

Wrap It Up Paul!

Wrapping up Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Accountability: Let's hold ourselves accountable!

- We learned last time that Christians will receive a future heaven prepared eternal body when the church is raised at the lord's coming. How did this promise challenge you this week to live in hope, and to shun fears...such as the fear of death?
- In what ways did thinking about the sinless incorruptible body that we will inherit encourage you as you dealt with your old sinful and corrupted fallen body this week?

Refresh: Let's take a fresh look at our focal scripture again!

- 1 Corinthians 16 NKJV

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

- In our reading this week we discussed the offering that Paul was collecting for the Jerusalem church. We learned that Paul had asked the Gentile churches to set aside an offering each week for this special cause. Did you know that the Bible contains more than 2000 references to money, giving, and possessions? This is more than twice the references to faith and prayer combined. Let's dig a little deeper and explore some of the additional principles from the Bible about money in order to expand our thinking on this subject.
 - Psalm 24:1 What does God own? How does this relate to my possessions?
 - Matthew 6:24 What did Jesus teach us about these two masters?
 - Psalm 37:16-17 What did the Bible say about poverty and righteousness?
 - Philippians 4:19 What did God say that He would provide? Can we trust God?
 - Acts 20:35 What are the implications of this text? Should we hoard wealth?
 - Proverbs 22:7 What does the Bible say about debt?
 - Deuteronomy 15:7 What does the Bible teach about helping the poor?
 - 1 Timothy 6:10 What is the potential danger of falling in love with money?
 - Malachi 3:8-10 What promises did God make about giving to the Lord?
 - Acts 5:1-11 What can we learn about dishonesty regarding our giving?
- Another significant idea that we discussed this week was the issue of consumerism and the church. Pastor Joel noted that the church is not a spiritual Walmart where shoppers come for a one stop shopping experience and consume spiritual goods at the lowest possible price. Of course, this statement was hyperbole...an intentionally exaggerated idea to make a spiritual point. In your opinion, what is a Biblical view of the church, what

perspectives are needed to conform ourselves to a Biblical view of church, and how can we avoid the dangers of a consumerist approach to church?

- Paul's conclusion centered around four key ideas: Sound Doctrine, Spiritual Growth/Maturation, Love of the Brethren, and Respect/Courtesy to Spiritual Authorities. Now that we have finished 1 Corinthians, why do you think Paul focused on these final exhortations, and what impact should these key ideas have on the church...in Paul's day and in ours?

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- In light of what we have learned this week, how would the Lord have us to think about our own finances and possessions? Is there an unyielded portion of my blessings that I have yet to allow Jesus to rule over?
- As we examine ourselves, have we entertained a consumerist attitude towards the church? Do we see the church more as a commodity or a community?
- Which of Paul's key ideas from His conclusion do I resonate with the most? Which one do I need to work on the most? If the Lord leads you, would you open up and share this with the group?