

**WHY WE GIVE  
LIVING THROUGH GIVING – PART 1 OF 3  
1 CORINTHIANS 16:1**

**CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE DILIGENT**

1. Paul transitions from the doctrinal to the **practical**.
2. The idea is that our **future** glory in the second resurrection is harnessed in the responsibilities of the **present**.
3. Believing that we will leave this world to live with new bodies in heaven should create a sense of diligence to lay up **treasures** in **heaven** (Matt. 6:20-21).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Peter described our **diligence** as Christians in the seriousness of **writing** for Christ's return (2 Peter 3:14).

**I. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF GIVING AS TAUGHT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE SAINTS WHO MAKE UP THE CHURCH (1 COR. 16:1).**

- A. The Christian's first obligation is to support **fellow believers** (2 Cor. 8:1-5).
  1. Giving is done to support Christians individually and **corporately** (Phil 4:14-16).
  2. The church's first financial responsibility is to invest in its **own life** and its own **people** (2 Cor. 9:12-15).
- B. This support of other believers is not the only **obligation** of the church.
  1. The Bible outlines the Christian's responsibility to minister personally and financially to **anyone** in **need** (Luke 10:25-37).
  2. As Christians, we are taught from the Bible to "Do good to **all men** and especially to those who are the **household** of faith" (Gal. 6:10).
  3. Support of the poor and needy is a high priority of Christian **missionary activity** around the world (2 Cor. 9:13).

**KEY THOUGHT:** The collection expressed the **oneness** of the church (Eph. 2:11-18; John 4:22).

**II. THE COLLECTION WAS KNOWN OF BY THE CORINTHIANS  
(1 COR. 16:1, 3).**

- A. This collection was for the **impoverished** Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:3).
  - 1. Paul had been sharing about this offering for **over** a **year** with other **churches** (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:1-5).
  - 2. The collection was to be presented to the Jerusalem **church** at the end of his **third** missionary journey (Acts 24:17).
- B. The Christians in Jerusalem had been persecuted for years, causing them to lose their **homes**, to be stripped of their possessions, and to be **imprisoned** (Acts 8:1-3; 1 Thess. 2:14).
- C. The Jerusalem believers **pooled** their assets to help those among them in **need** (Acts 2:44-45).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Paul promoted a collection in one group of churches to help meet the needs of other **struggling Christians** (Acts 11:29-30; Gal. 2:10).

**FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH**

**May 1, 2011**

**SUNDAY:** ***Christians are to be diligent until Jesus comes again (2 Pet. 3:14)!*** Paul transitions from the strong doctrinal instruction concerning the Resurrection in chapter 15 to a series of practical instructions to Christians as they await the return of Jesus. The idea is that our future glory in the second resurrection is harnessed in the responsibilities of the present. Our life is covered by the blood of Christ, and we know that He will live through us (Col. 3:1-4). Paul begins with a very obvious part of everyone's life, Christian or not, personal finances. Believing that we will leave this world to live with new bodies in heaven should create a sense of diligence to lay up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:20-21). The life of a Christian is all about the kingdom of God! Pray for the strength to be obedient to the simple commands that are made to us as believers. ***May you streamline your life so that enough of your energy can be directed to enlarging the kingdom of God!***

**MONDAY:** ***Christians are to support fellow believers (2 Cor. 8:1-5)!*** The primary purpose of giving as taught in the New Testament is for the support of the saints who make up the church. The Christians' first obligation is support fellow believers. The Christians described in Macedonia took that obligation a notch higher than required (2 Cor. 8:1-5). These sacrificial Christians begged to be allowed to give out of their poverty to those in dire need in Jerusalem. Possibly they were giving out of gratitude for the gospel they had received, or they just wanted to be part of the church around the world. Giving is done to support Christians individually and corporately. The church at Philippi supported Paul in his missionary endeavors, and Paul stated they would reap the spiritual blessing for doing so (Phil. 4:14-16). The church's first financial responsibility is to invest in its own life and its own people (2 Cor. 9:12-15). Giving to the general support of the church's activities is the concept behind Paul's comments to the Corinthian church. Ask the Lord to grant you the insight as to how you can tighten your belt to give more generously to the activities of your church. ***May this time of examination and its subsequent sacrifice bring great joy to your life and the hand of God's provision on your life!***

**TUESDAY:** ***The Christian is responsible to help those in need (Luke 10:25-37)!*** The support of other believers is not the only obligation of the church. The Bible outlines the Christian's responsibility to minister personally and financially to anyone in need. The account of the *Good Samaritan* illustrates the principle that those around us are our neighbors (Luke 10:25-37). Opportunities are given to the Christian to demonstrate that he/she is different than a non-Christian in how they sacrifice for the good of others as Jesus did when He came to earth. As Christians, we are taught from the Bible to "do good to all men and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Ask the Lord how you are to specifically support other members in your church family. ***May your act of obedience stimulate others to love and good deeds!***

**WEDNESDAY:** ***The collection Paul asked for expressed the oneness of the church (John 4:22)!*** The Jews "exported" the gospel to whatever city they traveled. Gentiles were indebted to the Jewish Christians that spread the gospel across the known world (John 4:22). Paul describes how the gospel united and changed the allegiance from nationality and race to

spiritual status. The barriers between Jews and Gentiles were eradicated by the gospel (Eph. 2:11-18). The collection from the Gentile dominated churches on Asia Minor for the impoverished Jewish Christians in Jerusalem would build a bond between the giver and the receiver. How can you bond more with other believers by supporting their ministry and lives through the gifts of your financial resources? Ask the Lord to share more ways you can contribute and to hold you accountable with the influence of the Holy Spirit. ***May the lessons you learn from being obedient bring greater strength and peace to your life in Christ!***

**THURSDAY:** ***The collection was to help the impoverished Christians of Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:3)!*** It was apparent by the manner in which Paul wrote of the offering that the church at Corinth was aware of the collection (1 Cor. 16:1). Paul reminds them that the offering is for the impoverished Jewish Christians living in Jerusalem (16:3). Paul had been sharing about this offering with the churches in Asia Minor for nearly a year and a half (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). Paul would make one last stop at each of the churches as he was preparing to return to Jerusalem. The collection was to be presented to the Jerusalem church at the end of Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 24:17). We collect three missions' offerings a year, each one over a period of several months. This allows our church and each regular attendee to participate in offerings similar to the ones that Paul collected during this missionary journey. Pray what you will do during the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for missionaries in North America. ***May this passage help you see your responsibility to give to missionaries beyond just the normal needs of your church!***

**FRIDAY:** ***The Jerusalem Christians had been persecuted for years (Acts 8:1-3)!*** The cost of bringing the gospel to the ends of the earth had been heavy for the Christians in Jerusalem. For years they had been persecuted and abused for their steadfast faith. Many of these Christians had been forced from their homes because of their faith. Some believers had been stripped of their possessions for professing Jesus while others could only find menial jobs because they were members of the Way. Still others were imprisoned for their faith (Acts 8:1-3; 1 Thess. 2:14). It was to these dear brothers and sisters that the Christians in Macedonia sacrificed beyond poverty to give (2 Cor. 8:1-5). What have you sacrificed for the cause of spreading the gospel around the world, across North America, or to every corner of California? Today is the perfect time to get on your knees and ask the Lord for direction of where to stop in our giving. How much is enough to spread the eternity-changing gospel to those around us? ***May the impact of God's world bring absolute change to your heart and life!***

**SATURDAY:** ***The Jerusalem Christians were already trying to help themselves the best way they could (Acts 2:44-45)!*** Scripture provides no hint that the Christians in Jerusalem knew of the offering that was slowly building to be brought to alleviate a portion of their suffering. The Jerusalem believers were pooling their assets to survive the oppression they were experiencing (Acts 2:44-45). Property was being sold and monies collected to care for the most basic of people's needs. The church gathered to hear the teaching of the apostles and to share food with one another. There was a sense of kinship and family in their fellowship in Christ that exceeded their pride or selfishness. The church became magnetic and dynamic in its community. Christians and the church in Jerusalem were beloved by the people of the city, and thousands gave their lives to Jesus Christ because of their steadfast witness (2:47). Pray that you personally and our church would catch the fever of "family life" in the kingdom of God. ***May the examples of scripture burn and a whole in our heart and translate into action in our lives!***