

Part 33 | Set Aside a Sum of Money

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

First Corinthians...Sinners Yet Saints

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

BIBLICAL GUIDELINES REGARDING GIVING

--Giving is outwardly focused for great commission work

"Concerning the collection for the saints..."

--Giving is a regular, deliberate act of stewardship

"On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside...that there be no collections when I come."

--Giving is in proportion to one's income

"...storing up as he may prosper..."

--Giving is best directed through a local church

"on the first day of the week...whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem."

--Giving recognizes money is a tool, not a destination

Matthew 6:19-21, *"do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...."*

Luke 16:11, *"Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*

Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as grudging obligation. But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:5-7

Teaching on Giving | 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Excerpt from Exposition Commentary by Warren Wiersbe

One of the most important ministries Paul had during his third journey was the gathering of a special “relief offering” for the poor believers in Jerusalem. He wanted to achieve several purposes in this offering. For one thing, the Gentiles owed material help to the Jews in return for the spiritual blessings the Jews had given them (Rom. 15:25–27). At the Jerusalem Conference years before, Paul had agreed to “remember the poor,” so he was keeping his pledge (Gal. 2:10). Even though this was a special missionary offering, from Paul’s instructions we may learn some basic principles that relate to Christian stewardship.

Giving is an act of worship. Each member was to come to the Lord’s Day gathering prepared to give his share for that week. The early church met on the first day of the week in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (The Holy Spirit came on the church at Pentecost on the first day of the week.) It is tragic when church members give only as a duty and forget that our offerings are to be “spiritual sacrifices” presented to the Lord (Phil. 4:18). Giving should be an act of worship to the resurrected and ascended Saviour.

Giving should be systematic. Some students have suggested that many people were paid on the first day of the week during that time in history. But even if they were not, each believer was to set aside his offering at home and then bring it to the assembly on the first day. Paul did not want to have to take up a number of collections when he arrived in Corinth. He wanted the whole contribution to be ready. If today’s church members were as systematic in their giving as they are in handling their other financial matters, the work of the Lord would not suffer as it sometimes does.

Giving was personal and individual. Paul expected each member to share in the offering, the rich and poor alike. Anyone who had an income was privileged to share and to help those in need. He wanted all to share in the blessing.

Giving is to be proportionate. “As God hath prospered him” (1 Cor. 16:2) suggests that believers who have more should give more. The Jewish believers in the church would have been accustomed to the tithe, but Paul did not mention any special proportion. Certainly the tithe (10 percent of one’s income) is a good place to *begin* our stewardship, but we must not remain at that level. As the Lord gives us more, we should plan to give more.

The trouble is, too many saints, as they earn more, involve themselves in more and more financial obligations; and then they do not have more to give to the Lord. Instead of finding a suitable “level” and remaining there, they keep trying to “go higher,” and their income is *spent* rather than *invested*. As the old saying goes, “**When your outgo exceeds your income, then your upkeep is your downfall.**”

Money is to be handled honestly. The various churches involved in this special offering appointed delegates to help Paul manage it and take it safely to Jerusalem. (See 2 Cor. 8:16–24 for more information on the “finance committee” that assisted Paul.) It is unfortunate when Christian ministries lose their testimony because they mismanage funds entrusted to them. Every ministry ought to be businesslike in its financial affairs. Paul was very careful not to allow anything to happen that would give his enemies opportunity to accuse him of stealing funds (2 Cor. 8:20–21).

This explains why Paul encouraged the *churches* to share in the offering and to select dependable representatives to help manage it. Paul was not against *individuals* giving personally; in this chapter, as well as in Romans 16, he named various individuals who assisted him personally. This no doubt included helping him with his financial needs. But generally speaking, Christian giving is church-centered. Many churches encourage their members to give designated gifts through the church budget.

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BIBLICAL GUIDELINES REGARDING GIVING

PURPOSE--Giving is outwardly focused for great commission work

"Concerning the collection for the saints..."

INTENTIONAL--Giving is a regular, deliberate act of stewardship

"On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside...that there be no collections when I come."

PROPORTIONAL--Giving is in proportion to one's income

"...storing up as he may prosper..."

ACCOUNTABILITY--Giving is best directed through a local church

"on the first day of the week...whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem."

UTILITARIAN--Giving recognizes money is a tool, not a destination

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