

INTRODUCTION - There are poor Christians in Judea. The “churches of Macedonia” (Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea) are giving to help. You, Corinth, started to help (1 Cor. 16:1).

(v1) **“the grace of God”** - the disposition, ability, opportunity to give, is a matter of grace.

“given in the churches of Macedonia”

(v2) **“proof of their affliction”** - trials provide a test of sincerity and devotion.

“abundance of their joy” - God’s grace rose above their sorrows.

“their deep poverty” - they experienced what Judea was going through.

“their liberality” - their liberality made their poverty, by contrast, appear even greater.

(v3) **“their power”** - they gave of their own accord.

“beyond their power” - more than Paul had expected.

“willing of themselves” - they wanted to do this.

(v4) **“beseeching us”** - maybe Paul urged restraint; but, they urged Paul to take it.

(v5) **“and this they did, not as we had hoped”** - they did more than what Paul hoped for.

“first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us ... “ - became Christians, and now become willing helpers of Paul.

(v6) **“we exhorted Titus”** - Titus carried the first letter to them, and he is to complete this task.

(v7) **“but as ye abound in everything ... “** - all the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7-11).

(v8) **“I speak ... by occasion of the forwardness of others, to prove the sincerity of your love”**
Paul says, “I am not commanding, but use the Macedonians as an example for you.

(v9) **“ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ”** - example of love.

(v10) **“you, who were begun before ... (v11) “perform the doing of it ... out of what ye have”**

(v12) **“first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man has ... “**

(v13-14) **“not that other men be eased, and ye burdened”** - don’t plunge yourself into distress.

“equality” - the object was relief of want, not an equalization of property.

“their abundance also may be a supply for your want” - one day the situation may be reversed, and giving may be done in recognition of the uncertainties of life.
That’s what is meant by “equality.”

(v15) **“it is written”** - illustration from (Ex. 16:18).

The lesson taught is, if each will give freely to help others, none will want.
Give what we have over to supply the lack of others.

(v16) **“Titus”** - receive him, let him do his work among you in this offering.

Paul, Titus, and “the brother” (v18) will exercise fiduciary responsibility.

(Chapter 9) continues the encouragement, attitude in giving, and more information.