

2 Corinthians 8:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

Analysis

But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you—Paul shifts focus to logistics, beginning with thanksgiving: *charis de tō theō* (χάρις δὲ τῷ Θεῷ, 'thanks be to God'). He attributes Titus's concern to divine initiative: *tō didonti tēn autēn spoudēn* (τῷ διδόντι τὴν αὐτὴν σπουδήν, 'the one giving the same earnestness'). The participle *didonti* (present active) indicates God continuously gives this concern. *Spoudē* (σπουδή, 'earnestness/zeal/diligence') describes Titus's pastoral intensity, which Paul says matches his own (*autēn*, 'the same').

This verse demonstrates Paul's theology of providence: God works through human agents by shaping their desires and concerns. Titus didn't merely comply with Paul's request; God placed genuine pastoral love for Corinth in his heart. The phrase *en tē kardia* ('in the heart') locates this concern at the deepest level of motivation—not external obedience but internal desire. Paul's thanksgiving acknowledges that all Christian ministry is ultimately divine work through yielded servants. Titus becomes the perfect messenger: apostolically commissioned yet personally motivated, carrying Paul's authority alongside his own Spirit-given concern.

Historical Context

Titus had successfully navigated the prior conflict with Corinth (2 Corinthians 7:5-16), earning both Paul's trust and the Corinthians' respect. His diplomatic skill

and genuine pastoral heart made him ideal for the delicate task of reviving the stalled collection. Paul's public thanksgiving for Titus's ministry also subtly commands Titus to Corinthian acceptance—they should receive him as God's provision, not merely Paul's representative.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing God's work through human leaders affect how you receive their ministry?
2. What 'earnest care' has God placed in your heart for particular people or causes?
3. How should we balance human responsibility and divine initiative in ministry motivation?

Interlinear Text

Χάρις	δὲ	τῇ	θεῷ	τῇ	διδόντι	τῇ	αὐτὴν
thanks	But	which	be to God	which	put	which	the same
G5485	G1161	G3588	G2316	G3588	G1325	G3588	G846

σπουδὴν	ὑπὲρ	ὑμῶν	ἐν	τῇ	καρδίᾳ	Τίτου
earnest care	for	you	into	which	the heart	of Titus
G4710	G5228	G5216	G1722	G3588	G2588	G5103

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 17:17 (References God): For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

Philippians 2:20 (Parallel theme): For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

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