



Lessons About How We Give (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

- Right after Paul finishes addressing the reality of the believer's future resurrection and all that comes with it in the end (Christ's return, His reign, death abolished, all things subjected to God), he turns to the here and now reality of how to give to an offering for the saints in Jerusalem.
 - Every glimpse we get of our future glory is only given to us to motivate a deeper sense of commitment to our responsibility in this present life of opportunity and need.
 - Paul gives us six lessons on how we can financially support the church and its first mission to God's people
- ❶ **Give with the right "why"** (16:1a: *"Now concerning the collection for the saints"*)
 - Paul answers the question *"Why should I give?"* and focuses on how giving can provide for the good of *"the saints"*.
 - One of the primary reasons we financially give is to meet the needs of *"the saints"* of which there are two kinds:
 - The saints in need include those with financial needs (widows, single mothers, believers in crisis) and those with spiritual and relational needs (give to teach, train, disciples, counsel, encouragement, etc.)
 - The saints who lead the church (1 Cor. 9:11, 14; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6).
 - ❷ **Give with the right "who"** (16:2b: *"each one of you"*)
 - Paul answers the question *"Who should give?"* and makes it clear that giving includes everyone. There are no exemptions (*"each one of you"*)
 - If everyone is a giver and should be participating, then it doesn't matter whether you are rich or poor, struggling with sin (Corinthians) or growing, young or old, a new believer or a seasoned veteran. God told His people, *"do not appear before Me empty-handed"* (Deut. 16:16-17; Ex 23:15; 34:20).
 - ❸ **Give with the right "when"** (16:2a: *"On the first day of every week"*)
 - Paul answers the question *"When should I give?"* and encourages a regular and systematic schedule of giving (The *"first day of every week"* is a regular time of worship and stewardship).
 - Do you have a scheduled plan to give or is your giving irregular and unplanned?
 - ❹ **Give with the right "where"** (16:1b, 2c, 3a, 4)
 - Paul answers the question *"Where should I give?"* and focuses on the local church as the primary storehouse for the reception and distribution of God's provision through His people.
 - v. 1 indicates this instruction was also given to the *"churches of Galatia"* which demonstrates he has local churches in mind.
 - v. 3 indicates this offering (*"gift"*) will be located at the local Corinthian church ready to be taken to Jerusalem when Paul arrives.

- v. 2 indicates that Paul wanted everyone to “*put aside and save*”. Was this place to “*set aside and save*” at each person’s private home or was it to be stored at the church? There is no other reference to setting aside an offering in your home week by week. The word “*save*” is the Greek word for thesaurus which indicates a place to keep something in store, a storehouse. Since Paul did not want any collections to be made when he came, it seems most likely that his words to “*set aside and save*” were meant to instruct the Corinthians to bring their weekly offerings to the church to be collected and held until Paul arrives to send the gift with trustworthy saints to deliver it to the Jerusalem believers.
- The focus of ministry is all around the work of the church. It is what Jesus is building (Matt. 16:18) and all other non-church ministries exist to support and enhance church ministry.

5 Give with the right “how much” (16:2d: “*as he may prosper*”)

- Paul answers the question “*How much should I give?*” and doesn’t disclose a percentage (like the three tithes Jews had to give as a form of taxation) or set amount, but connects the amount to a believer’s financial ability, no matter how much or little that may be.
- What kind of G.I.F.T.S does God want us to give?
 - **Generous gifts** (2 Cor. 8:2-3, 7; 9:5-6, 8, 10): Make it a gift that “*abounds*” and is “*generous*”
 - **Intentional gifts** (2 Cor. 9:7: “*let each one do just as he has purposed in his own heart*”. The word “*purposed*” describes a predetermined amount.
 - **First gifts** (2 Cor. 8:5; Prov. 3:9-10): Giving is a priority gift and God is always looking for the first and the best (Mal. 1:6-14)
 - **Thankful gifts** (2 Cor. 9:11-13): God’s lavish grace produces an overwhelming sense of gratitude
 - **Situational gifts** (2 Cor 8:2): It is proportionate to what God gives you. It is not equal giving, but equal generosity.

6 Give with the right “what happens” (16:3b-4)

- Paul answers the question “*What happens when I give?*” and highlights several blessings that God gives His people
- There’s a sociological blessing of unity (v. 3b: “*I will send them with letters*”). Paul had a strategy of having the Gentile believers bless the Jerusalem Jewish believers as an act of love and unity since those two groups were typically divided (Rom. 15:27)
- There’s a financial blessing of grace (v. 3c: “*to carry your gift to Jerusalem*”). The word “*gift*” is the word grace used 10x in 2 Corinthians 8-9 to speak of financial blessing.
- There’s a reciprocal blessing of return (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6; Prov. 11:25). “*I shovel out the money, and God shovels it back---but God has a bigger shovel*” R.G. LeTourneau. You can’t outgive God.