

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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CONCERNING THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS

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Paul authored, “*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come*” (I Cor. 16:1-2). Think with me about those things concerning the collection.

1) THE COLLECTION IS FOR THE SAINTS. In this text of I Corinthians 16:1-7, the collection was taken up for the “saints” in Jerusalem. Paul makes reference to the same need in Romans 15:26. The collection taken up by the Lord’s people is for the saints, not for the general public. If the collection was for the general populace, the Lord’s Church would rapidly go bankrupt. We should always recall there are some things with which the Lord’s Church is not charged (I Tim. 5:16).

2) THE COLLECTION WAS EXPECTED OF

OTHER GROUPS. Notice the apostle had also given an “*order to the churches of Galatia.*” In other words, the precedent to undertake this activity had been given to local churches of God’s people in other areas. In writing to the Philippian brethren, Paul said, “*Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing*” (Php. 3:16). What one local group is divinely inspired to do, all local groups are charged to do.

3) THE COLLECTION IS TO BE DONE BY THE LOCAL CHURCH. After having said the orders were given to Galatia, Paul instructed “*even so do ye.*” The fact it is to be done on Sunday, and that the order is given to the local group, suggests it is to be done within the service, just as it is with singing, praying, communing, and preaching. If not, why not?

4) THE COLLECTION IS TO BE DONE ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE

WEEK. This specific statement excludes doing this act on any other day of the week. Paul’s words help us to appreciate when God specifies something, He excludes every other possibility. Such as he did when He specified “*gopher wood*” in Genesis 6:14. In so doing, He eliminated all other kinds of woods. When God specified to remember the “*Sabbath Day,*” He eliminated all other days (Exo. 20:8).

5) THE COLLECTION IS TO BE DONE BY EVERY MEMBER. This is seen in the words, “*let every one of you lay by him in store.*” It should not be hard to understand, that each individual member (family) is to give on the first day of the week. In some places, if every member was like you (or me), there would no offering. The same phrase is found in Romans 14:12, “*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*” If “every one” means all in Romans, it means the same in I Corinthians. If not, why not?

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6) THE COLLECTION IS OFFERED AS GOD HAS PROSPERED.

These are the only words in the New Testament which guide the amount one is to give. Under the Law of Moses, the Jews were to "tithe" (Dte. 14:22-23). That is, they were to give a tenth of those things with which God had blessed them. No such law exists in the New Testament. Each Christian (family) is to individually determine what they will give. The amount they give is a private matter between them and God. If God is prospering you (and who is He not prospering), then you should be giving on the first day of the week. If not, why not?

7) THE COLLECTION IS TO BE DONE AS THE CHURCH GATHERS.

We have already established in this article it is to be done collectively as the Church gathers. This is made even clearer when Paul said, *"that there be no gatherings when I come."* It is expedient to take up the collection when the Church is gathered together, as

opposed to going house to house, family to family, to gather the collection.

8) THE COLLECTION REQUIRES PLANNING.

On the part of the giver, that is. Paul taught, *"Every man according as he purpo^seth in his heart, so let him give"* (II Cor. 9:7). The idea of "purpose of heart" is the concept of giving forethought to future actions. For instance, of Daniel it is said he *"purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank"* (Dan. 1:8). He had planned ahead to not do these things. Barnabas encouraged the Christians at Antioch *"that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord"* (Acts 11:22-23). They needed to plan ahead to stay close to God. So it is with the collection. Those giving on the first day of the week need to have given prior thought to what they are giving.

9) THE COLLECTION MUST BE OFFERED WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE.

Paul concluded II Corinthians 9:7 by admonishing when giving not to do so *"grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."* To give grudgingly is to give with heaviness or sorrow of the sinful kind. To give of necessity is to give feeling distress, or to feel like I'm "having" to give.

Rather than these attitudes, we should be joyful and happy to give. This is what God loves. This is how we understand also God sees not only what we give, but how we give. Each is important. The Bible records, *"Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury"* (Mk. 12:41). We must adopt the attitude of the Hebrews who gave so much, and with such a grand attitude, they had to be *"restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much"* (Exo. 36:6-7). As we concern ourselves with the collection for the saints, let us be sure we carry out this command with great joy and delight!

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm