

Galatians 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

Analysis

For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles. The participial phrase *ho gar energēas Petrō* (ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ, "for the one having worked in Peter") identifies God as the active agent. The verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) means to work powerfully or effectively—divine energy producing results. The dative *Petrō* indicates God worked in Peter, not merely through him; it's God's power, not human ability, that produces apostolic fruit.

The phrase *eis apostolēn tēs peritomēs* (εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς, "for apostleship to the circumcision") defines Peter's mission field. The same God who empowered Peter *energēsen kai emoi eis ta ethnē* (ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, "also worked in me toward the Gentiles"). The parallel structure establishes complete equality of divine calling and empowerment between Peter and Paul.

Paul's argument is irrefutable: the same God, producing the same powerful results, validates both apostles equally. This isn't competitive but complementary—one gospel, one divine power, multiple mission fields. The evidence of God's working (conversions, churches established, miracles) testified to Paul's authentic apostleship as clearly as Peter's ministry testified to his.

Historical Context

Peter's Pentecost sermon converted 3,000 Jews (Acts 2:41), his ministry brought healing and judgment (Acts 5:15, 5:1-11), and he opened the gospel to Gentiles at Cornelius's house (Acts 10). Paul's missionary journeys established churches across the Gentile world, performed miraculous signs, and brought thousands to faith. The identical source and similar results of their ministries demonstrated God's equal validation of both apostles.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What role does visible fruit play in confirming God's calling and empowerment for ministry?
2. How does recognizing God as the active power in ministry protect against both pride and despair?
3. In what ways might you be trusting your own abilities rather than expecting God to work powerfully through your weakness?

Interlinear Text

ο	γὰρ	ἐνήργησεν	Πέτρῳ	εἰς	ἀποστολὴν	τῆς
G3588	(For	he that wrought effectually	in Peter	to	the apostleship	G3588
G1063		G1754	G4074	G1519	G651	
περιτομῆς		ἐνήργησεν	καὶ	ἐμοὶ	εἰς	τὰ
of the circumcision		he that wrought effectually	the same	in me	to	G3588
G4061		G1754	G2532	G1698	G1519	
ξθνη						
the Gentiles						
G1484						

Additional Cross-References

Acts 9:15 (Parallel theme): But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

Acts 15:12 (Parallel theme): Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

Acts 21:19 (Parallel theme): And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

Acts 22:21 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.