

1 Corinthians

Chapter 16:1-24

August 4, 1996

- **1 Corinthians Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Ungodly divisions result from man's wisdom
- Chapter 2 Carnal man cannot understand our Spiritual God
- Chapter 3 All Christians will have their labors tried by fire
- Chapter 4 Boasting in our leaders puffs up and destroys fellowship
- Chapter 5 Maintain the purity of the Church
- Chapter 6 Do not dispute before the world and do not partake in sexual immorality
- Chapter 7 Principles of marriage
- Chapter 8 The responsibility of liberty
- Chapter 9 Those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel
- Chapter 10 You cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons
- Chapter 11 Propriety in corporate worship and communion
- Chapter 12 The body of Christ is unified around a diversity of spiritual gifts
- Chapter 13 Some spiritual gifts are temporary but love never fails
- Chapter 14 The spiritual gifts are to be administered in such a way that the entire body is edified
- Chapter 15 The resurrection of Christ ensures the future resurrection of our bodies
- Chapter 16 Weekly collections and concluding exhortations

- **Introduction & Review**

Having addressed numerous topics in this letter, Paul formally discusses one last topic: collection of money to aid the church in Jerusalem. Paul is apparently writing the letter from Ephesus which was in the region of Asia and is currently called Turkey. Corinth was in the Southern region of Greece called Achaia. Paul states in this letter that he was planning a trip to Macedonia, which was the Northern region of Greece, and that his intention was to visit them for more than just a short time.

- **Exposition**

1 Corinthians 16:1-24

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:² 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.³ And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.⁴ But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.

- Turning from his discussion of the resurrection, Paul begins to conclude his letter but he addresses one final topic: the collection of money for the Saints in Jerusalem. It is not exactly clear what the suffering is in Jerusalem but the common theories are that they were having a famine or that there was a general persecution. We do know that many in Jerusalem were selling their possessions and giving to others as there was need. Augustin suggests that the Saints knew from Christ's prophecy that Jerusalem was going to be decimated and were liquidating their assets prior to 70 ad and may have run out of money to live on.
- Paul instructs that the money gift should be set aside on the first day of the week (Sunday) so that collections need not occur when Paul arrives. This verse may suggest that the churches were gathering corporately on Sunday rather than the seventh day of the week by the time Paul wrote this letter.
- Notice also, that Paul intends to send the money to Jerusalem by way of men found to be faithful by the Corinthians. It appears here that Paul is establishing fiscal accountability perhaps to counter those who suggested that he was only in the ministry for the money.

⁵ *Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia).⁶ And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go.⁷ For I do not wish to see you now on the*

way; but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits.⁸ But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost.⁹ For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.¹⁰ Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.¹¹ Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.¹² Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time.

- Paul's desire was to stay with the Corinthians for a longer period of time rather than just a short visit.
- Notice that Paul found that Ephesus had many great opportunities for the work of his ministry and that many adversaries existed there. At first glance we might think this to be somewhat contrary but in reality, if a ministry is effective, there will be adversaries. The more effective it is, the greater the opposition will be. If there are no adversaries, the ministry is probably ineffective.
- Paul ensures that Timothy, who was laboring faithfully as Paul was, is received well by the Corinthians. Additionally, Paul reveals an argument between Apollos and himself but states that Apollos would be coming when he had opportunity. It is clear from these two examples that Paul is not trying to gather all of the respect for himself nor is he dictating to everyone what decisions they are to make.

¹³ Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.¹⁴ Let all that you do be done with love.¹⁵ I urge you, brethren-you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints-¹⁶ that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us.¹⁷ I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied.¹⁸ For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.

- If you want to ensure that something gets destroyed, just start taking it for granted. But Paul here says to press on, to be strong and faithful. But if we simply assume that things will be in the future as they are now, then we can most likely know that they won't be like they are now in the future.
- Paul instructed them to be strong, faithful and courageous. These attributes are virtually extinct in modern Christian men. Our country is filled with weak, wimpy men who don't stand up against evil and also attempt to shirk all of their responsibilities. Notice further from Paul that the command was to have these attributes with love.

¹⁹ The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.²⁰ All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.²¹ The salutation with my own hand-Paul's.²² If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!²³ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.²⁴ My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. NKJV

- Most of the references in the New Testament to the gathering of the Saints were meeting in homes, not church buildings. However, it is also practically known that as a group gets too large, a home will functionally lose appeal for a gathering place.
- Notice that Paul declares that those who do not love the Lord have a curse upon them. Those who do not love the Lord are damned by Him. Our modern humanistic thinking argues that this doesn't sound like love. But in truth, love divides and makes distinctions between truth and falsehood.