

Galatians 2:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Analysis

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. The qualifying adverb monon (μόνον, "only") introduces the single request from the Jerusalem leaders: hina tōn ptōchōn mnēmoneuōmen (ἵνα τῶν πτωχῶν μνημονεύωμεν, "that we should remember the poor"). The verb mnēmoneuō (μνημονεύω) means more than mental recollection—it implies active care and practical support. Ptōchoi (πτωχοὶ) refers to the destitute poor, those in desperate need.

The Jerusalem church faced severe poverty, likely due to economic persecution, famine (Acts 11:28), and the communal sharing of resources (Acts 2:44-45). Paul's enthusiastic response—ho kai espoudasa auto touto poiēsai (ὁ καὶ ἐσπούδασα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, "which very thing I was eager to do")—shows the aorist verb spoudazō (σπουδάζω, "to be diligent, eager, zealous"). He didn't view this as imposed obligation but willing partnership.

This verse reveals that gospel freedom doesn't eliminate social responsibility. Paul's collection for Jerusalem saints (mentioned in Romans 15:26, 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, 2 Corinthians 8-9) demonstrated the unity between Jewish and Gentile believers—Gentiles benefited spiritually from Jewish foundations, so they should share material resources. True theology always produces practical love for those in need.

Historical Context

Paul spent years organizing a collection from Gentile churches for the Jerusalem poor (AD 52-57), personally delivering it despite knowing it would endanger his life (Acts 20:22-24, 21:10-13). This wasn't mere charity but theological statement: Gentile and Jewish believers are one body in Christ, obligated to care for one another. The collection demonstrated that Paul's gospel of freedom produced generosity, not selfishness.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does care for the materially poor demonstrate the authenticity of the gospel rather than contradict it?
2. What connections exist between the doctrinal freedom Paul defended and the practical generosity he practiced?
3. In what ways are you actively "remembering the poor" as evidence of genuine gospel transformation?

Interlinear Text

μόνον	τῶν	πτωχῶν	ἵνα	μνημονεύωμεν	ὃ	καὶ
Only	G3588	the poor	they would that	we should remember	which	also
G3440		G4434	G2443	G3421	G3739	G2532
ἐσπούδασα	αὐτὸ	τοῦτο	ποιῆσαι			
I	G846	the same	to do			
G4704		G5124	G4160			

Additional Cross-References

Acts 24:17 (Parallel theme): Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

Hebrews 13:16 (Parallel theme): But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

1 John 3:17 (Parallel theme): But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

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