (communion; *twice*); **II Corinthians 6:14** (communion); **II Corinthians 8:4** (fellowship); **II Corinthians 9:13** (distribution); **II Corinthians 13:14** (communion); **Galatians 2:9** (fellowship); **Ephesians 3:9** (fellowship); **Philippians 1:5** (fellowship); **Philippians 2:1** (fellowship); **Philippians 3:10** (fellowship); **Philemon v. 6** (communication); **Hebrews 13:16** (communicate); **I John 1:3** (fellowship; *twice*); **I John 1:6** (fellowship); **I John 1:7** (fellowship).

3. Who is the "them" and who is the "all" in this verse? Titus and the brethren with him are the "them", while the churches are the "all" (**II Corinthians 8:24-9:1-3**). After all, **II Corinthians 9:13** is talking about proving the sharing in relief that was to occur. The brethren in Corinth had to prove something to someone? Who was that? Again, a study of the eighth chapter shows Titus, the brethren with him, and the churches.

4. What are the applications for us to learn from II Corinthians 9:13 and the context in which this verse appears? Consider these few points...

- That aiding brethren is fellowship (**II Corinthians 8:4; 9:13**).
- The need for accounting (**II Corinthians 8:19-21**).
- The need to think of how much God has blessed us when we are helping our brethren (**II Corinthians 9:9**).
- The need for us to act out of love rather than obligation (**II Corinthians 9:5-7**).
- Doing the right things can influence others (**II Corinthians 9:1-2**).
- The need to follow through with what we say we will do (**II Corinthians 8:10-11; 9:3**).
- We're going to reap what we sow (**II Corinthians 9:6**).
- God is able to provide for us (**II Corinthians 9:8**).
- The need to prove things in the sight of others (**II Corinthians 8:24; 9:13**).
- To pray for our brethren (**II Corinthians 9:14**).
- The need to have a good reputation since some will enquire about us (**II Corinthians 8:22-23**).