



20: **BE The Church** (1 Cor 16)

BE the Church.

That's how Paul concludes this letter to this beautiful mess of a Church. How are followers of Jesus supposed to act? Let's find out.

beourguest

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VISUAL NOTES

Catch the Context

The Corinthian Christians had been forgiven much, but some of them weren't livin' forgiven. So, Paul writes this letter to answer their questions and address other concerns. We complete our study through this incredible letter, reminded how followers of Jesus are to **BE THE CHURCH**. While there aren't many specific commands in this closing chapter, there are implications that point back to what was previously stated throughout the writing.

A GIVING CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 (CSB)

Now about **the collection for the saints**: Do the same as I instructed the Galatian churches. On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he is prospering, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. When I arrive, I will send with letters those you recommend to **carry your gift to Jerusalem**. If it is suitable for me to go as well, they will travel with me.

The Corinthian Church was meeting **on the first day of the week** - that's a Sunday, the day that Jesus rose from the dead (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:2; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1). The Church of Troas met on "the first day of the week" as well (Acts 20:7). The day of Jesus' resurrection was so significant that it became the primary meeting day for the early Church. (Some say God changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday - this is NOT TRUE.)

This **collection for the saints** was meant to bless the mother church in **Jerusalem**, the place from where the Gospel went out. If it weren't for faithful Jewish followers of Jesus who carried His message from Jerusalem, the Church in Corinth would not have existed (Rom 15:25-28).

- This mother Church faced persecution. Jews who followed Jesus were banished by their families, fired from their jobs, and pressured by their culture to leave Jesus and return to B.C. Judaism. These people needed food, a place to live, and a job. Many widows were being taken care of by the Jerusalem Church (Acts 6:1). Some had even sold possessions & property to help take care of other Christians (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34).
- James (the apostle) was beheaded and Peter was thrown in prison - right there in Jerusalem. Most of the Church fled from Jerusalem because of persecution from people like PAUL (Acts 8:1-3).
- Just a few years before Paul penned this letter, a massive famine that impacted the entire Roman Empire, including Jerusalem (Acts 11:28). Where do people head when they are starving? LARGE CITIES to get help.
- There here been been a wide divide between the Gentiles and Jews among the Church of Jesus. This sacrificial gift from Gentile Christians to Jewish Christians went a long way to demonstrate that the Church of Jesus is not divided by ethnicity, color, culture, nor social status.

How much were the Corinthians to give?

It depended on how a person was **prospering**. They were to give what they could. While all Christians *should give consistently and generously* for Kingdom work, as taught in the New Testament, this passage is not a command for all believers to give - but meant to address financial needs in Jerusalem at the time.

Many grew up with the idea of giving our "tithe," but this is not a New Testament Practice.



Hear more: **Giving & the New Testament** (<https://bit.ly/GivingandNewTestament>).

🌟 **John MacArthur** "Despite the claims of those who advocate mandatory tithing, Christian giving is entirely voluntary. Paul did not require a fixed amount or percentage from either the Macedonians or the Corinthians, nor does any other New Testament writer. The argument for tithing is based on a misunderstanding of the Old Testament." ¹

A Christian's giving corresponds to that in ancient Israel. We are required to give taxes to support the government under which we live (Rom. 13:6), just as the Israelites were to give tithes to support the divinely ordained system under which they lived (Matt. 17:24-27; 22:15-21). And we are to give to the Lord whatever we purpose in our hearts, "not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7), just as the Israelites gave out of their hearts to the Lord. The Lord has always loved a cheerful and sacrificial giver. No amount or percentage is ever required in the New Testament. Rather, each believer is to give from his heart.²

How much should YOU give? That's up to you. Be generous & consistent. Don't give God your leftovers.

AN ACCOUNTABLE CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:1a,3-4 (CSB)

Now about **the collection for the saints**...When I arrive, I will send with letters those you recommend to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it is suitable for me to go as well, they will travel with me.

Paul is careful to make sure there is **accountability** regarding this gift, asking the church to **recommend** people to travel with him to **carry the gift to Jerusalem**. Paul wants this accountability and so should we.

- **Accountability** - where others know what is going on in our lives. Accountability is not a lack of trust, but a road block that keeps us from losing trust. **Do you have anyone who you are being accountable to** (how you spend money, keeping your thoughts & actions pure, etc)?

A RELATIONAL CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:5-9 (CSB)

I will come to you after I pass through Macedonia—for I will be traveling through Macedonia—and perhaps I will remain with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I go. I don't want to see you now just in passing, since **I hope to spend some time with you**, if the Lord allows. But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, because a wide door for effective ministry has opened for me—yet many oppose me.

Paul modeled relationships to the Corinthians. He wanted to **spend some time with** his brothers & sisters in Corinth. Making time for people is the difference between **friendships/family** and **acquaintances**. The early church was built on TIME TOGETHER - hearing the apostle's teaching, fellowship, eating and celebrating the Lord's Supper, & prayer (Acts 2:42). Paul modeled a relational approach to the churches he started.

1 Thessalonians 2:7a-8, 12 (CSB) we were gentle among you, as a nurse nurtures her own children. We cared so much for you that we were pleased to **share with you** not only the gospel of God but also **our own lives**, because you had become dear to us...As you know, **like a father with his own children**, we encouraged, comforted, and implored each one of you to walk worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Every Christian NEEDS relationships with other believers, but that CAN'T HAPPEN if we don't make time for each other outside of large group.

- Schedule a time to with another person. Show up to one of our GROUPS (Sundays 10am, Wed 6:30pm).
- REACH OUT and invite those who are new or those who aren't plugged in.

¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *2 Corinthians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2003), 281.

² MacArthur, 455.

AN ENCOURAGING CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:10-12 (CSB)

If Timothy comes, **see that he has nothing to fear while with you**, because he is doing the Lord's work, just as I am. So **let no one look down on him**. **Send him on his way in peace** so that he can come to me, because I am expecting him with the brothers. Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to come to you with the brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. However, he will come when he has an opportunity.

Paul wrote a personal letter to Timothy, saying "**Let no one look down on you because you are young**, but set an example for the believers in your speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity." (1 Tim 4:12 NET) The Church was to encourage this young minister while he was there and **send him on his way in peace** - encouraged and ready for the next task that lays ahead of him. **Apollos** was eventually coming to Corinth to encourage them and be encouraged by them.

A FAITHFUL & LOVING CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (CSB) Be alert, **stand firm in the faith**, be courageous, be strong. **Do everything in love.**

Culture pressures Christians to conform to their ways, but if we're not different, we won't make a difference. Christians are to **stand firm** [lit. *act manly*] and **strong**, - being faithful to the One Who gave His life for us. Throughout this letter, Paul has encouraged the Church to do the right things for the right reasons. We obey the Lord, confront Christians living in sin, and put our spiritual gifts to work, making sure to **do everything in love**.

A SUBMISSIVE CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:15-18 (CSB) Brothers and sisters, you know the household of **Stephanas**: They are **the firstfruits of Achaia** and have devoted themselves to serving the saints. I urge you also to **submit to such people, and to everyone who works and labors with them**. I am delighted to have Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus present, because these men have made up for your absence. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore **recognize such people**.

Stephanas and others from his **household** were some of the only Corinthians whom Paul had personally baptized (1 Cor 1:16). They were the **firstfruits of Achaia**, the first to surrender to Jesus in Corinth (capital of the the region of Greece called "Achaia"). Stephanas and these other brothers were visiting Paul in Ephesus when this letter was written (bringing him questions and returning with answers).

Paul tells the Church to **submit** to godly servant-leaders like these men who **refresh** others. Christians are to **recognize**, respect, imitate, & **submit** to those who submit to Jesus.

- **Christians are people who submit to our Lord and anyone He tells us to submit to...**governing authorities (Rom 13:1; 1 Pet 2:13), other Christians (Eph 5:21), wives to husbands (Eph 5:22), children to parents (Eph 6:1-3), employees to employers (Titus 2:9), younger Christians to older Christians (1 Pet 5:5), to spiritual leaders (Heb 13:17).

A WELCOMING CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:19-21 (CSB) The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla send you greetings warmly in the Lord, along with the church that meets in their home. All the brothers and sisters send you greetings. **Greet one another with a holy kiss**. This greeting is in my own hand—Paul.

Many of the Christians in Corinth knew of **Aquila and Priscilla**, the Jewish Christian couple Paul stayed with and worked with as a tentmaker in Corinth (Acts 18:1-3). Far or near, Aquila and Priscilla were known for welcoming others with warm **greetings**.

Christians are to welcome one another & demonstrate genuine care for one another. In their day, they would **greet one another with a holy kiss**, although our cultural customs are acceptable (hugs, high-fives, handshakes, smiles, & words of greeting).

✓ We should be known for our kindness to & WELCOMING of others.

WRITE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE

AN OBEDIENT & EXPECTANT CHURCH

1 Corinthians 16:22-24 (CSB)

If anyone does not love the Lord, a curse be on him. **Our Lord, come!** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

If anyone does not love the Lord, He does not obey the Lord, and that person is a false follower. Those who claim to love Jesus must obey Jesus. Jesus said it this way:

John 14:21 (CSB) The one who **has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me**. And the one who loves Me will be loved by my Father. I also will love him and will reveal Myself to him.

Matthew 7:21 (CSB) Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven**.

Luke 6:46 (CSB) Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and don't do the things I say?

For those who DO love Jesus & walk in obedience to Him, there is a GREAT HOPE that we await: **Our Lord come!** As we await the return of Jesus, we walk in obedience & bask in His **grace**.

Now, let's go **BE THE CHURCH!**

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!

* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (850-464-6188), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? You might need to look back in your notes to help explain your answer.
2. **Read Mt 28:1, Mk16:2, Lk 24:1, & Jn 20:1, & 1 Cor 16:1-2.** What is the significance of the fledgling church meeting on Sunday, the "first day of the week"?
3. **Read 1 Cor 16:1-4.** Why was the Corinthian Church expected to give to the Jerusalem Church? Why should Christians give to help churches/missionaries in other places (e.g. we give to missionaries all over the world)?
4. **Read 1 Cor 16:5-9 & 1 Cor 27a-8, 12.** Why is it important to make time for relationships rather than just showing up to the Worship Gathering? What can we do as a church to get more people plugged into relationships?
5. **Read 1 Cor 16:10-18.** Talk about why these characteristics of a church are so important: encouraging, faithful, loving, submissive.
6. **Read 1 Cor 16:19-21.** What was your first experience at Fellowship like? Were the people **welcoming** to you? Why must we be aware and be welcoming to folks who are new to Fellowship? How should we treat others outside of our church family?
7. **Read 1 Cor 16:22a, John 14:21, Matt 7:21, & Lk 6:46.** Why should we listen to and share the warning to those who might / might not claim Jesus, yet show no evidence in obedience? How dangerous is it for us to affirm those who claim Jesus but don't follow Him? Who do YOU need to approach to warn them of this Biblical truth?
8. Go back and **read 1 for 16:22b-24.** What is the advantage to us expecting "Our Lord, come!?" What are some practical ways you are living/need to live like Jesus is returning?
9. What other questions has this teaching or discussion prompted for us to talk about?
10. **Share prayer needs and pray for one another.**