

Life Group Notes
Sunday 11 June 2017

Speaker: Scott Taylor

Passage: 1 Corinthians 16:1-9

Title: A Collection and Paul's Plans

Paul starts the concluding chapter of his letter by talking about a collection and how the collection will work. What a way to follow the glorious teaching of the resurrection!!!

The collection is most likely being taken up for the poor and the needy in Jerusalem. They were living under persecution and against the back drop of a severe famine. Paul is taking up this collection in all the churches that he has the privilege of being involved with. As much as wanting to get finances to the people who need it most there is also an element of displaying his theological conviction of one new man in Christ. Gentile churches collecting money for the Jewish church in Jerusalem. "There is no Jew or Gentile" we hear regularly from Paul and this is a meaningful way of displaying that. A way of saying to the gentile church, you are in the same family as the Jewish church and most importantly to show the Jewish church that the gentile church is in the same family. Looking to address the issue of – should gentiles become Jews to be Christians? Of course, no – so let's collect money and receive money from brothers and sisters across borders and backgrounds.

So how is the collection to be taken. They are to put something aside from what they have got each week, getting in the habit of storing up something in accordance with how they have prospered. Everyone therefore can be involved, not just the rich. All contributions are valued and valuable. It's taken up on the first day of the week, Sunday and therefore represents a first fruits type idea. Give first and trust God for the rest of the week. He wants to make sure that there is a generous offering to take to the Jerusalem church so he is giving them time to save for it.

Paul then gives them his plans so they know when to expect him and it seems that seeing as he wants to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost – and thinks he will probably be with them around winter time, they are probably looking at a bout 7months before he comes.

As we can see we too take up an offering each week and we use that for all sorts of things. We do talk about steps to giving -pocket, regular proportional, generous and sacrificial. It's not about us being individuals but rather us taking our place in our church family, helping to finance the mission. All this against the backdrop that Jesus came to BE our offering.

Suggested application and questions

- 1) What did you hear on Sunday that was new or a fresh reminder for you?
- 2) What has been your experience of giving in a local church setting?
- 3) Which step would best display your current thoughts around giving?
- 4) Read through 2 Cor 8-9 and discuss
- 5) Pray for one another around the whole area of finance.