

On Giving And Planning

1 Corinthians, Vol. 37

HBC 5/24/20

1 Corinthians 16:1-9

This chapter is an example of the tender and compassionate heart of the Apostle Paul. Put this together with what he writes in the first 15 chapters, and you see the perfect balance between truth and love. He touches on two subjects in our text for today.

- I. **Principles of Giving (1-4)**
 - A. Regular
 - B. Personal
 - C. Proportional
 - D. Proper
- II. **Principles of Planning (5-9)**
 - A. Be Definitely Indefinite
 - B. Focus on People
 - C. Serve Tenaciously

I. **Principles of Giving (1-4)**

1 Corinthians 16:1-4: Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 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. When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me.

Four Principles of Giving

- A. Regular

First day of every week: The principle is **regularity**. We should give at consistent intervals. It's logical to take this as the principle that **if you've been paid since the last worship gathering**, it's time to bring your next offering.

B. Personal

Notice that this is specified for **each one of you**. This is to be your **personal decision**. Of course, you should remember that all you have is His anyway. You are only a manager of what He entrusts to you, and He allows you to make the decisions.

Haggai 2:8: *'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts.*

Psalm 89:11: *The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours; The world and all it contains, You have founded them.*

It's important to observe what this passage does **not** say. It does not prescribe an amount or a percentage.

C. Proportional

As he may prosper: The principle is that giving should be in proportion to your income. No one is excluded, because it should be **regular** and it applies to **each one**. But it's up to you to regularly and personally decide what percentage you want to give.

D. Proper

Paul wanted the church to handle this on its own. Notice also that he went out of his way to make sure there was proper accountability and accounting. Make sure those who collect offerings give an account.

- II. **Principles of Planning** (5-9)
 - A. Be Definitely Indefinite
 - B. Focus on People
 - C. Serve Tenaciously

- A. Be Definitely Indefinite

1 Corinthians 16:5: *But I will come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia;*

After is the translation of a indefinite Greek word that could easily be translated **whenever**. It doesn't pin down a time. But at the same time, Paul mentions **going through** Macedonia. In other words, there was a well-defined intention and plan for travel, but Paul understood that it was always subject to exigencies and emergencies and new opportunities.

James 4:13–15: *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."*

Proverbs 16:9:

*The mind of man plans his way,
But the LORD directs his steps.*

- B. Focus on People

1 Corinthians 16:6-7: *and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits.*

Perhaps is another indefinite reference. His focus was on spending plenty of time with people. Paul wanted the Corinthians to be involved in his ministry as much as possible.

Wherever I may go shows that Paul had definite plans but he also was committed to ministry in any place that the Lord would allow him to go. Notice also, that he never lost sight of the sovereignty of God, as he added **if the Lord permits**.

C. Serve Tenaciously

1 Corinthians 16:8-9: *But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*

Wide door for effective service has opened means that Paul saw an opportunity and he wanted to seize it.

If you study all the passage that refer to an **open door** in the New Testament, you'll find that it's a metaphor for an opportunity or a way of access which can be taken or bypassed. The decision is left to the judgment of the person who is presented with the opportunity.

Open doors are God-given opportunities for service. They are not specific guidance from God, requiring that you enter them.

What should you take away from this? The principles suggested by Paul's actions and words give you plenty to keep in mind.

<p style="text-align: center;">Don't ignore the sovereignty of God</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Planning is good</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Circumstances are not signs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open doors are opportunities</p>

All this is irrelevant unless you have responded to the most essential aspect of the will of God.

2 Peter 3:9: **The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

1 Timothy 2:3-6: **This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.**