

Give, Live, & Man Up!

Lone Beach Alliance Church • April 11th, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

*Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.
~1st Corinthians 16:13-14 (NASB)*

1) Disciplined, Visionary, & Participatory Giving

- A) With the victorious facts of Christ's Easter resurrection still ringing in our ears (1st Corinthians 15:50-58), Paul shifts to one last question from the Corinthians (16:1) regarding participation in supporting "the saints."
- B) It is apparent that the Jerusalem church (16:3) was hard pressed financially (cf. 2nd Corinthians 9:12), and was under persecution from the Jews (1st Thessalonians 2:14). The reality of the plight of the Jerusalem church was undoubtedly known by all the "planted churches," and participation in giving to them was commonplace.
- C) Note that the Corinthian church is not grouching about participating in giving to those they do not even know! Even this head-strong and often immature group of Christians felt that financial giving was a de facto aspect of church life in Corinth (1st Corinthians 16:1-2).
- D) Note also Paul's approach to the subject (16:2-3). There are no gimmicks, there are no special "thermometers" to measure progress, no emotional heart-tugging appeals, and no mention of tithing, etc. What is Paul's call for giving?

E) Be disciplined (set it aside at the first of the week, like "first fruits," 16:2), be visionary (give with the future in mind, 16:2-3), be participatory (deliver it yourself, be blessed in your giving, 16:3-4).

2) Live The Mission, The Job Isn't Completed

- A) Paul shares his future plans for travel and visiting with the Corinthians (16:5-9). He clearly desires to spend more time with them, no doubt in part, because of all their conflicts and misunderstandings.
- B) Note that Paul has a plan, but is given to "if the Lord permits" (16:7). His heart is one of mission, and he passionately speaks of the opportunities he has in Ephesus, despite the "adversaries" (16:9; see also Acts 19:23-20:1).
- C) As a bit of a footnote, we learn in 2nd Corinthians that these initial plans changed, and Paul made an emergency trip to Corinth that proved to be disastrous and filled with unexpected persecution and tears (2nd Corinthians 2:1-4). However, eventually Paul followed the basic route he lays out in 1st Corinthians taking him from Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, etc.) and back to Corinth (2nd Corinthians 2:12-13, 7:5, 8:1, 9:4; Acts 19:21, 20:1-3).
- D) Paul also prepares for Timothy's eventual arrival (Acts 19:22), and seems to desire to clear the air for Timothy, perhaps referring to an earlier conflict/criticism (16:10-12).

3) Act Like Men, Love Like Jesus

- A) The closing of the book is filled (in characteristic Pauline style) with a flurry of imperative commands (16:13-24). Most notable is Paul's view of men as the leaders who are faithful, brave, strong, and loving (16:13-14)!
- B) The final thoughts of the letter are framed with love (holy kiss, 16:20), love for Jesus (16:22), grace (16:23), and love in Christ Jesus (16:24). Marana-tha is a literal Aramaic rendering of "Our Lord" (marana) "Come!" (tha). The "accursed" (anathema) is akin to excommunication (16:22).