

Gift Mtukwa, **“A Reconsideration of Self Support in Light of Paul’s Collections”** Published by Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology Vol 33:2 (2014) ISBN 1026-2946

Scholars have rightly recognized the importance of Paul’s collections and the fact that it is the one thing which he dedicated much of his time and energy. Paul’s collections reveal partly the economic relationship that existed among Pauline churches. The subversive nature of this collection is quite evident since Paul moves resources from subject to another subject. There is no doubt that it formed part of the glue that united various Christian congregations. This paper seeks to reconsider the call for the church (particularly the African church) to be self-supporting in light of Pauline collections. Since Paul did not write a treatise on money, we will rely on his undeveloped theology of finances, deciphered from his instructions to his fledgling churches to assist the poverty-stricken believers of Jerusalem. The Roman Empire’s economic systems will be used to illuminate the subversive nature of Paul’s practice in light of dominant culture. It is anticipated that the Pauline approach can liberate the church of Jesus Christ to use God’s resources wherever they are and wherever they are needed for God’s work. The study proposes that if Christian giving is properly done, it has the capacity to “equalize” our unequal world as resources will move from where they are to where they are most needed. Paul’s approach can free the African church to be missional just as the Pauline newly founded church communities. Texts Romans 15:25-32, 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9

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