

**I CORINTHIANS**  
**Chapter 16:1-9**

**INTRODUCTION:**

With the major moral and doctrinal issues behind him, Paul now turned to some final personal concerns. **"Now concerning"** - shows the transition from the subject of the resurrection to that of the collection.

**VERSE 1:**

This church is instructed to have a collection for the saints at Jerusalem. Paul had also instructed the churches of Galatia to give an offering and ask the Corinthian church to follow the same order - **Galatians 6:10**. The apostle used the words - **"have given order"**, which is a military word meaning to arrange as in a troop, to give a command. Their poverty was caused by a famine - **Acts 11:27-30** and persecution - **Acts 8:1; I Thessalonians 2:14**.

It is the duty of Christian people to help those who are in need, first in their own congregation and then to others as the need arises. Many of the Jews at Jerusalem were suffering hunger for Christ's sake and were in need at this time.

We are not to support lazy, careless, unfaithful people, but those who are really in need and have tried to help themselves. The Bible states clearly - **"that those who do not work, do not eat, and if a man will not provide for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel"** - **II Thessalonians 3:10; I Timothy 5:8**. There are bums and lazy people that will beg from the church and spend their money for beer, tobacco, and other nonessential things.

**VERSE 2:**

**"Upon the first day of the week."** - The first day of the week is Sunday, the day which Paul shows us that the believers were gathering for worship. To the early church, the first day of the week was recognized as the "Lord's Day" and became the day that Christians met to worship. It was distinguished from the seventh day (Saturday/Sabbath), which was identified with the law. The first day of the week was identified with the resurrection and grace.

Although Israel had celebrated the Sabbath as its day of worship, the church looked to the day of Christ's resurrection as its official meeting day - **John 20:19; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10**. To the Christian, the Sabbath was done away with by the death of Christ - **Colossians 2:16**.

**"let every one of you lay by...."** - Everyone was to be involved in the giving and it was not just for some! It included the rich and the poor, the young and the old. Every child of God that makes up the membership of the local churches is the one that received these instructions and orders from Paul. To put it very simply, if you are a Christian, you are to be a giver. The instructions that Paul gives is to the **"churches,"** which would indicate the church is to be your place of giving.

Everyone was to give proportionately. They were to give as God had prospered them. If there was not a known amount or a percent to go by, then they were commanded to bring all of that they had prospered. It is no question that they knew God's plan in supporting His work - **Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:8-10; I Corinthians 9:13-14; Hebrews 7:8**. Tithes and offerings have always been the plan of God to carry on His work.

Note: The way we give says a lot of things. First, it says something about a person as a person's giving is an expression of the heart. Our giving shows our sincerity and depth of our love for God, our faith in God, and our obedience to God. The offerings that are received each week say a lot about a church. A good measuring stick of a church's commitment and spiritual depth is the offerings on Sunday. A growing people are a giving people. If people are growing spiritually the offerings will grow numerically.

**"as God hath prospered him."** - Paul recognizes that God is the source of all we have. It is God that hath prospered us and all we have we owe to Him. The amount of our giving is to be based on what we have and the motive of our giving is based on our appreciation to God for what He has given us.

When we give, it is an act of thanksgiving and gratitude. It is an expression of appreciation. When we give less than we should it is the same as saying that we fail to recognize the real source of what we have and that we are unappreciative of what God has blessed us with.

#### VERSES 3-4:

These representatives were to be selected and approved by the church membership. It was Paul's plan to send the church approved messengers with the relief collection and with his apostolic credentials to Jerusalem. Paul had no intention of taking the money himself lest people misjudge his motivation and think he was trying to feather his own nest.

#### VERSES 5-9:

Some of Paul's critics thought that he would not return to Corinth, but he announced clearly that he would visit them. His plan involved three stages:

1. Ephesus to Macedonia **16:5** - He planned to pass through the Roman province of Macedonia in northern Greece, stopping off at the various churches.
2. Macedonia to Corinth **16:6-7** - Instead of a brief visit, he announced that he desired to spend the winter months with them. He probably shocked them by telling them that he would accept their financial support for the next leg of his journey. He could not visit them now since he needed to continue his stay at Ephesus, but he did plan to visit them in the future. Recognizing the sovereignty of God, he committed his travel plan to the will of God ("**if the Lord permit**" - **James 4:13-15**). It was the Lord's will, and Paul did get to stay there for three months - **Acts 20:1-3**.
3. At Ephesus **16:8-9** - The apostle labored three years in that Asian city **Acts 20:31**, but here he put a time limit upon his ministry until Pentecost. His reason for staying was that God had - "**opened to him a great and effectual door**" for proclaiming the gospel. On the second missionary journey God had forbidden Paul to preach in Asia - **Acts 16:6**, but on the third journey God had opened the closed door. Paul knew that his responsibility was to go through opened doors, not the ones that were closed - **II Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3**. From the base at Ephesus, all of Asia was evangelized - **Acts 19:10**. Many people were converted and several churches were established.

It was an effectual work in that God used His word to penetrate the sinful hearts of men - **Hebrews 4:12**. However, where God is working, Satan will be there to oppose. Ephesus was no exception - **16:9b**. The adversaries certainly included the pagan silver-smiths and the idolatrous worshippers of Diana - **Acts 19:23-41**.

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## Worksheet

1. What was Paul's instruction to the church of Corinthians concerning the receiving of an offering for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Why were the saints at Jerusalem in need of aid?
3. What duties do Christians have concerning the giving of a offering to others? To whom is aid to be given? To whom is aid not to be given.
4. Practical application to giving of offerings:
  - a. Biblically how does this principle apply in giving an offering to lost people?
  - b. How does this principle apply in giving an offering to a **family** (with children) whose father is an alcoholic or just plain lazy and does not work? How does **II Thessalonians 3:10; I Timothy 5:8** apply to these verses?.
  - c. How does this principle apply to a brother or sister in Christ who does not know how to manage their money and fails to save in time of plenty for the time of needs. How do the following verses apply to your answer? **Proverbs 6:6; Genesis 41:14-37**.
  - d. Example to discuss: Many years ago there was a church member who inherited \$40,000.00, within four years it was all gone. They had given it away, bought a very expensive truck, and blew it. Now the question to discuss! Should the church continue to help this member? How does your answer harmonize with the Bible?
5. When or what day of the week is the Lord's church to receive tithes and offerings? WHY?
6. What is the difference between the Sabbath and the Lord's Day?
7. Why and when was the day of worship changed?
8. Whose responsibility is it to give tithes and offering to the church?
9. The members of the Corinthians church were to give \_\_\_\_\_. They were to give as \_\_\_\_ had \_\_\_\_\_.
10. If a child of God tithes is he fulfilling the commands of God's Word?
11. What does giving say about a person? What does the tithes and offering of a church say about the church?
12. Define the phrase - "**as God hath prospered him**"
13. When we give it is an act of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. It is an expression of \_\_\_\_\_. When we give less than we should it is the same as saying that we fail to \_\_\_\_\_ the real \_\_\_\_\_ of what we have and that we are \_\_\_\_\_ of what God has blessed us with.
14. To whom was this offering to be given?
15. How many years was Paul at Ephesus? What was the reason for Paul staying so long?