



THE LIFE OF TIMOTHY

NEILL GIBSON

14A

SENT AHEAD TO MACEDONIA

SESSION 14A

SENT FROM EPHESUS WITH ERASTUS (ACTS 19:21-22)

- These verses chart the course for the remaining chapters of Acts.
- Erastus may have been the treasurer of Corinth, also a benefactor.
- Luke mentions Macedonia as the destination, but 1 Cor. 4:17 and 16:10-11 indicate that Achaia is on the agenda, as well.
- Verifies yet again Timothy's important role, here as a go-between, an apostolic representative, taking the place of a personal visit from Paul

"THE COLLECTION"

- Pierson's book: p. 73-74 "The Jerusalem relief fund"
- Paul's early involvement in famine relief: Acts 11:27-30; 12:25
- Mysterious agreement: Gal. 2:1-10 (esp. 9-10)
 - Possibly referred to in Gal. 6:6-10
- 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:27,31; Acts 20:16,22

WHAT WASN'T THIS AGREEMENT?

- Not a gift to poor Judeans at large, even though that would be worthy
- Just like buying things from Israel today or supporting the Jewish state can have some value, but it is not a precise equivalent to this
- It seems to be an extended form of famine relief, but does have implications of demonstrating a connectedness among the church, as well.

WHAT WAS THIS AGREEMENT?

The complexity of the evidence is apparent. Involved in Paul's collection were the credibility of his apostolic mission and the legitimacy of the Gentile mission (Gal 2:1-10), the recognition of the priority of Israel in God's redemptive plan (Rom 15:27), the goodwill of Christian communities (2 Cor 8-9), as well as the need for individual Christians to trust in God to supply their needs if they were to give generously (2 Cor 9). It is likely that the collection itself gained different theological arguments as Paul's ministry developed and as his relationship to Jerusalem shifted back and forth. (DPL)

ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLLECTION

- Jews in the Diapora (those dispersed among the nations) regularly gave the annual two drachma Temple Tax
- It was protected and monitored by the Roman government
- These funds being from Gentiles would appear similar, although in a different category. There could have even been mixture with some Jews among the church giving Temple Tax, and they and others providing famine relief.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION? (POSSIBILITIES FROM *DPL*)

- Help for the poor
- Unity of the Church
- Substitute for Jewish entry rites
- Eschatological provokation

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION? (SUMMARY FROM *DPL*)

We are probably on firmest ground if we recognize that Paul might have had more than one purpose in conducting the collection for the saints. It may well be that what began as largely an adventure in charity became, as a result of growing tensions, an act of theological unity and eschatological provocation. We can hardly be certain about these matters.

HOW SHOULD WE LOOK AT THIS?

- There is basic need and famine relief taking place.
- There is some recognition from Jerusalem of Paul's Gentile mission, and request for continued help, which Paul may embrace beyond their wildest expectations.
- *After a massive evangelization and church-planting effort, Paul sees this as the seal and fruit of his ministry to this point, voluntary free-will offerings from the nations demonstrating the unity of the church, appreciation for their spiritual roots, and the values of the age to come.*

HOW DOES TIMOTHY FIT INTO THIS?

- We saw him being sent ahead with Erastus, probably at least in part preparing for the Collection.
 - He is also being sent for other purposes that we will look at soon.
- Remember that Timothy is really Paul's right-hand guy, and has been for some time, so he will be integrally involved in this process.
 - When we see the delegates of the Collection in Acts 20:4, Timothy is the only one who is not associated with a place.

2 CORINTHIANS 8-9



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