



151st Church of Christ
Small Group Study Guide – 1 CORINTHIANS
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AN IMPERFECT LOCAL CHURCH
A Study in 1 Corinthians
CLASS – Lesson 24

GENERAL OUTLINE

1 Corinthians 16:1-24, Final thoughts

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1 Corinthians 16:1-24, Final thoughts

16:1-4, Another question: the collection

16:5-18, Paul's plans and exhortations

16:19-24, Final greetings

In this last chapter of the letter Paul deals with a series of practical and personal topics. Two of the items seem to be responses to questions asked of Paul by the Corinthians: "Now concerning the collection," and, "Now concerning our brother Apollos." The entire chapter has something to do with travel and fellowship: Paul's travel plans (including travel related to the collection); travel of Paul's associates such as Timothy; Apollos' travel plans; the financial fellowship demonstrated by the collection; the fellowship of encouragement among various Christians; Paul's final greetings. Every item is an example of how Christians should care for each other in the body of Christ as Paul has been teaching throughout the letter.

DISCUSSION

1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Another question: the collection

The collection for the churches in Judea was a pet project for Paul. We learn more about this effort in 2 Corinthians 8-9, where Paul is focused on the attitudes that should motivate their participation. Here he answers a simple question about the procedure to follow in collecting the funds and transporting the gift to Jerusalem (cf. 2 Corinthians 8:20).

There is some uncertainty about the laying aside (ESV, storing up) on the 1st day of the week. Does this mean to store up at home or bring to the assembly and store up together?

- 1. Why does he say to lay aside on the 1st day of the week? What was the significance of that day? What would have been the practical reason for specifying the day? How would they have avoided having "collections when I come," if they had "stored up" at home?**

2. What concerns might Paul be addressing by sending local brethren with letters of recommendation with the funds (cf. 2 Corinthians 8:16-24)?

3. Look through 2 Corinthians 8 & 9 and find “spiritual” words associated with the role and meaning of the collection in the life of the church and her members. Hint: it was more than a simple matter of donating money.

1 Corinthians 16:5-18, Paul’s plans and exhortations

4. In what cities had Paul started congregations in the province of Macedonia?

5. Compare Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 4:19 about his plan to visit in Corinth “shortly” with his plans as stated in 1 Corinthians 16:6, including the more uncertain, “wherever I go.” What do these statements say about the certainty of Paul’s plans, his inspired apostle status, and God’s will for his ministry?

6. Why would Paul say he had an open door for preaching the gospel in Ephesus if there were “many adversaries”? Would not “many adversaries” indicate a “closed door”?

7. What do we know of opposition to Paul’s ministry in Ephesus? What do we know of his success in Ephesus (cf. Acts 19; 1 Corinthians 15:32)?

8. What does Paul say that suggests that he was concerned about the reception Timothy would receive in Corinth? Why would he have that concern (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:17-21)?

9. What earlier statements in this letter about Apollos make Paul's personal contact and conversations with Apollos mentioned here particularly interesting?

10. The word "watch" is used only here in 1 Corinthians, but Paul has used other words in this letter that carry much the same meaning. What are some of them? What were they to watch out for?

11. Which of the Corinthian problems addressed by Paul in this letter were, in part, due to a failure to live by the exhortation of verse 14 (cf. chapter 13)?

12. Stephanus was one of the first converts in Achaia (the region of Corinth). What else do we know relating to his conversion?

13. Paul doesn't give details here, but what services might these three men (v. 17) have rendered to Paul in connection with the Corinthian church (cf. 7:1)?

1 Corinthians 16:19-24, Final greetings

14. Who greets whom, and who is encouraged to greet whom?

15. How does this series of greetings complete the loop back to the opening statement in 1 Corinthians 1:2, and what major theme of the letter do they reinforce?

16. Where else in his letters does Paul call a curse on someone? What is the similarity between the reasons for which Paul says someone should be accursed?

17. What thoughts does Paul include in the last two verses of the letter that provide balance with that severe curse?