

## DONATIONS (FREEWILL OFFERINGS)

**Acts 11:27-30** — And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. Then one of them, named Agabu, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, *each according to his ability, determined to send relief* to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

**Rom 12:10-13** — Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; *distributing to the needs of the saints*, given to hospitality.

**Rom 15:26** — For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain *contribution* for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.

**1 Cor 16:1-3** — Now concerning the *collection* for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you *lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come*. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your *gift* to Jerusalem.

**2 Cor 8:3-4, 8-15** — For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were *freely willing*, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the *gift*... I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you

through His poverty might become rich. And in this I give my advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have. For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; but by an equality, that *now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that [in the future] their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality*. As it is written, HE WHO GATHERED MUCH HAD NOTHING LEFT OVER, AND HE WHO GATHERED LITTLE HAD NO LACK.”

**2 Cor 9:1-5, 12** — Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your bountiful *gift* beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation... For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men.

**Philippians 4:10-18** — NLT — How grateful I am, and

how I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but for a while you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to get along happily whether I have much or little. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need. But even so, you have done well to *share* with me in my present difficulty. As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me ***financial help*** when I brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. I don't say this because I want a *gift* from you. What I want is for you to receive a well-earned reward because of your *kindness*. At the moment I have all I need—more than I need! I am generously supplied with the ***gifts*** you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable to God and pleases him.

**1 Corinthians 9:1-18** — NLT — Do I not have as much freedom as anyone else? Am I not an apostle? Haven't I seen Jesus our Lord with my own eyes? Isn't it because of my hard work that you are in the Lord? Even if others think I am not an apostle, I certainly am to you, for you are living proof that I am the Lord's apostle. This is my answer to those who question my authority as an apostle. Don't we have the right to live in your homes and share your meals? Don't we have the right to bring a Christian wife along with us as the other disciples and the Lord's brothers and Peter do? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have to work to support ourselves? What soldier has to pay his own expenses? And have you ever heard of a farmer who harvests his crop and doesn't have the right to eat some of it? What shepherd

takes care of a flock of sheep and isn't allowed to drink some of the milk? And this isn't merely human opinion. Doesn't God's law say the same thing? *For the LAW of Moses says, "Do not keep an ox from eating as it treads out the grain."* [Please notice that Paul did NOT quote an Old Testament Scripture on tithing here, and yet this would have been the perfect time for Paul to do so if God expected the ministry to be supported by tithes!] Do you suppose God was thinking only about oxen when he said this? Wasn't he also speaking to us? Of course he was. Just as farm workers who plow fields and thresh the grain expect a share of the harvest, Christian workers should be paid [from freewill offerings] by those they serve. We have planted good spiritual seed among you. *Is it too much to ask, in return, for mere food and clothing?* If you support others who preach to you, shouldn't we have an even greater right to be supported? Yet we have never used this right. We would rather put up with anything than put an obstacle in the way of the Good News about Christ. Don't you know that those who work in the Temple get their meals from the food brought to the Temple as *offerings*? And those who serve at the altar get a share of the sacrificial *offerings*. In the same way, the Lord gave orders that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it. Yet I have never used any of these rights. And I am not writing this to suggest that I would like to start now. In fact, I would rather die than lose my distinction *of preaching without charge*. For preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't do it! If I were doing this of my own free will, then I would deserve payment. But God has chosen me and given me this sacred trust, and I have no choice. What then is my pay? It is the satisfaction I get from *preaching the Good News without expense* to anyone, never demanding my rights as a preacher.

**Luke 10:1-8** — NLT — The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them on ahead in pairs to all the towns and villages he planned to visit. These were his instructions to them: “The harvest is so great, but the workers are so few. Pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest, and ask him to send out more workers for his fields. Go now, and remember that I am sending you out as lambs among wolves. Don’t take along any money, or a traveler’s bag, or even an extra pair of sandals. And don’t stop to greet anyone on the road. Whenever you enter a home, give it your blessing. If those who live there are worthy, the blessing will stand; if they are not, the blessing will return to you. When you enter a town, don’t move around from home to home. Stay in one place, *eating and drinking what they provide you*. Don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because *those who work deserve their pay*. If a town welcomes you, *eat whatever is set before you*. ”

**2 Corinthians 11:7-9** — NLT — Did I do wrong when I humbled myself and honored you by preaching God’s Good News to you without expecting anything in return? I “robbed” other churches by accepting their **contributions** so I could serve you at no cost. And when I was with you and didn’t have enough to live on, I did not ask you to help me. For the brothers who came from Macedonia brought me another **gift**. *I have never yet asked you for any support, and I never will.*

*See also: Tithing; Wages of Ministers*