

Sunday, July 22, 2018—I Corinthians 16:1-4 The Collection for the Saints

I Corinthians 16:1

- In his closing remarks, Paul mentions the collection “for the saints” that was apparently underway. There is no prior mention of this “collection” in I Corinthians so Paul must be referring to something that he had instructed them concerning when he was with them.
- We learn in verse 3 that this “collection” was for the saints in Jerusalem.
 - Romans 15:25-27—why would Paul instruct Gentile members of the body of Christ to finically help poor Jewish saints at Jerusalem?
- Matthew 19:20-22—the day was coming in the outworking of God’s plan with Israel that they were going to be instructed to sell all that they had.
- Luke 12:32-33
- Matthew 19:27-29—according to the Lord Jesus Christ these people would received back 100-fold when the kingdom was established.
- Acts 2:44-45
- Acts 4:32-37—in preparation for the establishment of the kingdom the saints at Jerusalem sold their lands and possessions and laid the money at the feet of the apostles.
 - Acts 5:1-11
- Romans 15:26—why are saints at Jerusalem poor? Because they sold all their possession in obedience to the kingdom gospel. But the kingdom didn’t come on account of Israel’s rebellious heart.
 - Acts 3:19-21—Israel didn’t repeat. As a result, God set the nation of Israel and her kingdom hope aside so that he could form the church the body of Christ.
- How many believers who are trying to follow Christ according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are selling all their possessions and living with all things in common?
- I Corinthians 16:1—Paul is taking up this collection upon the gentile churches of the Roman Empire to provide finical assistance for the poor saints in Jerusalem who will not be realizing their kingdom hope because a dispensational change has occurred.
- Regarding this “collection,” Paul wanted the Corinthians to follow the pattern set by the “churches of Galatia.” There seem to be two reasons for this: 1) the Galatians are used as an

example of what the Corinthians should do, 2) Paul does not want the Corinthians to think that the financial burden was theirs alone to bear. Rather the burden was being shared by all the churches that Paul had established.

I Corinthians 16:2

- Following the logic of verse 1 (“even so do ye”), I take verse 2 to be Paul’s explain of how the churches of Galatia had conducted themselves on this matter. This is the pattern of conduct that Paul wants the Corinthians to follow as well.
- *Upon the first day of the week*—provides strong indication that Gentile believers from Paul’s ministry were meeting the first day of the week (our Sunday) in commemoration of the Lord’s resurrection as opposed to the 7th day sabbath (sundown Friday till sundown Saturday) as outlined in the Law.
 - Mark 16:2
 - Luke 24:1
 - Acts 20:7
 - Romans 6:14—believers today are no longer under the law.
- *Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*—on the first day of every week the Corinthians were instructed to “lay by him in store” i.e., place their money into an account for the poor saints at Jerusalem. How much each saint laid in store was to be determined by how God had “prospered him.” According to this principle, believers who had more than they needed for them themselves and/or their family should give much, whereas those who had little more than to provide for the basic needs should give a little.
- *That there be no gatherings when I come*—Paul wanted the Corinthians to conduct themselves in this manner because he didn’t want to take up a collection when he came. In Paul’s mind there are two practical reasons for following this course of action:
 - First, Paul wanted the saints to give regularly each week out of how he Lord had prospered them.
 - Second, Paul did not want his coming and presence to be associated with taking up collections and offerings. Many enemies of Paul and his gospel would not have heisted in condemning Paul for such conduct.
 - II Corinthians 11:7-9

I Corinthians 16:3

- Upon Paul arrival, whomever the Corinthians have preapproved via letters those people would be sent to carry the Corinthian's gift to Jerusalem.
- Notice how this course of action places the responsibility upon the Corinthians to select faithful men, verify them via letters. Corinthian money was to be carried by Corinthians to its destination. In this way, Paul would avoid any allegations of wrong doing or finical impropriety.

I Corinthians 16:4

- Paul is careful not to appoint himself as a carrier. Paul is simply saying that if it is fitting, meet, or proper for him to also go to Jerusalem he might also go. However, those approved by letters from verse 3 will go with him.