

2 Corinthians 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

Analysis

For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you—Paul explains that Titus edexato tēn paraklēsin (ἐδέξατο τὴν παράκλησιν, 'received/welcomed the appeal') but exceeded expectations. The adversative *alla* ('but') introduces surprising information: *spoudaioteros hyparchōn* (σπουδαιότερος ὑπάρχων, 'being more earnest/zealous'), Titus acted *authairetos* (αὐθαίρετος, 'of his own accord/voluntary'). The same word described Macedonian giving in v. 3—spontaneous, uncoerced initiative motivated by love.

Paul's description elevates Titus: he's not a reluctant delegate but an enthusiastic volunteer. The phrase *exēlthen pros hymas* ('he went out to you') indicates Titus had already departed for Corinth when Paul wrote this letter. Paul simultaneously commends Titus and prepares Corinth to receive him warmly. By highlighting Titus's voluntary zeal, Paul removes any impression of coercion—Titus goes because he wants to, having caught Paul's vision for Christian unity expressed through the collection. This models kingdom leadership: authority exercised through persuasion, delegation empowering rather than controlling, leaders motivated by love rather than power.

Historical Context

Titus's voluntary mission to Corinth demonstrated the relational bonds that held the early church together across vast distances. Without denominational

structures or institutional authority, churches depended on personal relationships and shared gospel conviction. Titus's willingness to travel hundreds of miles to complete a financial collection showed the depth of Christian commitment in an era when travel was dangerous, expensive, and slow.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What ministry opportunities have you accepted not just willingly but enthusiastically?
2. How does Titus's 'of his own accord' service challenge hired professionalism in ministry?
3. When has God called you to go beyond requested duty to voluntary, zealous service?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	τὴν	μὲν	παράκλησιν	έδέξατο	σπουδαιότερος	δὲ
For	G3588	indeed	the exhortation	he accepted	G4705	but
G3754		G3303	G3874	G1209		G1161
ὑπάρχων	αὐθαίρετος	έξηλθεν	πρὸς	ὑμᾶς		
being	of his own accord	he went	unto	you		
G5225		G830	G1831	G4314		

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:6 (Parallel theme): Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

Hebrews 13:22 (Parallel theme): And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

2 Corinthians 8:10 (Parallel theme): And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

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