

1st Corinthians: Be A Believer

## A Great and Effective Door

1st Corinthians 16

### 1st Corinthians Refresher

- Written by Paul to the church in Corinth - Isthmus of Greece
- **“To live like a Corinthian”** / indulgent, uncontrolled lifestyle
- Corrective letters
- **I do not want you to be ignorant: Israel, Gifts, Return**

### Previously

- Adam sinned, Christ saved
- The importance & implications of the Resurrection - if Christ didn't rise...but He did!
- Death is done - so we live to life
- Right living in light of the Resurrection
- The responsibility of righteousness - awake to it

Started this series many years ago...the goal of instructing us all in how to **“Be a Believer”**  
*New believers class, reading when I first got saved*

### The importance of a genuine faith, growing faith

### Salvation & sanctification

Today we finish

### [Pray]

## 16:1-4

### Collection for the saints

Corinth had wealth, other regions did not.

### Giving is not usually compulsory

Tithing - OT 10%

NT - really 100%

**[2Co 9:7 NKJV] 7 [So let] each one [give] as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.**

**A cheerful giver.** *If you can't give cheerfully, don't give at all...but if you can't give it all, you won't have any cheer.*

**Tithes & offerings** - give to your local church first, then other ministries

*Times i've been lacking and prayed and God had me use what I would have tithed to handle something - not the norm*

*Times I've known others lacking and God led me to give it to them*

*Times I've lacked*

*Times I've lacked and envelopes literally showed up in the mail or were in envelopes in the tithe box*

### **Regular giving is a natural part of our faith and walk**

It's God's provision in our lives - and recognizing that has many implications

*At Calvary, we never asked for money, never talked about it - unless it came up in scripture.*

### **But here, Paul was commanding them to do so in this instance**

Not to be a burden of a last-minute gift or to have to give all at once, but start a collection pot now and add to it every week - that way it's ready and full when Paul comes to bring it

**Commentary** I thought beneficial to just read through here:

- i. Benevolence distribution is a potential source of conflict and division, and it is the job of deacons to prevent such problems by their wise, Spirit-led actions (Acts 6:1-7).
- ii. The church has an obligation to help the truly needy (James 1:27).
- iii. The church must discern who the truly needy are (1 Timothy 5:3).
- iv. If one can work to support himself, he is not truly needy and must provide for his own needs (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, 1 Timothy 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 4:11).
- v. If one can be supported by their family, he is not truly needy and should not be supported by the church (1 Timothy 5:3-4).
- vi. Those who are supported by the church must make some return to the church body (1 Timothy 5:5, 5:10).
- vii. It is right for the church to examine moral conduct before giving support (1 Timothy 5:9-13).
- viii. **The support of the church should be for the most basic necessities of living** (1 Timothy 6:8).

**Listen to these verses about what we should be content with...**

**[1Ti 6:3-10 NKJV] 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a [means of] gain. From such withdraw yourself. 6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into [this] world, [and it is] certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and**

**harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all [kinds of] evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

*Many times our perceived needs are not what we actually need - God allows us to suffer "lack" in some thing that we might see where we've actually put our trust*

**If God isn't meeting our needs, maybe its our needs that need to be questioned - and not Him**

**[Psa 37:25 NKJV] 25 I have been young, and [now] am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.**

**But this isn't a message about tithing or giving. But when we see a need amongst the saints, we should try and meet it**

*Lending a hand, being a friend, helping find a job, paying a bill, praying, inviting, discipling  
They all go hand-in-hand*

**:5-9**

**Passing through Macedonia, North of Greece**

We definitely don't know the difficulties of travel in the old world  
It's so easy to travel these days, some even do it daily for commuting  
*My commute in NY/NJ/MD, even driving 4-5 hours, people in NYC, my Dad, my brother in LA/NJ*

**Paul made long trips to see them. Days, weeks. No small thing.**

Yet sometimes we're reluctant to just go get coffee with someone  
Go visit them at home  
Invite them over

*Traveling back East for work - trying to get to NJ/NY to visit family.  
Montana time vs. East Coast time - 4 hours here is nothing!  
It's nothing when you love someone or want something  
Traveling to get vans, traveling to see bands or people in college*

**Where we're willing to go can show how much we love someone or something**  
Granted we can travel for selfish reasons - and some people love to travel

**But if we're the family of God, going out of our way for others, especially believers, should be second nature - not even a thought given**

**[Jhn 4:3-4 NKJV] 3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. 4 But He needed to go through Samaria.**

**[Act 16:9-10 NKJV] 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.**

**Time and distance are no problem for the Lord (Philip & Ethiopian Eunuch)  
If God is calling you, the trip will be worth it. "The journey is the destination"**

**I hope to stay a while with you- if the Lord permits**

Despite all the travel and time and expense to get there, Paul's plans were never ahead of the Lord's.

He was flexible enough to know that if God just wants him to stop by, then that alone was worth the trip

**Plan and purpose are good - but "blessed are the flexible"**

**A great and effective door has opened to me**

**Megas** - great, space and dimension, extent, stature, rank, intensity, esteemed for their importance, splendid, grand scale, stately, God's preeminent blessings

**Opportunity**

"When one door closes another opens" is not always true

And not every "opportunity" before us is the door God would have us walk through  
It might be someone else's door for us, or a nice thing, but not the best thing

Prayer and study/devotional time is important to discern what's an opportunity for us for the Kingdom, for Good, from God, in his time

**But don't discount the opportunities before you**

Following Jesus can be hard, but sometimes the way is obvious  
*Sierra when the kitchen door opens*

Sometimes we just need to take those opportunities - but we have to be ready for them.

**[Pro 16:1 NKJV] 1 The preparations of the heart [belong] to man, But the answer of the tongue [is] from the LORD.**

**Your entire life is an opportunity - how will you spend it?  
How have you spent the first half? How will spend the second?**

**Truth is, we don't know how much time we have left -**

*Pastor Tony, 5 years ago yesterday, serving until his last breath*

**Being a believer, laid out before you, is an opportunity to follow Jesus**

**Just as the disciples did**

**Just as the apostles did**

**You can too. The opportunities are there. The open door is MEGA and beyond it is a really blessed life, but will you take it?**

**Whether we receive the things of God or not is really up to us. He certainly puts the Way before us.**

**Commentary calls it "directed service"**

Not every need is our responsibility

**The need isn't the call. The call will however, meet a need.**

**Effective**

active, operative:—effectual, powerful.

When God opens a door, no one can shut it

If God's called you to do something, go somewhere, He wants you to have it

He's MADE YOU to be the answer to that prayer - and the open door is your opportunity to fulfill his desire for you, for others, for the kingdom

And it will be effective! Your life will change. Others lives around you will be changed. And most of all, God will be glorified. His Kingdom will come.

*"Such a time as this..." Esther*

***Imagine if Paul hadn't said yes? Hadn't been so sold out?***

*Maybe some of the other apostles weren't, and we don't hear from them - or maybe they were, and their reward is truly great because we don't know about it...but the question lingers, did they all take the opportunities before them? How would the world be different if they hadn't?*

**And there are many adversaries...**

When God places a path in front of you - expect resistance.

From your flesh. From well meaning friends and family. From the enemy.

**But also, this is a battlefield - when the door opens, we need to take it quickly**

That person may not be there again. This may be the only time you're able to do such a thing.

*Getting older - it's a lot harder to change direction now - physically as well as in life - have family in tow. There's still opportunity, but the truck turns wider now.*

**Sometimes our lack - is God giving us an open door to serve without it.**

*Paul wished all were as he was...unmarried*

*Not saying don't get married or don't pursue something you're desiring if God wills it*

**But have you stopped to consider that there might be another path, another way in life?**

*One with more opportunities you haven't even considered? More spiritual fruit? More heavenly reward? More blessings of God than just what you think you need?*

**[Jhn 21:3-6 NKJV] 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." 6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find [some]." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.**

## **:10-12**

Name Timothy reminds us of Timid, which he was, I think partly because of his fatherless life growing up potentially

But his name means Honoring God - and that's what he was about

But it was hard for him to stand up and be as bold as Paul

And Paul wanted to make sure that the church encouraged Timothy to be who he was called to be

*The importance of the church and the pastor - the pastor is a part of the church - Dangerous Calling - there's a big problem in the church today of the pastor being separate*

**Paul really wanted Appollos to be a part of all of this**

**But apparently it was inconvenient for him at that time**

**We miss opportunities because of mis-placed priorities**

I can't or I won't or I don't have time for - because we're giving our time to other things

Maybe that wasn't Appollos, maybe Paul was too pushy here - but maybe not

**What are our priorities with the gospel?**

*I try to invite folks to Montana and to the ministry all the time  
Family, friends, believers I've served with*

*And I don't know that I'd follow me anywhere, so i don't blame them, but at the same time, if my best friend asked me to come somewhere and do something, I'd like to think I would - especially for the gospel, especially if I had nothing else going on. Why not follow God? Is my job, or my house or my town or my church or my social circle that important, if there's not some direct call on my life from God to be there?*

**Let not our service be out of convenience, but out of obedience**

## **:13-18**

**Paul's commands are very militaristic - our faith is not one of ease or gentleness of life**

- Watch - because there's danger out there
- Stand fast in the faith - because everything and everyone is out to get you to fall short
- Be brave - because it's frightening
- Be strong - because it's not easy

**[2Ti 2:3-4 NKJV] 3 You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.  
4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of [this] life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.**

**Let all that you do be in love**

I think this is the first one we forget, our motives are rarely for agape

**Also submit to such**

Submitting to those who are truly serving God and are living about the gospel

We submit to so much less, we put up with church and christianity and personal decisions that are far less than God intended

When we see someone serving, we should seek to serve alongside them - until God gives us something to do elsewhere

If you're involved somewhere - it's not just for you. Don't seek to be served, seek to serve.

**How will you know? They will refresh your spirit. The main thing you walk away with is a taste of Jesus, a touch of love in your spirit - that's the mark of ministry, of where you belong.**

**We look for all the wrong things "from" church - certain music, what can I get out of it, what does the pastor look like, who said hi to me, etc. When it should be "Did I hear from God? Was I taught the Word? Did I worship God? Is there a place for me to be effective in**

exercising (or learning how to use) my giftings in service? Is the place about Jesus primarily? - If so, then it will be refreshing.

## :19-24

**Churches of Asia** (Asia minor - greece/turkey)

Calls out a house church - not everyone was in a house church, but P and A were

Greet one another with a holy kiss - that european kiss still exists - but a holy one  
The christian side-hug, the hugs we gave each other - we were family.

The church is not a firm handshake. It is a holy embrace.

If my kids gave me a handshake I'd be hurt and worried - wondering what I've done to hurt them that they wouldn't come close

**Salutation in my own hand** - Paul writing this part of the letter himself, the rest dictated

**Christianity is passive and inoffensive! NONSENSE!**

[1Co 16:22 NKJV] 22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.  
O Lord, come!

**LET HIM BE ACCURSED!**

**Devoted to the direst of woes**

Not our responsibility to save everyone - if they reject, don't love Jesus - we can't make them

**Bit of word play here, too** - Anathema - Maranatha

**Come Lord Jesus**

At the end of it all - that's all Paul wants, Jesus to come back

Not fame, not wealth, not even to plant more churches, but for Jesus to come take us all home

*Talking with Friends lately*

**That's what it means to be a believer**

**To love Jesus. To be ready and make ourselves ready for his return.**

**To seek every way possible, and be ready for the opportunities, to serve Him and others until he comes back**

**To be brave. Be bold. Stand strong in the faith**

**And to love each other**

[Jhn 13:34-35 NKJV] 34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."