

correcting carnality

1 CORINTHIANS

Sermon Series Notes



"Principles To Give By" (I Corinthians 16:1-4)

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Intro: It is interesting how Paul goes rather abruptly from the glories of resurrection to what we read in the opening verses of chapter sixteen. But perhaps it is not as disconnected as it might first appear. Please note with me the linking verse between chapter fifteen and chapter sixteen, keeping in mind that when Paul wrote this letter, it had no verses and chapters (read I Cor.15:58). I mentioned last week that Jesus said in John 6:27-29 (read this passage). To believe means to entrust. One of the ways to know if I have entrusted my life to Jesus Christ is by what I do with my money.

Giving is at the heart of the gospel (John 3:16). God gave something a whole lot more valuable than money. He gave Himself/His Son. In light of that thought, listen to what Paul writes about the giving of the Macedonian churches (see II Cor.8:1-5). If God has me, he has my money.

Have you given yourself to the Lord? If you have, it will show up in your checkbook/wallet/purse.

In the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, one out of every six verses deals with money. Jesus told twenty-nine parables, and sixteen have to do with money, and specifically people and money.

Heb.13: 5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

I Tim.6: 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

Luke 16: 13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

What God gives us in this brief text are principles for giving. A principle is a fundamental truth as the basis for reasoning or action. I see five in these four short verses.

1. God expects His people to give corporately/collectively through the local church.

* The specific offerings being collected here was for the poor saints in Jerusalem (see Gal.2:9-10; Rom.15:25-27).

* In Romans 15, Paul mentions a principle for giving, that being returning monetary offerings for receiving spiritual blessings.

* See I Cor.9:4-14. Here Paul lays down the biblical principle of giving to support full time ministers of the gospel, including missionaries sent out by the church.

* See I Tim.5:9-10,16,17-18. Here we see the church financially supporting widows, and paying a double salary to church ministers who have the responsibility of preaching and teaching. This suggests that there were other paid staff members of the church whose responsibilities did not include preaching and teaching.

* John 12: 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. Jesus had a treasurer for His church. Unfortunately he was a thief.

* Note: The local church is the primary place we are to bring our offerings to the Lord. And a local church is not just a group of Christians who meet together for Bible study/fellowship. A biblical church has ordained elders and leaders that are recognized. It has guidelines and procedures for ministry (Just read I Timothy).

* This was not the only offerings the churches were involved in see I Cor.9:4-14; Just as Israel was God's agent to give through in the OT, so the church is God's agent to give through in the NT. The church is a broad term, but the NT makes it clear that a church is more than a group of Christians getting together for fellowship, etc.

2. God expects each person to give

* God expects every one of us to give. Can you imagine what the church would be able to do if every person in the church was a giver? I'm not just talking the increase in ministry and missions, but the blessings that Christians would enjoy that come only through giving (more on that later).

* II Cor.8: 7 But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us --see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

* Note: We should be teaching our children to give One lady in the church recently brought me a check that her nephew (?) had written to Calvary Chapel (Hold up the check). It's in the amount of \$10,000,000! Her nephew is 10 years old, and was being taught about writing checks and handling money/giving & he was provided with a practice checkbook

3. God expects us to give systematically (not haphazardly)

* v.2a On the first day of the week. What day was the first day of the week for them? (Sunday).

* Acts 20: 7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

* Mark 16: 9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

* This was the day the church regularly gathered for worship. Part of the weekly gathering for worship ought to include giving.

* Prov.3: 9 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the *firstfruits* of *all* your crops (8393. tebuw'ah, teb-oo-aw'; from H935; income, i.e. produce (lit. or fig.):--fruit, gain, increase, revenue.).

* Immediately after becoming a Christian at age 19, I began the habit of writing a check to honor the Lord. My first check was ten percent of all the money I had at that time. Then every time I got paid, I wrote a check to the local church I was a part of that time. And I made sure that I wrote that check first. If you don't write it first, the money has a way of disappearing.

* v.2b If collections needed to be made when Paul arrived

a. The offering would possibly (probably) be less than it would have been had the people in the church given systematically (the money "disappears").

- Example: if I set aside \$20.00 out of every paycheck, in six months the total would be \$520.00. But if I don't set it aside, I might not have \$520.00 to give after six months, even if I wanted to.

b. The offering I give might be given grudgingly

- II Cor.9: 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

4. God wants us to give in keeping with our income

* Note: This does not mean we should never give sacrificially. For some people, ten percent (a tithe) is very little in comparison to what is left over. The widow at the temple was led to give all she had to live on. The widow of Zarephath was directed by Elijah to offer something to Elijah first. The Macedonian churches gave beyond their ability

* II Cor.8: 12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

* See Christianity Today article

5. God expects church leaders/Christian ministries to be financially accountable.

* Note: Paul is a great example of a church leader who went to great lengths to make sure there was accountability regarding the offerings being collected and distributed through the church (see II Cor.8:18-23). Here at CCSP we go to great lengths to ensure financial accountability, including hiring an outside firm to annually review our books & procedures.

I'd like to close by quickly mentioning some tremendous advantages in giving.

1. Church/ministry/missions needs are met

2. My needs are met

* God wants to solve your financial problems, and one thing he uses to do that is giving (see II Cor.9:6-11)

* Elijah and the widow of Zarephath

3. God is honored in my life (Prov.3:9)

4. I receive more than I give

a. Financially

- Our motive should never be give in order to get, but it is clear that if we give, God will give back.

- Mal.3: 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

- Luke 6: 38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

b. Spiritually

- Acts 20: 35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

- I Tim.6: 17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

5. I store up riches in heaven

6. It helps to guard my heart from being infected with the love of money.

* A love that is never satisfied

- Eccl.5: 10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

* A love that leads to more evil

- Heb.13: 5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

* A love that leaves you discontented

- I Tim.6: 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

* A love that will choke spiritual fruit out of your life

- Matt.13: 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

* A love that may destroy you!

- Achan, Balaam, rich young ruler, Ananias and Sapphira, Judas

CONCLUSION

* Are you setting aside an amount of money each paycheck to honor the Lord. I encourage you to consider tithing

* Are you able to set aside an amount of money each paycheck beyond the tithe (in keeping with your income)?

- Support a missionary
- A worthy Christian ministry (Wendy & I supporting Campus Crusade because of Tanner's involvement...)
- Special Needs
- Go beyond the tithe in giving to the church

* I'd like to thank you for being such a giving congregation!