

2 Corinthians 6:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

Analysis

Giving no offence in any thing (μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, mēdemian en mēdeni didontes proskopēn, 'placing no stumbling block in anything')—The present participle didontes indicates Paul's habitual practice. Proskopē means an obstacle or occasion for stumbling, something that would cause another to trip or fall into sin. The doubled negative (mēdemian en mēdeni) creates comprehensive scope: 'no offense in nothing.'

That the ministry be not blamed (ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία, hina mē mōmēthē hē diakonia)—The subjunctive mood with hina expresses purpose: Paul's blameless conduct aims to protect the gospel ministry from reproach. Mōmaomai means to find fault, criticize, or discredit. Paul recognizes that ministerial failure brings public disgrace not merely on the minister but on the gospel itself.

This verse introduces the famous 'hardship catalogue' (vv.4-10) by establishing its purpose: Paul's conduct must adorn the gospel, not discredit it. True apostolic ministry combines doctrinal fidelity with ethical integrity—orthodoxy without orthopraxy breeds hypocrisy and undermines evangelistic credibility.

Historical Context

Paul faced constant criticism from opponents in Corinth who questioned his apostolic credentials and conduct. His opponents likely pointed to his sufferings as evidence of divine disfavor. Paul turns this argument on its head in verses 4-10,

showing that apostolic hardships, borne with godly character, actually validate rather than discredit true ministry.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. In what areas of your life might your conduct create stumbling blocks that discredit the gospel?
2. How does Paul's concern that 'the ministry be not blamed' challenge modern individualism that divorces personal conduct from gospel witness?
3. What practical steps can you take to ensure your Christian witness is reinforced rather than contradicted by your lifestyle?

Interlinear Text

μηδενὶ ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ
any thing in any thing Giving offence that G3361 be
G3367 G1722 G3367 G1325 G4349 G2443 G3469

ἡ διακονία
the ministry
G3588 G1248

Additional Cross-References

Romans 14:13 (Parallel theme): Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

1 Corinthians 9:12 (Parallel theme): If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

Matthew 17:27 (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

1 Corinthians 9:22 (Parallel theme): To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.