

Turning to Acts 11 : 29, we learn that in the region of Antioch, during a time of great want in the province of Judea, 'the disciples, every one according to ability, determined to send relief to the brethren in Judea'; and let it be noted, 1st, that they determined to do this simply as disciples of the Lord; 2nd, that they did it according to ability; 3d, that they sent it to the elders, and not to some alms-distributing society or some specially created officers; and 4th, that they sent the same by 'messengers of the churches,' who in this instance were brethren Barnabas and Saul. Here is an example of one company of brethren assisting another; is it not a model?

In this same Antioch, a question arising which required decision by the college of apostles, the brethren determined to send Paul, Barnabas, and others to the city of Jerusalem; and these brethren, thus deputed, were 'brought on their way by the church,' without a special organization, Acts 15 : 3.

Paul tells us three or four religious secrets in reference to contributions and church assistance in Romans 15 : 24, 26. He says that he is to journey into Spain to labor among the Spaniards, calling at Rome on his tour; and he trusts not only to see the disciples in the Roman capital, but to be brought on his way there by them: meantime he is engaged as a messenger of many churches, all the churches both in Macedonia and Achaia; for the brethren in these regions, having been taught the necessities of the brotherhood at Jerusalem, and having no discretionary organization, had made contribution for them as disciples of the Saviour; and a faithful, warm-hearted messenger was needed to seal to them this fruit. Paul was the man for the work. He was their messenger. Of the large bounty of the disciples in these countries the apostle boasts by way of stimulating the believers in Corinth. 2 Cor. 8.

The churches in Galatia, as also the church in Corinth, were taught to collect on the Lord's day according to the ability of each brother. And brethren whose faithfulness and competency could be certified by letter were to be sent to the chief city in Judea with the collections for the benefit of the brethren there, or if necessary the apostle himself was to be one of the messengers. 1 Cor. 16 : 1, 4.

But Paul himself needed assistance and an occasional messenger. To the tender and affectionate brethren in Philippi, he writes—'You know that when I left Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving but you. . . . I am full; having received of evangelist Epaphroditus the things sent from you.' Brother