

1 Corinthians Chapter 16

NKJV Notes by Pastor Bob Caldwell

Collection For The Saints

v. 1 Now Concerning - Paul has completed his corrective instructions in regards to the moral and doctrinal areas of concern. In this last chapter he addresses a few miscellaneous issues before he closes.

The Collections - This was a collection for the poor in Jerusalem (v. 3).

Saints - This was a common term for all believers. It is "Hagios" in Greek and refers to being holy, set apart, sanctified and consecrated.

Given Orders - The word "Diatasso" (Gk.) refers to instructions on how to carry something out. The involvement with this offering had been voluntary. However, once it was agreed upon to participate, Paul felt a legitimate need and right to direct how this voluntary gift should be dealt with.

Churches of Galatia - The churches from the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia had also joined in on this effort (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:1-5).

v. 2 First Day - Sunday was the first day of the week in the ancient calendar. This became the accepted day of Christian worship because Jesus was resurrected on Sunday (Acts 20:7). It was on this day that He first appeared to His disciples and it was on the next Sunday when He returned to meet with them (John 20:19-20; 26). By the time Revelation was written, Sunday worship came to be called the "Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10).

Let Each One - Though the amounts will vary based upon the financial situation of each believer, there should still be total participation in giving.

Lay Aside - Paul gives practical advice to help the people fulfill their desire to participate in this offering by setting aside a planned amount based upon how God is prospering their lives.

When I Come - Paul did not want to be put in an awkward position of having to personally hold these people accountable to what they said they would do financially. He expected them to be responsible for this commitment and not to expect him to have to in any way pressure them for this gift.

v. 3 You Approve - Paul accepts the need to assure complete accountability when it comes to handling money that has been given to God's work. Therefore, he requests the Corinthians to select a person to personally represent them in the money given when it is taken to Jerusalem.

v. 4 Is Fitting - Paul makes himself available to assure the proper handling of this gift if needed.

Personal Plans

v. 5 Through Macedonia - Paul wrote this letter at the conclusion of his three year stay in Ephesus. Originally, Paul had planned to visit Corinth both on his way to and back from Macedonia (2 Cor. 1: 15-16). But for reasons we don't know he choose to change his plans. It is clear from Paul's other writing that he felt no conflict between making plans and at the same time being open to changes in those plans as the Holy spirit led him day by day (Acts 16:6-7; Rom. 15:24-28).

v. 7 If the Lord Permits - This was Paul's way of making plans. He made them, but was always open to adjustments that he felt were God's will.

v. 8 At Ephesus - This indicates that this letter was written from Ephesus.

Until Pentecost - Pentecost means fifty. This was a Jewish festival that occurred fifty days after the Passover Feast.

Effective Door - Paul's time in Ephesus had been amazingly fruitful. It is because of this that he had remained there for so long (3 years). His visits were normally much shorter. This desire to stay longer in Ephesus may explain why he felt he needed to drop one of his two proposed visits to Corinth (v. 5-6).

v. 9 Many Adversaries - Wherever the ministry of Jesus Christ bears fruit, there will be opposition from Satan and those under his influence. We should not think that when God gives an open door it means there will not be any difficulties—in fact it may be just the opposite.

v. 10 If Timothy - Paul sent Timothy to them (4:17-18), but the "if" is included here for the same reason Paul referred to his own visit to them with the qualifier "if the Lord permits" (v. 7).

Without Fear - Timothy was timid by nature, which is why, years later, Paul would remind him that God has not given us a spirit of fear but of love and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7). At this point in Timothy's life he was a young man (Acts 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 1: 12). Paul felt it was critical that the believers opened their hearts to Timothy, receiving him with a spirit of encouragement.

v. 11 Despise - When a group of Christians hardens their hearts to one whom God has sent to serve them, they are ultimately hurting themselves by hindering the very one sent to serve them.

Send him - Paul realized that effective ministry was a two way relationship. These Corinthians needed to not only receive ministry, but also return to the one who served them.

v. 12 Apollos - He was a gifted speaker who came into contact with Paul's close friends Priscilla and Aquila. They taught him many of the foundational aspects of the gospel (Acts 18:24-28). He taught in Corinth for a while and then went to Ephesus to assist Paul in responding to the open door God had given.

I Strongly Urged - This gives further insight into how planning and decisions were made. Even though Paul was an apostle and felt convinced that Apollos should go to Corinth, Apollos had the freedom to follow his own conscience in not going.

Convenient Time - It may have seemed inconvenient to go at this time because of all that God was doing at Ephesus. Apollos was part of the work going on there.

Final Exhortations

v. 13 Watch Here - Paul gives several words of encouragement that he believes should be a central focus of their lives. The first is to call them to be more aware of the influences upon them and the events surrounding them (Mk. 14:38; 1 Peter 5:8,9; Matt. 24:42; Rev. 3:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:3-5).

Steadfast - This means to be firm, unmovable in the faith that they had embraced.

Be Brave - In Greek this carries the thought to "act like a man." The idea is to stand up and face squarely the challenges and privileges of being a Christian, not being afraid of the response of nonbelievers or the personal challenge of obeying Jesus Christ.

Be Strong - They are called upon to not accept defeat as a normal Christian position. Instead they are to face and overcome those weaknesses by the provision of God (Eph. 6: 10).

v. 14 Love - Paul reminds them to live a life of love, which is the fulfillment of God's call upon the believer.

v. 15 Household of Stephanas - These first converts in the province of Achaia moved to Corinth and proved themselves to be people who approach the Lord's work with an intense and passionate desire to serve others on behalf of Christ.

v. 16 Submit to Such - In this letter, Paul warned them about coming under the influence of those whose motivation was not genuinely for the well being of the people. Stephanas was an exception to this. He followed in Paul's example of serving the flock out of love.

Labors with us - They are encouraged to look for others who had a ministry that reflected the priorities that Paul held.

v. 17 I am Glad - That these three men had come to confer and minister to Paul was a source of joy for him. Even a man like Paul the apostle needed the encouragement and fellowship of other like-minded men.

They Supplied - This may have included not only the encouragement and love they brought, but also financial support to help in the ministry under Paul's care.

v. 18 Refreshed my Spirit - Constitutionally, a person in Christ is spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23). Here Paul refers to his spirit, which had been born again by the Holy Spirit, as having been renewed by the influence of these godly visitors. Even though our outward body may be in great difficulty, our inward being can be renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16).

Acknowledges Such - These are the types of godly men Paul desires the believers to recognize. Until now, they were misguided by their ungodly living and self-serving lives.

Greetings and Solemn Farewell

v. 19 Churches of Asia - The term Asia was used to refer to Asia Minor in general and or the region around Ephesus, which was its major city. Here it is referring to Ephesus.

Aquila and Priscilla - Paul met this couple upon his arrival to Corinth on his initial visit to that city. They were tent makers, as was Paul, and began working together in that trade. They became extremely helpful to Paul and strong in the things of God. They disciplined Apollos, and later they went to Ephesus to help Paul. They also went to Rome to start a church (Rom. 16:3-5).

In Their House - In the early church most of the meetings were held in homes.

All the Brethren - These churches and their issues were different, but there was still a bond of love in Christ between them.

v. 20 Holy Kiss - This was the common greeting, similar today in how we use a handshake or hug.

v. 21 My own Hand - Paul used a secretary to write out his letters as he dictated them. However, he personally signed them to affirm their authenticity.

v. 22 Accursed - "Anathema" (Gk.) This word refers to a person who has been declared as cursed by God. Essentially, they are awaiting divine condemnation. That which brings this curse upon a person is the violation of the greatest and most important commandment ever given, which is a call to love God.

O Lord Come - "Marana tha" This was an Aramaic phrase. It was used to emphasize the intense desire for God to come and right the wrongs, to administer His judgment, and to establish His will. This will, of course, occur at the second coming of Jesus.

v. 23 The Grace - It was God's unwarranted blessing that saved these Corinthians and Paul knows it will be that same grace that will keep them and present them to God.

v. 24 My Love - Paul had written these believers some strong warnings and exposed in clear terms their faults. It may seem harsh, but it was an expression of love just as much as the words of encouragement and support that he also gave them.

In Christ Jesus - Paul recognized that the source of his love for the people was found in the love of Jesus Christ.