

CONCERNING THE COLLECTION 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Int. Paul knew when to take a collection. In 1 Corinthians 15 he led his readers to rejoice in the matchless glory of Christ's resurrection and in the promise of their own. At the height of their joy, he suddenly passed the plate! Jerusalem suffered under famine and persecution. Paul asked the Gentile churches to help. The Corinthians asked Paul how to take the collection. In reply Paul spelled out God's six-point program, principles that have held good across the ages. God's concern for the collection speaks to

PERIOD

Collections should take place on the "first day of every week."

The principle is that of regular and systematic giving. Christians should give as regularly and systematically as they read the Bible and pray. Giving must not be a response to whim, special need, or "as the Spirit moves."

PERSONS

"Each (and every) every one of you" give. No exceptions when it comes to collections. Many of the Corinthians were poor themselves. But Paul appealed to each and every member of the Christian community to give something!

PLACE

Paul called for the collection to be gathered to a specific place. "Put something aside and store it up." This does not mean "save up at home" but bring it to the "storehouse" (as Mal 3:10), i.e. the local church treasury. If I give to God, I ought to put it where he says. It is not mine to dole out to charities, colleges, needy relatives or TV evangelists.

PROPORTION

Each member gives "as he may prosper." What a Christian gives is based on what God gives to him. If God gives much, he expects much. If he gives little, he expects little.

PURPOSE

"So there will be no collecting when I come." Regular giving eliminated the need for a special collection when Paul arrived. They would have plenty of money on hand for a generous love offering.

PROTECTION

Paul asked every congregation that contributed to the love gift for Jerusalem to pick a man or several men to help take their gift to the saints there (2 Cor 8:19-21). Paul would not even travel with them unless they asked him to go along.

How should the collection be protected? Funds should be handled by more than one person and never by the preacher!

All money should be receipted and recorded. It is biblical to handle funds with care.