

And first, observe its *Freedom*: "Willing of themselves," "not of constraint, but of a ready mind." It was not the result of some eloquent appeal, or done in imitation of others; it was not to save character, to be seen of men, or to keep up with the times; it was the spontaneous flow of a heart thawed and warmed by the love of Christ. To part with their property in such a case inflicted no pain; it was pleasant as the action of a healthy limb. They enjoyed the luxury of doing good. Observe,

Secondly, its *Abundance*:—"Abounded to the riches of their liberality." I suppose the simple meaning of the passage is, their liberality gave indication of being rich; their donations were princely; they gave not only as if they had been rich men, but like rich men when profusely bountiful. Had their circumstances been inferred from their bounty, all would have pronounced them rich: had we seen them in the economic fare of home, we should have said, "how poor!" But place them in their own element, the kindness of Christian love, and they at once assume the princely air of beneficence which Christianity inspires: "Though poor, yet making many rich." But ah! dear Brother, do not some rich professors of the present day exhibit a picture fearfully the reverse of this? Did we judge of their circumstances from their scanty donations to the cause of Christ, we should pronounce them poor; yet they are, in fact, rich. "Alas for the miseries that shall come upon them;" "their riches are corrupted, their gold and silver cankered; the rust of them shall witness against them, and shall eat up their flesh as if it were fire."

But observe, thirdly, *their liberality was replete with energy*. It had serious difficulties with which to contend, and to overcome. Had it oozed like water soon lost in feeble obstruc-

tions, it would have spent its kindness upon themselves; but it moved forward like the deep rolling river, carrying obstructions away on its bosom. Who does not feel, in the present day, poverty an insurmountable hindrance to liberality? But the young energy of Christian principle, which nerved the disciples of Macedonia, bore it away in the strong hand of their kindness. "It was out of deep poverty they abounded to the riches of their liberality." And who would think, under the afflictive pressure of business, and the unhingedments of war, or persecution, of being liberal? Who does not feel justified in stinting his benefactions under such circumstances? But must economy always commence in the cause of our Redeemer? Why not rather commence retrenchment at home? Was it in a time of plenty he said, "Bring ye ALL the tithes into the storehouse?" No. It was when the vine was casting her fruit before the time in the field, and when the devourer was busy destroying the fruits of the ground. Is there not reason to fear that some professors of religion in this Colony, in consequence of our late trial of affliction, will be disposed, if not to withhold, at least to stint, the mite of their liberality? Let such call to mind the energy of Macedonian kindness; for it was out of a *great trial* of affliction they abounded in the riches of their liberality. Nothing but a sense of justice could prevent them from meeting the calls of benevolence.

But who, after all, would think of intruding their kindness upon others, especially persons themselves in poor and straitened circumstances? To lift up the beseeching voice in behalf of those who need assistance, is common; and to meet, even there, with a ready answer, is often matter of gratulation. But how seldom do we witness an attitude so Godlike as that which these Macedonians occupy.