

I Corinthians

Chapter 16

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

As we begin this last chapter, we ask that you will open our hearts and minds so that we might gain understanding. We thank you for your provision. We thank you for your word. We desire to know you more each and every time we come together in your word. Help us as we strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for it is in His name we pray, Amen!

In Chapter 16, we take the last and final section under instruction. The first nine verses have to do with the collection of money.

What Paul had done is he had traveled through the Gentile churches and said that the Christians in Jerusalem, the Jewish Christians are suffering.

They are suffering persecution. There's a famine going on. Plus, what the Jewish people had to suffer when they received Christ. Now you think we have it tough! People think "Gee, I don't want my best friend to not talk to me anymore." Its little things like that that are big things to us.

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But if a Hebrew or Jewish person receives Jesus as his Messiah, the family kicks him out. He's usually working for a Jewish person so he loses his job. He goes down to the marketplace to buy food and they won't sell food to him.

Even to this day, the Orthodox Jews living in New York, the family even holds a funeral for you. They literally bury you. They bury a box and say "There's my son!"

I heard a testimony of a young man who had received Jesus as Messiah, and his family disowned him and they had a funeral for him. So one day he was walking down one of the streets in New York and he passed his father.

So he turned around and said "Dad, dad." He touched him on the shoulder and turned him around and said dad, it's your son. And the dad said "You're not my son. My son is dead!" And he turned around and walked away.

Now that's pretty hard core! But that's what they had to suffer.

So not only was there a famine going on, but the believing Jews, all they had was each other. Nobody would give them food. Nobody would give them a job. So they didn't have money and they didn't have food.

So Paul went around to the Gentile churches and said "You know, first of all I am making you sensitive that if you have some brethren over there that are suffering, interacting and taking care of them is part of the Christian church.

But even just as important, since you're Gentiles and they are Jews, this is going to bring the Gentile and Jewish people in the Lord closer together.

Because you remember at the beginning, the Jewish people didn't even think that Gentiles could be saved. Then they figured out that they could be saved, but they still had Jewish leaders that disowned them and wouldn't even talk to them.

So Paul took a collection of all the churches so that he could take all of this money to the believers in the church at Jerusalem and say "This is from 12 churches, all Gentiles!"

Plus, he was not guaranteed that it would be received. We are talking about hard core hatred. Some Jewish people would die before they would take help from a Gentile.

But these are Christians. They still had some prejudice there. So Paul is taking up the collection hoping to bring these two elements in the body of Christ closer together.

So in the first nine verses, he tells us about this collection of money. And with it, we're going to study the principles of giving.

C.O.

I Corinthians 16:1-9 The Money Collected

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

He starts out with "Now concerning," the same way he started out the other subjects and topics from Chapter 7 Verse 1 on. So this is another one of their questions. "What about this collection that you're taking for the believers in Jerusalem?"

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. This is for everybody!

Here are the principles for giving. There are five of them:

2 Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

First of all he tells them, upon the first *day* of the week. That would be Sunday. So they were to do this upon a certain day. That's when the believers met, even Jewish believers. The Jews would actually go to synagogue on Saturday and then on Sunday they would meet in house churches with Christians.

Why would they go to the temple?

There were various porches on the sides of the temples so all the believers would meet out on Solomon's Porch which was a huge area right off the temple, and they would be giving bible studies. They would be preaching Christ to the Jews.

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That's why they went to the temple on Saturday, the Sabbath, like regular Hebrew people. And they were there to preach Christ as Messiah.

But on Sunday is when the believers gathered together. And not only does the scripture tell us this, but it is my strong conviction that the church is for believers. It's for the feeding of believers, fellowship of believers.

And so on Sunday, they would meet in various homes. They didn't have church buildings until around 313 A.D. when Constantine said that we're going to recognize Christianity as a legal religion, so we'll let you practice your religious practices and we won't persecute you.

So Christians came out of hiding which is the worst thing that could have happened to them. Because then they went public and they joined the religious system that was already in place.

The worship of the sun god, and that's why it's called Sunday. You'll find that some of the traditions in our churches are traced back to religious practices that were back in Constantine's day that Christians took in to their church services because it was now open to the public.

And people coming in off the streets had certain pagan practices, and just like today, we bring the world into the church so we can make everybody "happy!"

Believers started meeting on Sundays because Sunday is the day Jesus rose from the dead. So they began meeting, and they met in homes. And as the persecution got worse, they began meeting in caves.

So upon the first day of the week, secondly, let every one of you lay by him in store, thirdly, as *God* hath prospered him. The reason: that there be no gatherings when I come.

So basically, he's saying on Sunday, when you get together, however God has prospered you, bring that money that you're going to give to the saints in Jerusalem, rather than me showing up and you saying "Yea, yea, we saved up a little money somewhere around here."

He's saying start now. Every week when you come together, bring whatever you're going to give, and do it every Sunday!

It is interesting that they were told to give what prospers them. That's everything beyond necessity. I think you'll find that particular study in the bible fascinating. I do!

In Acts 2:44 and 45, it says that the early church had everything in common. They brought all of their possessions and laid it at the feet of the disciples. Same thing in Acts 4:34 and 35.

They had all things in common. If I made \$10,000 a month, and you made \$1,000 a month, we would bring all of our money, bring it to the church, and the church would distribute it to the people who had need.

Maybe I might be making \$10,000 a month, but my necessities, I only need \$100. Then the church gives back to me what I need. It was that way from the beginning.

Then there was the stoning of Stephen and the persecution against the church in Acts Chapter 7. And of course the believers were scattered out of Jerusalem because of the persecution.

So the basic principle still stood, except the church didn't take charge of all that. The church says same principles, except now you are the steward of your own money instead of the church. You take and use what God has given you for your necessities, and seek the Lord how He wants you to serve Him with the rest of it.

So he says as God has prospered you. You see, there's no set amount. Paul never taught tithing, ever!

People often get offended when the conversation is about tithing. But just to think that people struggle to give 10 percent of their income to the church!

Do you know what that means? They are keeping 90 percent for themselves. Wow! "I give the Lord 10 percent and the rest of it is mine!" That's totally untrue as far as the scripture goes.

Everything that we own, and every dollar that we earn, it belongs to Jesus Christ, period!

How would you like it if you gave your money to a bank and the next month you went to draw your money out and they said "We spent it?"

I am the banker. I am the steward of God's money. You might say wait a minute, I earned that. Well, who gave you the job and who gave you the strength to work the job? And for what purpose? It's for His purpose!

So let everyone lay up in store as God has prospered him, at that meeting, that gathering time each week!

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3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, and this is the fourth principle: them will I send to bring your liberality, which is the word gift, unto Jerusalem.

With letters of recommendation, I want some people to take this money to Jerusalem.

Interesting, Paul was not out to raise money. You see, he didn't want to show up with all this money and say look what the Christians did.

He wanted them to be there in person because it's not just an idea across the ocean where all of a sudden a Jewish person says "Well God bless them. You know? I'm changing my mind about those Gentiles!"

The word liberality is gift, and the word gift is Charis which means grace. It's not a forced thing. It's a gift. It's the work of grace in people's hearts that causes them to give.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

And if it be meet, or necessary that I go also, they shall go with me.

Paul says I will accompany them. Obviously, depending upon what the offering is. If it's \$1.50, I don't think you need seven people sailing across the ocean!

Paul says if it's worthwhile, if it's a sacrificial gift of grace, then they should go with me, so that Paul can actually bring some of the very people who gave, some of the leadership in the church that was responsible to these churches that gave, so that can meet them face to face and bring this offering.

Now the plan of Paul in Verses 5 through 9:

This is very boring reading except for the fact that I want to point out to you how Paul planned his life. There are what are called five subjunctive statements.

Subjunctive means possibility. There are five subjunctive statements that he makes.

5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.

First of all he says now I will come to you, whenever I shall pass through Macedonia:

The word when is literally whenever. So he's basically saying I'll come to you, but whenever it is that I'm going to pass through Macedonia. He says for I do, or am going to pass through Macedonia. He just didn't know when.

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

Secondly, and it may be that I will abide.

The term "it may be" is one Greek word that means perhaps. He'll pass through their area but we will find out in a minute that if it's the Lord's will, he'll stay with them. Perhaps I will. It depends what the Lord wants me to do!

Thirdly: And even winter with you, that you may bring me on my journey. You see, Paul saw himself as continuing. "I might abide with you if it's the Lord's will. In fact, I might even spend a winter with you if it is the Lord's will."

Maybe you might have some relatives like that? "I thought you were going to stay for Christmas? It's already June." Some people have that problem!

Then he says, fourthly, whithersoever I go. That is he's not sure where he's going to go on his journey. Wherever it is, he doesn't know where God's going to take him!

7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry, that is to wait a while with you, if the Lord permits.

That's the fifth thing. Paul always planned, and whenever I'm in your area, I plan to see you, and abide with you perhaps so that you can get me on my way, wherever that's going to be. So I'll just wait here until it's time to go if the Lord wills.

The word permit is the word will, if He wills.

In the book of James, Chapter 4 Verses 13 and 14, James said the same thing. In fact, he used Poneros for the word evil. It is evil for you to say that we're going to go into such and such a city, buy and sell there for one year, make money, and come home.

Kakos is human evil. Poneros is spiritual evil. As a matter of fact, Satan is called the evil one, Ho Poneros. That's how serious James was.

Instead, you should say "If it is the Lord's will, we shall go into such and such a city. And if it's the Lord's will, we will stay there. And if it's the Lord's will, we'll make some money. And if it's the Lord's will, we'll come back!" It's because you don't know!

So basically, a believer has to make plans, but you also have to expect the unexpected. I mean, that's the way I see it now. But to be honest with you, I don't know what the Lord wants. How do I know what He wants? He knows what I want!

If you're like me, you plan trips and you go on a trip, and pretty soon your car breaks down right in the middle of nowhere. But you know, God has something else for us. That's how He communicates.

He communicates by saying "I'm in charge of all things." Those things don't happen by accident. God had a purpose in it.

So Paul shows us, and James teaches us. And of course the Lord said the same thing, "Do not be anxious for tomorrow. Tomorrow has enough anxiety waiting for its own without you worrying about it ahead of time.

And it won't do you any good because you are not there at tomorrow yet. And do you know that tomorrow never comes? Because when you get to tomorrow, it's today! Today can be yesterday but tomorrow is always today!

But in my mind and probably in your mind, tomorrow already exists! Maybe we have already gone half a day in our minds. Jesus said do not be anxious!

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries.

For a great door and effectual, which means powerful, energy, Energeo, is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

So he says I'm right in the middle of God opening a door by His power, so that I can preach the gospel, but I have many adversaries, many opponents.

S.O. **1 Corinthians 16:10-24**
Conclusion

C.O. **1 Corinthians 16:10-12**
The Mission of Timothy

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

Timothy is always presented as like-minded with Paul. In fact, I think it's in Philippians that he says "I have no one who is like-minded more than Timothy." Timothy is the only person that's like minded. His attitude and frame of mind was the same.

So Timothy was a little reluctant to go to Corinth after finding out who they are and what they do. They said receive him without fear, for he works the same as me, so receiving him is like receiving me.

11 Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

Let no man therefore despise him: That is treat him with contempt. But conduct him forth, that is let him leave in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

But then Verse 12 talks about Apollos:

12 As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

This is very interesting! Paul says I greatly desired, or literally I greatly encouraged Apollos to come to you with Timothy and the brethren. But, his will was not at all to come at this time.

Literally it reads, he said it was not God's will that he come at this time, but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

Paul encouraged him to go. Apollos said that it's not God's will that I go. I got things to do here. Maybe I'll go later. So Paul backed off. Whatever the Lord's will is. A very interesting way to live!

C.O. **1 Corinthians 16:13-18**
The Manner of Those Who Serve

M.V. **1 Corinthians 16:13**

The principles brought forth in Verses 13 and 14. There are five commands.

13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

It says first of all, Watch ye, or watch.

This is a present imperative, so be continually watching! The word is the opposite of the word for sleep. So it means to be on guard. Be awake!

Jesus used the word in Mark 14:38 when the disciples fell asleep when he was praying, and He said stay awake, be watchful.

Also Peter, in 1 Peter 5:8, he says be watchful, be sober, because your adversary the devil is walking around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

He's not saying don't get physical sleep. But literally "Wake up, spiritually. Wake up. Be on the alert because Satan is waiting to catch you off guard. That's command number one.

Command number two: Stand firm in the faith. This is what I told you earlier. In Ephesians Chapter 6, Paul tells us put on the whole armor of God in order that you may be able to stand. Not run, not even fight, because he's already been defeated. Stand firm in the faith!

Number three: quit you like men. "And like a man, I've quit several times!" No, that's not what it means. It's literally one Greek word that means be a man. It's associated with courage!

Remember what God told Joshua, in Joshua Chapter 1 Verses 8 through 11? Be of courage Joshua for I am with you wherever you go. It's not a human courage. It's a spiritual trust that no matter what, we can face anything in life because Christ is there.

Next, it says be strong. It's a passive. Literally, be strengthened. Be the recipient. Not you be strong, meaning from out of yourself work it up. It means be receptive to being strengthened. And the word happens to be Kratos.

In Greek, it's the word for grip. Again, it's the same word that Paul used for putting on the armor of God in Ephesians Chapter 6. He says be empowered in the strength of His grip. That is literally what he said in Ephesians Chapter 6.

What he pictures is God's hand, and that when we belong to Christ, we are in God's hand. And he's telling us to draw off the strength of that grip that God has on you.

But we try to get away. We are always trying to be on the run. But God has a grip on you. Receive from the strength of that grip.

Remember what Jesus said? He said no one can take you out of my Father's hand, and no one can take you out of my hand. So basically there's two, the Father's hand, and the Lord's hand.

And we are in His grip. Now who in the world is going to break that grip and get us away from Christ? It won't happen. So instead of wiggling and trying, and because we've got this tremendous grip over us, just receive the strength from that grip. Be at peace!

14 Let all your things be done with charity.

Fifthly, Let all your things be done with agape, agape love.

The participation in Verses 15 through 18:

15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

I beseech you, brethren, (you know the house of Stephanas. He is one of the people that came over to Ephesus to make a report where Paul wrote his letter to the Christians in Corinth.

That it is the firstfruits of Achaia.

Stephanus and his family were the first ones to receive Christ in Achaia over by Macedonia.

And, they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

The word addicted means devoted, totally given themselves over 24 hours a day. They have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

The word ministry is Diakonos, and it is where we get our word deacon from. It means service. It is the Greek word for a waiter, waiting on tables. Wait on the rest of the brethren, day and night, 24 hours a day!

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

First of all, that you submit yourselves unto such people.

Now those are the kind of people that you want to submit to, people who are devoted to Christ 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Not to leading and being in charge of people, but people who serve. If you put yourself in the hands of those people, your life will be blessed!

And to everyone that helps with us, and labors. Paul say submit to them too! The word labor means work to the point of exhaustion.

I would encourage you to not entrust yourself to religious people, but to honest to goodness believers in Jesus Christ, that live for Him, and seek Him, and have devoted and committed themselves to Christ.

The third thing about participation, he says:

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

The term lacking means absent. You were absent but these three people came from you here, and they supplied me with what I needed.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

For they have refreshed my spirit and yours:

Fourthly: Therefore acknowledge them that are such.

Acknowledge them, recognize them. If you hang around these kind of people, your spirit will be refreshed in the midst of discouragement.

C.O.

I Corinthians 16:19-20
The Mention of Greetings

Now the mention of greetings in Verses 19 and 20, and there are five of them:

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord.

And you know who they were. They started out in Rome. And under the edict of the emperor, Jews were kicked out of Rome for a while. And they went from Rome down to Corinth.

They were tent makers and they were believers. Well, down at the "Union Hall," they got together with other believers. And guess who was there? Paul!

So Paul got to know them. They went to Ephesus, and when it was clear to go back to Rome, they went back to Rome. But every city that Aquila and Priscilla lived in, they had a church in their home.

And churches met in homes. It was family.

So Aquila and Priscilla salute you in the Lord. And thirdly, and the church that is in their house.

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

Fourthly, all of the brethren greet you. Fifthly, greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

This is not a kiss of affection. This is a holy kiss. And according to tradition, and you've probably seen it on the news over in the Middle East, where you see dignitaries greet each other on the cheek.

That's what he's talking about. It's equivalent to our hand shaking.

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C.O.

I Corinthians 16:21-24
The Message of Paul

The final message of Paul, and there are five things:

21 The salutation of *me* Paul with mine own hand.

At this point, he takes the pen from the amanuensis, because he dictates all his letters, and he writes with his own hand to show his affection and to show how personal it is.

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

He says, if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

The word for love as far as Jesus goes is Phileo, family love or friendly love. If anybody does not love the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema. That's the word for cursed. It means to offer a sacrifice that has been designated for a curse.

And then Maranatha is broken up into three words. And both of these words are Aramaic, but you probably heard this one, so it's worth writing it down.

Mar, is Aramaic for Lord. Mar is Lord. An is our. And Atha is come. Our Lord comes is what Maranatha means.

So he says let them be cursed, our Lord is coming!

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.

Thirdly, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and notice the word *be* is in italics, which means that it is not in the original text.

This is not a prayer, as it sounds. This is a factual statement in the Greek text. It literally read the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with you!

24 My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Fourthly, my love *be* with you, again, the word *be* is in italics. My love is with you all in Christ Jesus. It's a factual statement. That's the word Agape.

And fifthly, he says Amen. It comes from the Hebrew word that is pronounced the same, and it means so be it. That's the crowning touch of the letter, the sign off, so be it, of a truth!

(The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timotheus.)

So we finish 1 Corinthians. Next we will start 2 Corinthians.

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

We're so thankful that we can spend time just going verse by verse through your word, receiving that which you have for us to understand.

And the main purpose for your ministry is that we might be refreshed and encouraged, and that we might not be like the Christians in Corinth that Paul said I'm saying this to shame you because you are ignorant of the things of God.

There comes a time when we should no longer be ignorant, but we thank you that the more we come to know, the more we're walking in the truth, and the more refreshed and encouraged we are.

We thank you for that. We ask for your care and protection over all, and we pray for your blessing as we begin this new letter next week. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!