

2 Corinthians 8:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

Analysis

Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf—Paul concludes chapter 8 with direct appeal: *tēn oun endeixin tēs agapēs hymōn* (τὴν οὖν ἐνδειξιν τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν, 'therefore the proof of your love') and *tēs hēmōn kauchēseōs hyper hymōn* (τῆς ἡμῶν καυχήσεως ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, 'our boasting about you'), show (endeixasthe, ἐνδείξασθε, 'demonstrate/display') *eis autous kai eis prosōpon tōn ekklēsiōn* ('to them and before the face of the churches'). The word *endeixin* (ἐνδειξιν, 'proof/evidence/demonstration') requires visible action, not private intention.

Paul's dual motivation is brilliant rhetoric:

1. demonstrate love—complete the collection to prove their agapē genuine, not empty profession
2. vindicate Paul's boasting—he's publicly praised Corinth to Macedonians (9:2), so Corinthian follow-through validates his credibility.

The phrase *eis prosōpon tōn ekklēsiōn* ('before the face of the churches') indicates public demonstration—other churches are watching. This isn't manipulation but appropriate use of peer accountability and reputation. Paul concludes chapter 8 having used every legitimate motivator: Christ's example (v. 9), their own prior commitment (v. 10), Macedonian example (v. 1-5), equality principle (v. 14), and now personal honor. He leaves them with clear, unavoidable challenge: demonstrate your love publicly by completing what you started.

Historical Context

The phrase 'before the churches' indicates inter-church communication networks in the first century. Churches watched each other, learned from each other, and held each other accountable. Corinthian reputation mattered because Christianity spread through credible community testimony. If Corinth proved ungenerous after Paul's public commendation, it would damage both their witness and Paul's apostolic credibility.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does public accountability ('before the churches') motivate Christian faithfulness?
2. What 'proof of love' do your actions demonstrate to watching believers and unbelievers?
3. Is it legitimate to use personal honor/reputation as a motivator for spiritual commitments? Why or why not?

Interlinear Text

τὴν οὖν ἔνδειξιν τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν καὶ ἡμῶν
G3588 **Wherefore** G1732 G3588 **the proof** G26 **love** G5216 **of your** G2532 **and** G2257 **of our**
G3767 G1572 G1519 G846 G1731 G2532 G1519

καυχήσεως ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἔνδειξασθε καὶ εἰς
boasting **behalf** **of your** **before** **them** **shew ye** **and** **before**
G2746 G5228 G5216 G1519 G846 G1731 G2532 G1519

πρόσωπον τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν
G4383 G3588 **the churches**
G1577

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 7:14 (Parallel theme): For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.

2 Corinthians 7:4 (Parallel theme): Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.