

2 Corinthians 8:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

Analysis

Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have—The verb epiteleō (ἐπιτελέω, 'complete/finish/accomplish') appears in imperative form: epistelēsate kai to poiēsai ('complete also the doing'). Paul wants action matching intention. The phrase hē prothumia tou thelein (ἡ προθυμία τοῦ θέλειν, 'the readiness of willing') refers to their year-old commitment; now must come to epitalesai ('the completing') ek tou echein (ἐκ τοῦ ἔχειν, 'out of what you have').

This last phrase is crucial: Paul expects giving proportionate to resources, not beyond them (contrast Macedonians in v. 3 who gave para dynamis). He doesn't demand Macedonian-level sacrifice from Corinth, only faithfulness to their own capacity. The emphasis on epitalesai (completion/finishing) recurs throughout chapters 8-9—Paul wants follow-through. Good intentions without action mock both recipients and God. The balance between generous willingness and practical completion reflects mature stewardship: enthusiasm grounded in reality, vision matched by execution.

Historical Context

Paul's insistence on completing commitments addressed a cultural issue: wealthy Corinthians might have made public pledges for honor but failed to follow through when the spotlight faded. This pattern was common in Greco-Roman civic life

where promises exceeded performance. Paul holds them to their word, teaching that Christian integrity means private faithfulness, not just public posturing.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What gap exists between your stated values and your actual resource allocation?
2. How can you move from 'readiness to will' to 'performance' in concrete stewardship decisions?
3. Why does God value completion and follow-through, not just initial enthusiasm?

Interlinear Text

νυνὶ	δὲ	καὶ	τὸ	ποιῆσαι	ἐπιτελέσαι	ὅπως	καθάπερ
Now	G1161	also	G3588	the doing	perform	of it that	as
G3570		G2532		G4160	G2005	G3704	G2509
ἡ	προθυμία	τοῦ	θέλειν	οὕτως	καὶ	τὸ	ἐπιτελέσαι
G3588	there was a readiness	G3588	to will	so	also	G3588	perform
	G4288		G2309	G3779	G2532		G2005
ἐκ	τοῦ	ἔχειν					
out of	G3588	that which ye have					
G1537		G2192					

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 9:2 (Parallel theme): For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

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