

Gospel Generosity - 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

We have two sermons left (this week and next) in our series on Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth. We've spent over a year in this wonderful book written to a church in Ancient Greece, but as we have found it has been timely for us. Paul has addressed the issues of division in the church, a misguided sexual ethic, marriage and divorce, church discipline, eating meat sacrificed to idols, how women should wear their hair to church, and Spiritual Gifts. The previous chapter before our text for this week is one of the great theological passages in all of Scripture. We did not skip it, actually, we preached chapter 15 at Easter as this is the greatest treatment on the doctrine of the resurrection, both Christ's and ours, in all of Scripture. Paul scaled El Capitan for us gradually climbing rock by rock a simple yet profound truth, that if Christ has risen so will we. All of 1 Corinthians flows to this chapter. Paul has continually challenged the people in the Corinthian church to live transformed lives in the Gospel. God has called this group of believers from the Corinthian culture, but getting Corinth out of them is a challenge. Yet, it is important because of the Gospel and because Christ is risen. In other words, believers in Jesus are people who have been rescued by Him and who stand between two resurrections, Jesus' and their own. Therefore, all of life is to be lived with these two days in our view.

Paul then rolls into chapter 16, which is basically a closing commendation with personal greetings as well as Paul's travel plans. Yet, this chapter too lies in the shadow of the final chapter which is the motivation for the commands in this chapter. Our text for this week is fairly simple and straightforward. During Paul's third missionary journey he has been collecting an offering for the church in Jerusalem. The book of Acts shows us that this is the mother church, the first one, and every church since has been planted from the first one. Since it is in Israel, the church in Jerusalem is almost exclusively made up of Jewish people, yet it was this church that paved the way for non-Jews to come into the faith without the burden of the Old Testament Law. Two things have happened in Jerusalem that are devastating believers there. First, the growing intensity of persecution coming from the hands of the Jewish religious leaders has led to the marginalization of Christ-followers. Second, a famine in the region has devastated the economy and left people starving. And since believers are already hated by many, this compounds their suffering. So Paul now wants the Gentile-majority churches to love this church through their generosity. So he calls on them to add funds to the offerings they are already giving so that he can then take these funds to brothers and sisters in Christ that these Corinthians believers do not know, yet they are in their Christian family. This text stands in a long line of passages in both the Old and New Testament commanding those who have experienced grace to live generous lives freely giving of their finances, belonging, and even their lives to care for the poor and the outcast and to support the work of the Gospel.

Paul tells them that they are to, on a weekly basis as the church gathers on the first day of the week (Sunday), bring an offering they have set aside. Their giving should be universal (all of them giving), regular (each week), sacrificial (they are to set aside and give from their treasure), and proportional (as each may prosper). Again, the challenge here is not equal gifts but equal sacrifice. Sadly, studies in giving among those who claim Jesus in our culture finds that the least likely people to tithe or even give anything to the cause of Christ are those making more than \$75k. The gifts are to be given to the church so that the gifts can also be given through the church. This makes their giving an act of worship and guarantees that the money given will go with the preaching of the Gospel. Paul also declares his commitment to financial integrity as the one who will make sure the offering

gets to the people intended as he tells them they will be able to choose someone to go along to make sure the funds get to the right place.

Generosity should be a natural outcome of people who have experienced the truths in 1 Corinthians 15. Christ left heaven and gave His life, the ultimate act of generosity. Furthermore, His resurrection and the promise of ours ought to pry our fingers off our stuff and help us realize that storing up treasures here is a worthless goal. In Acts we find believers in the mother church in Jerusalem selling pieced of land and all their goods to care for each other and to advance the Gospel. May this sort of generosity be found among us as we seek to love the poor and broken and see the Gospel taken to all peoples.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
2 Chronicles 32	2 Chron 33	2 Chron 34	2 Chron 35	2 Chron 36	Hosea 1	Hosea 2

Reading from this past week: 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Corinthians 16:5-24

Family Worship

Song - *God My Rock*

<https://youtu.be/5ROycuHKkOY>

Gospel Project

Story: The Emmaus Disciples

Story Point: Jesus taught that all the Scriptures point to Him.

Big Picture Question: Where is Jesus now?

Answer: Jesus ascended to heaven where He is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Scripture: Luke 24

New City Catechism

Question #47: Does the Lord's Supper add anything to Christ's atoning work?

Answer: No, Christ died once for all.

Verse: 1 Peter 3:18

Scripture

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

- When followers of Jesus are not generous and giving, what does this actually reveal about them?
- What does verse 2 teach us about how we are to give?
- Why might it be important that most of our giving be channeled through the church?
- What steps could our family take to be more generous in the Gospel?

Prayer

*Use Psalm 100 in your prayer this week

*Ask God to help you be generous and faithful with the financial resources He has given you and your family.

*Pray for our church finances, especially as we are considering a permanent space.