

The Resurrection and Money

Part 2

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

BI: The children of God should be a generous people. We should give worshipfully, individually, and proportionately for the glory of God

Last time we were together we learned about the connection between the promise of the future resurrection of believers and the present generosity of believers. We spent the majority of our time in the book of Acts where we saw that after the resurrection of Christ, the apostles continually taught on the coming resurrection—imploping people to believe in Jesus because one day they would stand before Him as judge. Not only that, but for those who did embrace the gospel, the resurrection became their greatest hope! At the resurrection we receive glorified bodies. There will be abundant reward for our faithfulness to the Lord and his church. All our tears will be wiped away and all things would be made new.

The response to this truth was amazingly practical in nature. The promise of resurrection gave their lives meaning and enabled them to see their lives as God sees them. The proof of that was in their unexplainable, extravagant generosity.

Suddenly, everyone was spontaneously giving to meet one another's needs. People even began selling property to make funds available to meet the needs of fellow Christians. It was a truly extraordinary time, but it didn't end any time soon.

Nearly 20 years after Pentecost, a great need arose among the people living in and around Jerusalem. We get our first glimpse of it in the Acts 11. Turn with me there and let's read Acts 11:27-30.

Famine, indeed, became a severe problem in Judea that lasted for years. And all the while as the Christians in Jerusalem suffered, believers from all over Asia Minor felt compelled to give to meet their needs. The interesting thing is that you can't read too far in Paul's writings before you find him discussing the need for churches all over the known world to collect money to send to Jerusalem. Turn with me to Romans 15.

Here at the end of the book of Romans Paul is explaining his desire to visit Rome on his way to Spain where he hoped to preach the gospel and establish some more churches. But watch what he says in v. 25-27. Rom. 15:25-27

So here Paul is explaining why the Gentiles in Macedonia and Achaia felt compelled to send money to Jerusalem. The fact is, they felt a great debt to the Jews. After all, Jesus was Jewish, and all of the O.T. was Jewish. The gospel had been to the Jew first. God sent the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world by means of Israel. So the Gentile churches that Paul had planted felt they owed a debt to their suffering Jewish brothers. So they were taking a major collection to send to Jerusalem for their relief.

And this was motivated by a deep sense of generosity in the hearts of God's people that transcended socio-economic lines. Everyone gave, regardless of their abundance or need. Turn with me again to 2 Corinthians 8.

Now we are going to read a lot of Scripture today, so do your best to follow along. We won't have time to unpack all of this, but reading it will be good for us. Let's work our way through 8:1-15

Wow! There is so much here to consider that we don't have time this morning to do justice to. But think about the major themes here. The poor people of Macedonia begged Paul to allow them to give. Why? Because a spirit of generosity is one of the fundamental characteristics of being a Christian. Followers of Christ just believe that it is more blessed to give than to receive!

Not only that, but they gave as an act of worship. V. 5 says they first gave themselves to the Lord. In other words, they determined that everything they owned belonged to God. So letting God use what was already His seemed natural and was an expression of worship for them,

Notice too, that Paul was not commanding anyone to give any particular amount. He merely pointed to Jesus as our example. "Though he was rich, yet he became poor so that you through His poverty might become rich." That's the gospel! He is teaching us "gospel-motivated giving." It is giving that loves God, loves people, and is eager to give of one's self as Jesus did.

But this isn't all Paul has to say on the matter. Look at chapter 9. Follow along with me as I read this chapter. Read Chap. 9.

Wow! Did you ever imagine that Paul had so much to say about giving? This is where we learn the theology of sowing and reaping. This is where we get the promise that God will make all grace abound to us so that we will always be supplied with enough to meet our own needs and to share with others as we minister to them.

And as we do, the effect of our faithfulness reverberates throughout the church to the glory of God. Our giving to others causes them to give thanks to God and to feel an abundance of love toward those who have given.

You see, beloved, generosity is a really important virtue for Christians. And the fact that God allowed a famine to plague Judea just gave the churches opportunity to exercise their God-given impulse of generosity so that needs would be met, the gospel would be visibly demonstrated, faith would increase, and love for one another would be shared in extraordinary practical ways.

Now all of that is context for the text we have before us in 1 Cor. 16:1-4

Read 1 COR 1:1-4

Here Paul refers to the collection he is gathering to relieve the suffering saints in Jerusalem. And as he is preparing to go to Corinth to collect the money, he offers us four principles for how they should give.

I. Giving should be an act of worship: (2)

1. Notice what day of the week the giving is to be done. It is the “first day of the week.” Why the first day? Because that was the day that the church gathered. And it is still that way today. Sunday is the first day of the week, and it is on this day that believers give their offerings to the Lord.

2. This is the connection between giving and worship. Worship happens as we drop money into the plate and say to the Lord, “All that I have is yours. I trust you alone and my rock, my strength, my satisfaction and my reward. My God is not gold. My God is Jesus Christ.”

3. But this is not the only aspect of worship that we find. Actually, as we saw in 2 Cor. 8, giving of money to the Lord starts by giving ourselves to the Lord. This should be the cry of our hearts in worship every day. “Oh Lord, all I have is yours. Take me and use me as you desire. I withhold nothing from you.” That is an expression of a heart of worship. Giving on the Lord’s Day should simply be an expression of a heart that worships the Lord every day.

4. It is tragic when church members give only as a duty and forget that our offerings are to be “spiritual sacrifices” presented to the Lord (Phil. 4:18). So first of all, giving should be an act of worship. Second...

II. Giving should be Personal: (2)

1. Paul said “On the first day of the week each one of you is to put aside and save...”

2. The term “Each one of you” is all-inclusive. This applies to all Christians who have an income. If you are a young person who knows the Lord and has a job, you should participate in the privilege of worshipping the Lord through giving. And we parents would be wise to train our children to do this at an early age.

3. Consider the amazing teaching of Jesus Matthew 6:19–20

¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

4. Giving personally will only happen to the degree that we understand the Treasure Principle. Jesus is not saying that we shouldn’t store up treasure on earth because money is bad, but because money will not last. Proverbs 23 says, “Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.

5. Next time you buy something you really wanted, imagine walking out into the parking lot of that store and seeing that precious thing jump out of your bag and fly away! “Man, There goes my new iPhone 4s!”

6. And Jesus is not just saying it might be lost. He’s saying it *will* be lost. Wealth is always eventually lost. It will either leave us while we live or it will leave us when we die.

7. Randy Alcorn offers a great illustration of this. He writes:

Imagine you're alive at the end of the Civil War. You're living in the South, but you're a northerner. You plan to move home as soon as the war is over. While in the south you've accumulated lots of Confederate currency. Now, suppose you know for a fact that the North is going to win the war and the end is imminent. *What will you do with your Confederate money?*

If you're smart, there's only one answer. You should immediately cash in your Confederate currency for U.S. currency—the only money that will have value once the war is over. Keep only enough Confederate currency to meet your short-term needs.

As Christians, you have inside information of an eventual worldwide upheaval cause by Christ's return. This is the ultimate inside trading tip: Earth's currency will become worthless when Christ return—or when you die, whichever comes first.” How should that truth affect the way we view our treasure?

4. The treasure principle says, “You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead.” Whatever treasures we store up on earth will be left behind when we leave. Whatever treasure we store up in heaven will be waiting for us when we arrive.

5. Jesus' purpose was to motivate us to see personal giving not as a sacrifice but as in investment in what He is doing in this world that will last for eternity/

III. Giving is to be Proportionate: (2)

1. Verse 2 again, “... each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper.”

2. Everyone wants to know “How much should I give?” Should I tithe? Does the Bible command me to give 10% of everything to the Lord?

2. The Jewish believers in the church would have been accustomed to the tithe, but Paul did not mention any special proportion. Certainly the tithe (10 percent of one's income) is a good place to *begin* our stewardship, but we must not remain at that level. As the Lord gives us more, we should plan to give more.

3. Our problem is that so many of us live beyond our means that we have very little to give. Someone once said, “When your outgo exceeds your income, then your upkeep will be your downfall.”

4. On the one hand, Tithing (giving 10%) was an O.T. law that is not repeated in the NT. On the other hand, Abraham gave 10% to the priest Melchizedek long before the law was ever written. So 10% seems to be a good pattern to follow. But let's remember what the apostle Paul says concerning the law of sowing and reaping. 2 Cor. (9:6-8)

Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

5. So here is what you do. Spend some time looking over your finances, and asking God what he wants you to give. Then, purpose in your heart that you will give that amount systematically, regularly, with a cheerful heart and as an act of worship. That's how to determine how much God wants you to give.

6. Paul made it clear in 2 Corinthians 8–9 that Christian giving is a *grace*, the outflow of the grace of God in our lives and not the result of promotion or pressure. An open heart cannot maintain a closed hand. If we appreciate the grace of God extended to us, we will want to express that grace by sharing with others.

VI. Money is to be Handled Honestly: (3)

1. Read v. 3-4

2. It's just important to note that even in the apostle Paul's day he was concerned about making sure all financial dealing were open and above reproach.

3. For local church ministries, and all gospel ministries, there needs to be clarity and integrity. Anyone in the church body ought to be able to ask questions about the church's finances and get solid answers.

4. The elders have always been committed to keeping the church financial reports readily available for all to see. This is not our money. This is the Lord's money. He has simply entrusted it to us as stewards who are accountable to the Lord and to His church for handling His money in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord.

BI: The children of God should be a generous people. We should give worshipfully, individually, and proportionately for the glory of God

- I. We believe we are owned by God, not ourselves.
- II. We believe we exist to show the world what God is like.
- III. We believe God is essentially generous in nature.
- IV. Therefore, we believe giving of our money is a stewardship of generosity.

Key Scriptures:

Acts 11:27-30

Acts 24:17-19

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 “For *this* is not for the ease of others *and* for your affliction, but by way of equality—”

2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Proverbs 10:22 “It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, And He adds no sorrow to it.”

Deuteronomy 8:18 “But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day.”

Romans 15:25–27 “but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. ²⁷ Yes, they were pleased *to do so*, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things.”

V. 1

Collection:

Saints: holy ones, dedicated, God's people (Who is to give)

I directed: command, arrange for

So: in this manner (How they are to give)

V. 2

First day: one (How often are they to give)

Of Week: (sabbatou) Sabbath, week, The Lord's day. The Christian holiday

Each one: every (Who is to give. cf. 1)

Is to put: appoint, deposit

Save: treasure up, store up

He may prosper: get along well; gain in business, complete. (How much to give).

Bible Knowledge Com: “Paul never used the word “tithe” when he discussed giving, even though he gave more attention to giving than any other New Testament writer. Giving should be a systematic, weekly practice on Sunday when the church meets together.” “What was important was that giving be a unified ministry with **each one** participating, regardless of his income.”

Mathew Henry: “The good we receive from him should stir us up to do good to others, to resemble him in our beneficence; and therefore the more good we receive from God the more we should do good to others.”

Matthew Henry: “All we have is from God; the more he gives (circumstances being considered), the more he enables us to give, and the more he expects we should give, that we should give more than others who are less able, that we should give more than ourselves when we were less able. And, on the other hand, from him to whom God gives less he expects less. He is no tyrant nor cruel taskmaster, to exact brick without straw, or expect men shall do more good than he gives ability. Note, *Where there is a willing mind he accepts according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not* (2 Co. 8:12); but as he prospers and blesses us, and puts us in a capacity to do good, he expects we should.”

V. 3

I arrive:

You may approve: test, regard as worthwhile, judge as good (Think Emmanuel’s Child trip in Jan. 2013)

Bible Knowledge Com: Paul’s practice in money matters was scrupulously aboveboard. Not only did he avoid solicitation for himself (cf. 9:12, 15), but also when he acted to meet the needs of others he avoided direct involvement in handling the **gift**. He preferred instead that individuals from the various contributing congregations elect representatives to bear their gift (cf. 2 Cor. 8:19-21) whom he might then **accompany** to the presentation.

Letters: epistle

I will send:

Gift:(charis) grace, kindness, thanks, goodwill

Key Terms

Exegetical Outline

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

- ¹ Now concerning the collection
for the saints,
as I directed the churches of Galatia,
so do you also.
- ² On the first day of every week
each one of you
is to put aside and save,
as he may prosper,
so that no collections be made when I come.
- ³ When I arrive,
whomever you may approve,
I will send them with letters
to carry your gift to Jerusalem;
⁴ and if it is fitting for me to go also,
they will go with me.

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