

2 Corinthians 8:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

Analysis

And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you—Paul introduces a third delegate: ton adelphon hēmōn (τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν, 'our brother') whom Paul has repeatedly tested (edokimasamen... pollakis, ἐδοκιμάσαμεν... πολλάκις, 'we tested... many times'). The perfect participle emphasizes completed testing with ongoing results: he's spoudaion onta (σπουδαῖον ὄντα, 'being diligent/earnest'). Now he's spoudaioteron (σπουδαιότερον, 'more diligent') due to pepoithēsei pollē (πεποιθήσει πολλῆ, 'great confidence') in the Corinthians.

This third brother (also unnamed) brings tested character and fresh enthusiasm. Paul's description—pollakis... en pollois ('often... in many things')—indicates extensive ministry experience. The confidence (pepoithēsis, πεποίθησις) in Corinth motivates increased diligence: he believes they'll respond well, energizing his service. This teaches important ministry dynamics: confidence begets diligence, expectation motivates effort. Paul publicly expresses confidence in Corinth (despite recent conflicts) to inspire them to meet those expectations. Three delegates—each tested, each motivated differently (Titus by personal concern, the second by church appointment, the third by confidence in Corinth)—ensured both competence and accountability.

Historical Context

The three-delegate system reflects both Jewish legal requirements (two or three witnesses, Deuteronomy 19:15) and Roman administrative practice (multiple officials preventing corruption). Paul adapted cultural wisdom for church governance: no single person controlled funds, decisions required consensus, and diverse motivations prevented collusion. This created a checks-and-balances system protecting both the collection and Paul's reputation.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does publicly expressed confidence motivate people to rise to expectations?
2. What role does proven character ('oftentimes proved diligent') play in ministry assignments?
3. Why did Paul use three delegates instead of one very trustworthy person?

Interlinear Text

συνεπέμψαμεν δὲ αὐτοῖς τῇ ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν ὃν
we have sent And with them which brother our whom
G4842 G1161 G846 G3588 G80 G2257 G3739

ἐδοκιμάσαμεν ἐν πολλῇ πολλάκις σπουδαῖον ὅντα
proved in many things oftentimes diligent G5607
G1381 G1722 G4183 G4178 G4705

νυνὶ δὲ πολλῇ σπουδαιότερον πεποιθήσει πολλῇ
now And many things G4706 confidence many things
G3570 G1161 G4183 G4006 G4183

τῇ εἰς ὑμᾶς
which I have in you
G3588 G1519 G5209

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