

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 11TH - 12TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

GIVING (1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-4)

"NOW ABOUT..."

Paul ended his first letter by addressing some questions that the Corinthians had asked him. First, he addressed giving to the local church, something Paul taught all churches to do.

- Paul condones ministers making a living from their work (1 Corinthians 9), but **the majority of the giving was to go towards advancing the gospel and helping the needy.**

SOME SIMPLE GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

Paul said this was to happen at church as a part of the worship experience. He also tells "each of [them]" to give "keeping with how [they] are prospering."

- **One cannot separate generosity and Christianity. We are all called to contribute something, especially in a land as blessed as ours.**

RESPONSIBLE AND SELFLESS

Paul says, "no collections will need to be made when I come." This means that the church has been responsible to save for times of crisis and benevolence (the famine).

- Our culture rarely honors God in how we use money. **We must strive to be appreciative, balanced, responsible, and generous because this honors Christ.**

A MATTER OF THE HEART

Though tithing isn't a salvation issue, giving to advance the gospel and benevolence is something Christians should participate in.

- I personally believe tithing 10% is a good standard for giving (Malachi 3). **Not only will God take care of those who trust Him with their money, He will shape their hearts to be more like His.**

PLANNING (1 CORINTHIANS 16:5-12)

POSSIBLE RESISTANCE

Paul was concerned he might meet resistance in Corinth, so he included a lot of detail in hopes of making his arrival less chaotic.

- He also mentions he wants to spend some time face to face with them. This is important because we learn **as Christians to address tension and to do it with maturity.**

PAUL WAS ALSO SENSITIVE TO THE SPIRIT

Paul mentioned he was staying longer in Ephesus because "a wide door for effective ministry has opened" up for him. **Though he prepared and communicated clearly, he also trusted the Spirit to lead him.**

- Remember, true Christianity is a **balance of truth (logic, practicality) and Spirit (the supernatural).**

PAUL'S PROTÉGÉ

Timothy was a pastor and missionary that learned under Paul and was the focus of two books of the Bible. Paul obviously cared for Tim and wanted him to be successful in ministry.

- Tim was young (1 Timothy 4), shy (2 Timothy 1), and was in bad health (1 Timothy 5), which made Paul worry about him. Amazingly, God used Timothy in a big way.

PAUL'S OTHER PROTÉGÉ

Apollos was another person Paul put a lot of energy into. Apollos was virtually the opposite of Timothy. He was eloquent in speech and well known, which may be why Paul addressed it earlier in the letter.

- We must seek **true humility** and **not go to the extremes of self-promotion or self-deprecation.**

PLANNING AND PREPARATION ARE BIBLICAL

We learn from the conclusion of this letter that preparation doesn't quench the Spirit; it actually opens up room for God to work in our lives.

- **We will plan and prepare for what we truly care about.** If we claim to follow Christ, **Jesus should be a priority in our scheduling and daily lives through prayer, study, and church community.**

ENCOURAGEMENT (1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-24)

WRAPPING UP SOME SIMPLE ADVICE

An honorable life through following Jesus is not complicated in principle, but it can be extremely difficult in practice, especially because of the pressure and temptations of the world.

- We are simply instructed to **be alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, strong, and do everything with love.**

BACK TO THE BASICS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN

If we're to be alert and stand firm in the faith, we must know what to look out for and what our faith is. This is done by reading **the Word.**

- If we're to be courageous and strong, we must **pray and learn to listen to the Spirit.**
- The only way to **truly love is through the power of God's Spirit in us and the knowledge of the Bible.**

RESPECTING AND SUBMITTING TO LEADERS

Paul mentions the "household of Stephanas," Fortunatus, Achaicus, and some very close friends to Paul and mentors to Apollos, Aquila, and Priscilla.

- These people were pioneers of the faith in that region and deserved the respect of the Christian community because of their sacrifice.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE (V19-20)

Paul wanted to end on encouragement. **He** reminded the Corinthians that virtually **all the Christians at that time were supporting and praying for them.**

- Christians today should think like this! **We must also make sure that we're partnering with other Christians that hold to the majors of Scripture.**

NOT AS WEIRD AS YOU THINK

"Greet[ing] one another with a holy kiss" was a cultural statement and more like touching cheeks than actually kissing (think Italians).

- This was put into the text to remind Christians to show genuine love and affection for other Christians. **Do we get excited when we meet other believers?**

WATCH OUT FOR WOLVES (V21-24)

These verses are a stern warning to any divisive people (professing faith or not) that may seek to hurt the church.

- **We're to be welcoming to all people, but we cannot fellowship with individuals who wish to hurt or divide the body.** This isn't an easy or popular lesson, but it's imperative for a healthy "flock."

A CALL TO RESPONSIBILITY

- Proverbs 21:5 says, "The plans of the diligent lead to profit, but anyone who is reckless certainly becomes poor." This is more than finances, this is a mindset.
- God has a plan for us, so we're to live intentionally and responsibly so we can hear His voice and decipher His will for our lives.
- Self-control and discipline not only honor God and make our lives better, but they are also a greater witness to a confused and chaotic world around us.
- Simply put, are we intentionally living out our faith? Are we prioritizing time to read, listen, pray, and be around people that encourage us?

A CALL TO GENEROSITY

- We cannot separate Christianity and generosity. How we use our resources (time, money) truly shows the state of our heart (Matthew 6:21).
- We've been immensely blessed. Are we appreciative of what we have, balanced in how we live, and generous towards the work of the church and those in need?

A CALL TO HOLY AND PURPOSEFUL LIVING

- We're saved by God's grace, but not so we can continue living in the same condition He saved us from. **We are called to live by a high standard that is made clear in the Word and made possible by His Spirit.**
- We don't have to do this alone. We have the church community to encourage and hold us accountable.
- Now more than ever, we must **be alert and stand firm in the faith**, which is only possible by knowing the Word. We must be courageous and strong through prayer and meditation. And we must **do all things with true biblical love.**
- We must also be welcoming while using wisdom to protect ourselves from wolves.

AN HONEST INVENTORY

- Are we aware of and thankful for the blessings in our lives?
- Are we responsible stewards of our time and money? Or have we become selfish or materialistic?
- Can we say we are generous people? What is our definition of generosity?
- Are we sober-minded and alert? Do we even know what to stand guard against?
- Are we using grace as an excuse to not live up to the standard God has called us to? This isn't biblically supported (Romans 6:2).
- Are we holding onto the truth in our cultural sea of lies?
- Are we "do[ing] everything in love"?