

TOGETHER, LET'S ABOUND
IN GOD'S WORK

NOVEMBER 26, 2023

WORSHIP

Lord of All Creation, Praise is Rising, Love Goes On, Stand Strong (Grounded), Goodness of God

WELCOME

Share about the most recent important "group project" or a meaningful goal that you got to accomplish with the help of your team (family, workmates, classmates, friends, etc.).

WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-13
(READ THE REST OF THE CHAPTER)

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. ² On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. ³ When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; ⁴ and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me. ⁵ But I will come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia; ⁶ and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. ⁷ For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits. ⁸ But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; ⁹ for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. ¹⁰ Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without [c]ause to be afraid, for he is doing the Lord's work, as I also am. ¹¹ So let no one despise him. But send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brethren. ¹² But concerning Apollos our brother, I encouraged him greatly to come to you with the brethren; and it was not at all his desire to come now, but he will come when he has opportunity. ¹³ Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done in love.

As we go through the last chapter of 1 Corinthians, here's a look at what Paul dealt with in his first letter to the church in Corinth:

OUTLINE OF 1 CORINTHIANS

1. Issues on Unity (Corinthians 1-3, 6)
2. Issues on Spiritual Growth (Corinthians 2,4,5-7)
3. Issues on Genuine Love (Corinthians 7-9, 13-14)
4. Issues on Proper Worship (Corinthians 9-11)
5. Issues on Spiritual Gifts (Corinthians 10-12, 14)
6. Issues concerning the Resurrection (Corinthians 15)
7. Conclusion (Corinthians 16)

Paul's goal in writing this was for the church to become pleasing to God as they live in unity. How do we achieve this together as a church? Jesus prayed for the unity of believers so that His church will be an effective witness to the world (**John 17:20-21**). The world needs to see the kind of love that we have for one another! Individually, we can make a difference. But corporately, we can change the world. Even big businesses know that "togetherness" enables them to succeed. God wants us to have that as well! TOGETHER, LET'S ABOUND IN GOD'S WORK wherever you may be. Paul admonished us to do just that (**1 Corinthians 15:57-58**). God's purpose is the only purpose that will not be in vain. Wherever God placed you, you have a job to do. God's work for us is to accomplish God's mission here on earth (**Matthew 28:19-20**). How do we abound in God's work?

1. GIVE ABUNDANTLY (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

Chapter 15 ends with Paul talking about the victory we have through the resurrection of Jesus. His final reminders in **1 Corinthians** are for believers to give abundantly and to do everything in love. Giving is important because it is a sign of love. You can give without loving, but you can't love without giving. God modeled that when He gave Jesus to save us. The churches that Paul planted already had a culture of giving (**vv. 1-2**). The purpose of the weekly giving was for God, His people and His work. In fact, the church at the very beginning were already sharing their resources to one another (**Acts 2:44-45**). As the church grew, they needed accountability (**vv. 3-4**).

Why do we give to the church? 1-To accomplish the Great Commission (**Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 9:23, 2 Timothy 4:2**); 2-Help those in need (in the church and outside the church) (**Acts 4:33-35, Acts 6:1, Galatians 2:10**). There was famine in Jerusalem and the churches in other cities were sending help to the believers there. 3-Support church workers, pastors, missionaries (**1 Timothy 5:17-18, 1 Corinthians 9:11, Acts 13:2-3**). One way to abound in God's work is to give! We honor God when we give, we learn stewardship, and it protects us

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from materialism, it blesses us, and our faith grows! Giving to the Lord is counterintuitive---we are the ones who are blessed when we give!

Tithing giving 10% of everything we earned/grew for the Lord and His work. Offering is freely given, over and above our tithe, for the Lord, His people and His work. Scripture never tells us that we should not tithe anymore and just give offerings. We will not debate over this because the purpose for both is that it is for the Lord, for His people and His work. Giving is a natural response of someone who is a recipient of God's amazing grace. Before tithing was a law, Abraham gave a tenth of all he had (**Genesis 14:17-20**). Jacob also tithed (**Genesis 28:20-22**). The Israelites gave to the Lord's work because their hearts were moved by God's grace (**Exodus 35:21**). **Matthew 6:19-21** commands us to store up our "treasures" in God's kingdom. Money is one of the tests of our love for God; there is a serious consequence when we do not honor God with tithing, and there is also great blessing when we do (**Malachi 3:8-10**). Jesus himself tells the Pharisees that they should not neglect doing the right things as well as tithe (**Luke 11:42**). Give cheerfully from the heart (**2 Corinthians 9:6-7**) and give generously (**Luke 6:38**). We cannot outgive God!

2. LOVE ABUNDANTLY (1 Corinthians 16:5-24)

Jesus commanded His disciples to love as He loved them, by which people will know they were His followers (**John 13:34-35**). Paul wanted the church to be like that, such that when people see the love among believers, they would want to be part of that group. The world needs to see what genuine love is in the way we spend time, the way we act, and the words we say to each other. Paul was intentional in spending time with the Corinthians (**vv.5-9**), even if some maligned him before, and Paul urges them to treat Timothy well when he comes (**vv. 10-11**). Even Apollos did not desire to visit the Corinthian church, yet Paul encouraged him to do so (**v.12**). It was Paul's way of saying that he and Apollos support each other, in contrast to the divisions within the church.

When the world sees how we love and build up one another, they will be attracted to Jesus (**Acts 2:46-47**). People are looking for a genuine loving community and the church, though it's imperfect, is the best place to find it. You may belong to groups outside the church, they may be fun to be with, but they will not lead you closer to Jesus (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). Though imperfect, the church will help you be more like Jesus. Believers and pastors may disappoint you but that's no reason to leave the church. Do everything in love; if there's conflict, let's resolve it; let's forgive one another (**vv. 13-14**). Let there be mutual submission (**vv. 15-16**). Honor those who refresh your spirit (**vv. 17-18**). Welcome warmly and treat each other as family (**vv. 19-20**)! Finally, let's have an eternal perspective, awaiting the return of our Lord Jesus Christ as we abound in God's work through giving and loving abundantly (**vv.21-24**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What have you learned about tithes and offering from the message and why do you think it's important?

2. Setting It Right.

What are the reasons that prevent (or can prevent) you from exercising the spiritual discipline of giving to the Lord and His work?

3. Living It Out.

Why do you think the church (the body of Christ) is the best place to grow in our relationship with God?

4. What can you do to fulfill God's desire of unity and growing love in the body of Christ (specifically in CCF)?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people in the church to do everything in love towards one another; pray for those outside the church to see that love and be drawn to Jesus and the community of believers. Abound in the work of the Lord by loving others enough to give them the greatest news of all---the gospel of Jesus Christ.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks.
- Rescue of the Israelites taken as hostages.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

III. Church

- CCFers would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

I CORINTHIANS 16:13-14

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