

“Final Instructions”

1 Corinthians 16

This final chapter of 1 Corinthians covers such a variety of topics that it is impossible to bring them all under one theme. That is because after having dealt with a number of current problems at Corinth throughout the course of his letter, Paul concludes with more personal matters. He gives instructions on the collection for the impoverished believers in Judea. He writes about his travel plans and those of his colleagues; he greets them and sends along the greetings of friends; he thanks them for sending a delegation to visit him and adds some final words of exhortation.

Opening Question(s) – Choose one.

- Who are some people you are hoping to visit this year?
- When you travel, do you like to plan things thoroughly, or just go and see what happens?

Study Questions

- 1) **Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4.** Paul encouraged the Christians at Corinth to take a collection, which we know from his other letters was for “the poor among the saints in Jerusalem” (Rom. 15²⁶; cf. Gal. 2⁹⁻¹⁰; Acts 11²⁹⁻³⁰; 24¹⁷). How should economic differences, locally and globally, impact what giving priorities and guidelines we follow?
- 2) Within the year Paul wrote a follow up letter that also referred to the collection. What additional details do we find out about how well the collection was going in 2 Corinthians 8⁶⁻¹²?
- 3) How do you feel about giving money to your church and to ministries beyond your church? What motivates you to give?
- 4) **Read 16:5-9.** Paul plans his travel with careful deliberation (v.5), but also sufficient flexibility for extended ministry as the need or opportunity arises. How can we be good stewards of our time and yet allow for flexibility to alter our plans or schedules as ministry needs or opportunities arise?
- 5) What situation does the apostle face in Ephesus (v.8)? What relationship have you observed between opportunity and opposition in your life and ministry?
- 6) **Read 16:10-18.** What do Paul’s words show about his attitude and concern for his colleagues?
- 7) What should the Corinthians imitate regarding Stephanas and the others (vv.15-18)?
- 8) **Read 16:19-24.** How would you describe the tone of the greetings conveyed to the Corinthians?
- 9) Why do you think Paul speaks so strongly in verse 22 to those who don’t love the Lord?¹
- 10) As you think back over this letter of Paul’s, what has challenged or helped you most?

¹ *Anathema* (“a curse be on him”) and *maranatha* (“Come, O Lord”) are a play on words. They may also reflect the standard covenant renewal, stated with curses and blessings, that we find in the Old Testament (e.g. Deut. 28^{1,15}).