

1 CORINTHIANS: LESSON 52

Chapter 16: Saints Giving to the Saints

25 May 2018

The Bible has much to say about the proper handling of money. For the Christian, giving to the needs of others plays a big part in their own financial soundness. God promises to provide for the needs of those who give to the needs of others (Prov. 3:9-10, Prov. 11:24, Luke 6:38, 2 Cor. 9:6-7, Heb. 6:10, Phil. 4:19, etc.). God does not expect us to carelessly give to every moocher that comes our way, so He provided us with some guidelines.

The unwillingness on the part of saved people to surrender their material goods for the benefit of God's people and the furtherance of the Gospel is yet another evidence of selfishness. Today we'll look at God's instructions to the believers in Corinth concerning their giving.

SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING

1. **THE CHURCH IS TO CARE FOR GOD'S WORK AND GOD'S PEOPLE (VS 1).** The Bible does not instruct Christians to feed and clothe pagans, idolaters, or sluggards (people who don't want to work, 2 Thess. 3:10).
2. **THE WORLD IS NOT TO PROVIDE FOR GOD'S MINISTRY (VS 1).** Churches are not to solicit donations from society in general. Financing missionaries and ministries of the church are the responsibility of the church.
3. **OFFERINGS FOR THE WORK OF GOD SHOULD BE MADE BY EVERY MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION (VS 2).** God wants every member to experience the blessings that result from following this principle of giving. Do you have a heart that is willing to give up something that is dear and precious to you for the glory of God?
 - a. **THE OFFERING SHOULD BE SYSTEMATIC (VS 2).** There ought to be a set time for giving. A disciple is one who is disciplined in his activities, including giving.
 - b. **CHRISTIANS SHOULD GIVE OUT OF THEIR PROSPERITY (VS 2).** Your prosperity is everything you've got that you don't need for your basic necessities of life. Can you lay aside your own lusts and desires and use that extra money to help a missionary get on the mission field, etc.? Can you do it with joy? The widow (Mark 14:42-43) had no prosperity, so she gave her all.
4. **DON'T RELY UPON OCCASIONAL EMOTIONAL APPEALS (VS 2).** Churches should not depend upon the huge offerings they get when they invite a famous preacher (like Paul) or have a special event. That will all balance out when the church members begin withholding future offerings to make up for the large amount they unintentionally gave while they were emotional at the big event. Special appeals to give more are not necessary when you have an ongoing concern for others and their needs.
5. **APPEALS SHOULD BE MADE WITH THE HIGHEST MOTIVES (VS 1).** If your heart is right when you give to a brother or sister (a saint), you're going to get a blessing regardless of whether or not they used the money properly.
6. **FUNDS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY ADMINISTERED (VS 3).** Those who handle the offerings need to be capable, trustworthy, honest, not covetous, and not influenced or drawn by money. Judas Iscariot didn't qualify (John 12:6).
7. **BE LIBERAL WHEN IT COMES TO GIVING (VS 3).** Liberal means that you cast away all restraint. Liberality is bad when it causes you to get rid of the restraints that would prevent sin. But, when it comes to giving for the needs of the saints, God wants us to be unrestrained and to give generously. Be liberal for God and He'll provide for your needs (Prov. 11:24).