

2 Corinthians 8:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

Analysis

For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened—Paul preempts potential objections: he's not seeking anesis (ἀνεσις, 'relief/relaxation') for others at the cost of thlipsis (θλίψις, 'affliction/pressure/burden') for Corinthians. The verb ou gar... thlipsis ('not... affliction') indicates Paul's goal is not impoverishing Corinth to relieve Jerusalem. This verse introduces the equality principle developed in v. 14: mutual aid, not one-directional depletion.

Paul's sensitivity here reflects pastoral wisdom: he knows Corinthians might resent funding distant believers while struggling locally. He addresses this by framing the collection as reciprocal partnership, not exploitative extraction. The concern for avoiding thlipsis echoes his earlier description of Macedonians who gave en thlipsei ('in affliction,' v. 2)—but Macedonians volunteered pressure while Paul refuses to impose it. This nuance shows apostolic care: he celebrated Macedonian sacrifice without demanding Corinthian replication, respecting different capacities and callings.

Historical Context

The potential for resentment was real: why should prosperous Corinthian Gentiles support poor Jerusalem Jews, especially given Jewish-Gentile tensions in the early church (Galatians 2:11-14, Acts 15)? Paul must carefully explain that the collection expresses gospel unity, not ethnic tribute. His assurance that he doesn't seek their impoverishment addresses legitimate concerns about fairness and reciprocity.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's concern for 'not burdening' you affect your perception of Christian giving?
2. When is financial support healthy partnership versus unhealthy enabling?
3. What boundaries should exist around Christian generosity to prevent donor impoverishment?

Interlinear Text

οὐ	γὰρ	ἵνα	ἄλλοις	ἄνεσις	ὑμῖν	δὲ	θλίψις
I mean not	For	that	other men	be eased	ye	and	burdened
G3756	G1063	G2443	G243	G425	G5213	G1161	G2347

Additional Cross-References

Acts 4:34 (Parallel theme): Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,