



Sermon Series: Parting Thoughts From Paul, Part 1

Sermon Title: The Collection

Speaker/ Date: Cameron Baker, July 11, 2021

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

In today's Scripture Paul shares with us some very important truths affecting your ability to care for yourself and those around you. In this scripture you will see:

Big Idea: Joy-filled generosity requires careful planning

Careful planning that requires three primary people:

The Recipient

1 Corinthians 16:1

The targeted collection of money is for people that are believers in Jesus Christ. Paul knew these believers in Jerusalem were in a special situation that needed special support. He is making a plea for a special gift, above and beyond how the church in Corinth was already supporting one another.

HERE: We are able to offer support to those in need in our own congregation, and also those working with one of our Christian-Mission organizations. We also support the homeless by partnering with organizations like Family Promise.

FOR YOU:

When you are able to support someone you know personally, it is a joyful blessing. It's also an opportunity you and I are given to bless others in the name of Jesus!

The Giver

1 Corinthians 16:2

There is a genuine financial plan that Paul presents to the Corinthians: Make the collection on Sunday, give in an amount based on how God has prospered you, saved up over time, and be ready when Paul comes.

At Grace Church on the Mount, the weekly offerings support the ministries and the ministry centers in two locations. We encourage people to participate in what the Bible calls a tithe or 10% of my income.

For people in crisis, just as Paul recommends, we encourage people to set aside special funds, on a regular basis into what we call The Benevolence Fund. Support for missionaries and other ministries outside of Grace also comes from the weekly giving of God's people.

For you, Paul's plea would be for deliberate planning. We are encouraged to save up over time. According to your income, not the demands of the person in need. For some families, there may need to be some hard decisions because some are in a position where their expenses are far above their income and the thought of tithing or generous giving is not something possible.

God blesses us, but also sees us as managers of what he gives us. Plan well, or what was meant to be a blessing may instead be a source of grief.

The Deliverer
1 Corinthians 16:3-4

The people who are making the delivery are men known from the local congregation; not outsiders; and certainly not strangers. Managing this donation of money was an important task, not meant to be taken lightly.

At Grace, giving remains as private as possible. The Pastors don't know who gives what. We avoid "cash influence". Pastors are assigned a budget by the the Leadership Board of Elders and the congregation. The pastors are in no way "in charge" of the finances. In every area we work to follow the best financial protocols. Even to issue a simple check from the church... we go through multiple layers of approval.

FOR YOU:

Whom do you trust to handle your donations?

- 1. Direct giving.**
- 2. Trusted person.**
- 3. Trusted organization.**

But if you are in trouble, If you are on the needful end, reach out for help - not just for a donation, but for help in assessing your own personal situation. There is more guidance in the Word of God for your financial well being than you might have imagined: Book of Proverbs, Jesus, the apostle Paul and many others.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Scripture tells us to give to the church. Why do Christians have difficulty obeying that command?**
- **Do you have a strategic plan for setting money aside to give? If comfortable, share what it is**
- **What circumstances would need to change in order for you to increase your giving?**
- **What advice would you say to someone who says he or she is not financially able to give?**
- **What criteria do you use to determine whom you will help financially?**
- **How have you been blessed by someone else's generosity?**