

1 CORINTHIANS 16 | Part of the Team

Collection for the Saints

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. 3 And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

Paul's Intentions

5 I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia, 6 and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7 For I do not want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord [Jesus] permits. 8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Put Timothy at Ease

10 When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord [Jesus], as I am. 11 So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers. 12 Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but it was not at all his desire (θέλημα) to come now. He will come when he has opportunity.

Stand Firm and Do All in Agape

13 Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done in agape (ἀγάπη).

Be Subject to Paul's Co-Workers

15 Now I urge you, brothers and sisters—you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints— 16 be subject to such as these, and to every co-worker and labourer. 17 I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, 18 for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such people.

Greetings from the Asian Churches

19 The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord [Jesus]. 20 All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Paul's Personal Greeting

21 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. 22 If anyone has no *philos* (φιλέω) for the Lord [Jesus], let him be accursed. Our Lord, come (μαράνα θά)! 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you (pl.). 24 My *agape* be with you all in Messiah Jesus.

Commentary

1. Collection for the Saints (1 Co 16:1-4).

- a. **1 Co 16:1-4** 1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. 3 And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.
- b. Paul is a director of churches (v. 1). He's in charge, and the Corinthians must follow his directions. He is a coach, a commander, a leader. The church today needs men like him.
- c. All the churches are to follow the same directions. The Corinthians don't get to pass on this. They are to do what the Galatian churches are doing (v. 1).
- d. The best way to give is regularly and consistently, whether weekly or monthly (v. 2). This keeps one regularly engaged week by week. It usually increases the amount over time. The Corinthians won't have to scramble when Paul arrives. He won't have to plead with them or play on their emotions or guilt. Giving week by week takes emotion out of the picture.
- e. The first day of the week, our Sunday, is the day when the early church met (v. 2).
- f. *Each* of the Corinthians is to save up for giving, including rich and poor (v. 2).
- g. Paul doesn't direct an exact amount or percentage, such as a tithe (10%). Believers are to give as they prosper (v. 2). Paul wants them to give as much as they can, even above 10%.
- h. Believers in one part of the world should care about and provide for the basic necessities of believers in a totally different part of the world (v. 3). We must not be too self-focused as a local church.
- i. This is Gentile believers caring for far away Jewish believers (v. 3) through financial giving. We do the same when we give to ministries like Barnabas Aid and Voice of the Martyrs. We should care for Jewish believers especially.
- j. If Corinthian emissaries arrive in Jerusalem with funds in hand (v. 3), it will be a big win for the global church and for Paul's ministry. Giving will prove the genuineness of the Corinthians' faith.
- k. When it comes to money in the church protocols and checks and balances keep everything above board (vv. 3-4). Paul wants the Corinthians themselves involved in safeguarding the funds and getting them to the desire recipients.

2. Paul's Intentions (1 Co 16:5-9).

- a. **1 Co 16:5-9** 5 I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia, 6 and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7 For I do not want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord [Jesus] permits. 8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.
- b. Macedonia includes Philippi and Thessalonica (v. 5).

- c. It's good for us to have ministry intentions (v. 5), but we should hold them with an open hand and not a closed fist (vv. 6-7). Our plans are always subject to change.
- d. Paul is a director, but Jesus is ultimately in charge (v. 7).
- e. Are any doors for effective work opening to us right now? We should pray for these doors to open (v. 9).
- f. We must not let adversaries, no matter how many, deter us from effective work (v. 9).

3. Put Timothy at Ease (1 Co 16:10-12).

- a. **1 Co 16:10-12** 10 When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord [Jesus], as I am. 11 So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers. 12 Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but it was not at all his desire (θέλημα) to come now. He will come when he has opportunity.
- b. We are to respect hard-working gospel workers (v. 11), put them at ease (v. 10), and help them along (v. 11). See *Hospitality*.
- c. Paul is an extremely hard worker (1 Co 15:10), and his staff are hard workers, too (v. 10).
- d. Timothy may not be able to fend for himself in Corinth, so Paul asserts his strength as a big brother: "Don't mess with Timothy" (v. 11).
- e. Paul wants the Corinthians to know he is not Apollos' rival nor preventing Apollos from returning to Corinth (cf. 1 Co 1:12; 3:6).

4. Stand Firm (1 Co 16:13-14).

- a. **1 Co 16:13-14** 13 Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done in agape (ἀγάπη).
- b. Paul advocates engaged, strong, loving manhood among the Corinthians (v. 13). This isn't, by the way, toxic masculinity. "Man up."
(1) ἀνδρίζομαι: "conduct oneself in a courageous way" (*BDAG*, 76).
- c. V. 14 could be the theme verse for the entire letter (1 Co 8:1; 13; 14:1).

5. Be Subject to Paul's Co-Workers (1 Co 16:15-18).

- a. **1 Co 16:15-18** 15 Now I urge you, brothers and sisters—you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints— 16 be subject to such as these, and to every co-worker and labourer. 17 I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, 18 for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such people.
- b. Stephanas and his entire households devoted themselves to the service of the saints. Impressive (v. 15). What a great father and leader Stephanas must have been. Good and order, discipline, and agape characterise his household.
- c. The Corinthian believers are to recognise/respect/submit themselves to disciples like Stephanas and his household (v. 16). These disciples have *mana*.
- d. Disciples and disciple makers are co-workers and labourers who devote themselves to service (vv. 15-16). Believers are to respect them (v. 18). See *Service*.

6. Greetings from the Asian Churches (1 Co 16:19-20).

- a. **1 Co 16:19-20** 19 The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord [Jesus]. 20 All the brothers and sisters send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- b. We are to keep other churches in mind (vv. 19-20), whether across the street or around the globe. Receiving updates from Barnabas Aid or Voice of the Martyrs is a great way to keep up with the church in foreign countries.
- c. We are to show outward affection for one another (v. 20).
- d. Paul definitely considers the Corinthian church a genuine church filled with genuine believers, despite their mistakes, misunderstandings, and weaknesses.

7. Paul's Personal Greeting (1 Co 16:21-24).

- a. **1 Co 16:21-24** 21 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. 22 If anyone has no *philos* (φιλέω) for the Lord [Jesus], let him be accursed. Our Lord, come (μαράνα θά)! 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you (pl.). 24 My *agape* be with you all in Messiah Jesus.
- b. Love (φιλέω) for Jesus is the true test. If one does not love Jesus, he is cursed (v. 22)
(1) **1 Co 12:3** 3 ...No one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit.
(2) **Ps 2:12** 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
- c. We are to love (φιλέω) Jesus (v. 22) because he, the beloved, is attractive. This is an example of R. B. Thieme's concept of personal love.
- d. God's grace is with Paul (1 Co 15:10). He pray the grace of Jesus will be with the Corinthians (v. 23).
- e. Paul practices what he preaches. *Agape* is the most excellent way (1 Co 14:32), and Paul's *agape* is with the Corinthians (v. 24). His act of writing this letter is an act of *agape*.