

guide:

- CHECK-INS: Introductions, check-in
- CARE: Needs in the group
- COMPASSION: What is the group planning? Are you inviting neighbours to join in?
- GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS Church-wide and group-only
- DIG IN: "Ice-breaker" question (group facilitator), discuss questions as a group
- PRAYER: Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

for reflection & discussion: NT Wright, others

[Remember: Group compassion work!, group celebrations: birthdays, life-events, holiday season! Aim for three times a month+meeting, ask who is missing - follow up!]

Warm ups: What was one of the worst purchases you've ever made and why? What was one of the silliest things you've seen a friend invest in or purchase? Why?

1. How do you feel working on a team? What about when you were at school? What were some of the ups and downs of your experiences?
2. Read the passage (14 verses - rotate readers to get everyone's voice in (or at least most, no pressure!))
3. In 8:16-24, why does Paul find it important to send several others with Titus?
4. When fundraising and finances are concerned, what kinds of precautions and procedures are important to put into place in Christian groups today so everything looks right to God and others?
5. In 2 Cor 9:1-5 (6-15), Paul gives the impression that he cared deeply about every stage in his own planning, and thought hard about the people involved and how they would be affected. What are the key things he wants to make sure are the case in the process of collecting the gift?
6. Paul is always raising up others and working at mutuality and collaboration. Depending on your wiring you may find this encouraging or annoying ('I'll just do it myself' or 'they can do it', instead of working together based on strengths). What is it about our human condition that tends to push us away from working with others, particularly if they are different (at least superficially)?
7. What gifts, talents, or skills do you have that God might be calling you to use with and for others at Pilgrim or our larger community?
8. Final thoughts on ANYTHING from the teaching or passage?

Pray in "huddles" of men and women to close out. Share one thing you're looking forward to (big or small) this week? One challenge you will face?

2 CORINTHIANS 8:16-9:5
SECOND CORINTHIANS SERIES

The Power of Planning

At Pilgrim, we often rotate between a topic-based and a verse-by-verse based teaching series. We are currently working through the end of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. In this letter, Paul is sharing his plans for poverty relief. It touches on themes of careful planning, authority, churches working together, financial accountability, and how structure—while not the main focus—can be important to apply in our own lives and community organizations.

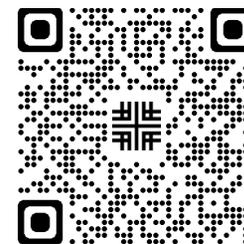
2 Corinthians 8:16-9:5

PRE-TRIP: Big Idea(s)

We see Paul's high level of emotional intelligence, leadership, pastoral heart, collaborative leadership, fundraising, and theological skill all at play in one place here. If you want something to grow and last beyond yourself, you've got to build a team, get out of your own head, and communicate above and beyond (including encouragement and rebuke). Money, relationships, sharing power...and Jesus.

TAKEOFF: Outline

1. Representatives Recommended **8:16-24**
2. Achaia stimulated the Macedonians **9:1-2**
3. Another Reason for Sending the Delegates **9:3-5**



connect

- need prayer?
- ask questions
- get information
- make comments
- meet with pastor Shel or Josh
- sign-up for our weekly e-newsletter
- join a Home Church

FLIGHT: Through the Text

NRSVUE 8:16 *But thanks be to God, who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have.* 17 *For he not only accepted our appeal, but since he is more eager than ever, he is going to you of his own accord.*

- “Thanks” is another use of χάρις [grace], gratitude.
- Grace has a huge range. Paul uses Charis, Grace, 100 of the 156 in the New Testament (another count 63 of 155 in the New Testament). Here in this chapter and chapter 9:
 - God’s kindness, favour, or enablement 8:1, 9:8,14
 - The privilege of participating in the collection 8:4
 - The collection itself (this gift) as an expression of God’s grace 8:6,7,19
 - A verbal expression of thanks 8:16, 9:15

18 *With him we are sending the brother who is praised among all the churches for his work for the gospel,* 19 *and not only that, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking[f] for the glory of the Lord himself[g] and to show our goodwill.* 20 *We are making this arrangement lest anyone blame us about this generous gift that we are administering,* 21 *for we are setting our minds on what is right not only before the Lord but also before the people.*

The almsgiver is a harbour for those in necessity: a harbour receives all who have encountered shipwreck, and frees them from danger; whether they are bad or good. ... it escorts them into his own shelter. So, you likewise, when you see on earth the man who has encountered the shipwreck of poverty, do not judge him, do not seek an account of his life, but free him from his misfortune. -John Chrysostom (theologian and pastor, 4th century)

22 *And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found eager in many matters but who is now more eager than ever because of his great confidence in you.*

23 *As for Titus, he is my partner and coworker in your service; as for our brothers, they are messengers[h] of the churches, the glory of Christ.*

To look at another Christian and think ‘This is someone who will be part of the Messiah’s glory when he appears again’ is to learn to value one’s fellow believers, not only as human beings made in God’s image, but even more as part of the glory that will light up the whole world. -NT Wright, 95, PFE: 2 Cor

24 *Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you to them.*

9:1 *Now it is not necessary for me to write you about the ministry to the saints,*

2 *for I know your eagerness, which is the subject of my boasting about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them.*

3 *But I am sending[a] the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be;*

4 *otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be put to shame—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking.[b]*

5 *So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a bountiful gift and not as an extortion.*

ARRIVAL AND LANDING: Take Home and Final Word