

2 Corinthians 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

Analysis

And his inward affection is more abundant toward you—Kai ta splanchna autou perissoteros eis hymas estin (καὶ τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐστίν, "and his affections are even more abundantly toward you"). Splanchna (σπλάγχνα, literally "bowels/intestines") refers to the seat of emotions in ancient physiology—deep visceral affection. Philemon 7, 12, 20 use it of Christian love; Colossians 3:12 links it to compassion. Titus's affection wasn't duty but genuine emotional bond forged through ministry crisis.

Whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him—Anamimnēskomenou tēn pantōn hymōn hypakoēn, hōs meta phobou kai tromou edexasthe auton (ἀναμνησκόμενου τὴν πάντων ὑμῶν ὑπακοήν, ὡς μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἐδέξασθε αὐτόν, "while remembering the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you received him"). Hypakoē (ὑπακοή, "obedience") isn't servile submission but covenant faithfulness—the response of faith (Rom 1:5, 16:26). Meta phobou kai tromou (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου, "with fear and trembling")—the same phrase Paul uses for working out salvation (Phil 2:12) and slave-master relationships (Eph 6:5). The Corinthians treated Titus with reverence appropriate to Christ's ambassador.

Historical Context

Receiving traveling Christian workers 'with fear and trembling' contrasted with pagan hospitality customs based on patronage and honor hierarchies. The Corinthians could have rejected Titus (as Paul's proxy) or received him with political calculation. Instead, their humble reception demonstrated they recognized apostolic authority. In a shame-honor culture, 'fear and trembling' before a messenger showed submission to the one who sent him—ultimately God.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does my reception of Christian leaders and teachers reveal my attitude toward the authority of God's Word?
2. What does Titus's growing affection for the Corinthians teach about how suffering together builds ministry relationships?
3. Do I treat church leaders with 'fear and trembling' (reverent respect) or casual familiarity that undermines spiritual authority?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τὰ	σπλάγχνα	αὐτόν	περισσότερος	εἰς	ὑμᾶς
And	G3588	inward affection	him	more abundant	toward	you
G2532		G4698	G846	G4056	G1519	G5209
ἐστὶν	ἀναμιμνησκομένου	τὴν	πάντων	ὑμῶν	ὑπακοήν	
is	whilst he remembereth	G3588	all	of you	the obedience	
G2076	G363		G3956	G5216	G5218	
ὥς	μετὰ	φόβου	καὶ	τρόμου	ἐδέξασθε	αὐτόν
how	with	fear	And	trembling	ye received	him
G5613	G3326	G5401	G2532	G5156	G1209	G846

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:12 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

2 Corinthians 2:9 (Parallel theme): For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

1 John 3:17 (Parallel theme): But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Isaiah 66:2 (Parallel theme): For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Acts 16:29 (Parallel theme): Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

Colossians 3:12 (Parallel theme): Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Psalms 119:120 (Parallel theme): My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

Psalms 2:11 (Parallel theme): Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Job 21:6 (Parallel theme): Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

2 Corinthians 6:12 (Parallel theme): Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

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