

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: 1 Corinthians

Week of November 24 (Week 17)

1 Corinthians 16



1 CORINTHIANS 16: SUMMARY

"1 Corinthians 16 encourages us to serve and give generously, to plan thoughtfully, and to cherish fellowship in the body of Christ. As we navigate our Christian journey, let's remain steadfast in faith, perform every action with love, and honor those who work hard in the service of the Lord. In all things, may we remember that our labor in the Lord is never in vain." (1 Corinthians 16: Summary, Bible Hub).

OBSERVING & APPLYING THE TEXT

In 1 Corinthians 16, Paul appears to be cramming in a bunch of disjointed thoughts before the curtain closes. But, through these final instructions, what the readers see emerging is a portrait of a community that lives in light of that event that changed the world – the kind of community that the church is supposed to be. And very simply put, it's one that mends what's torn, that rights what's wrong – that reconciles. How?

- By Sharing Its Goods
- By Sharing Its Life
- Across Every Dividing Line (Stephen T. Um, 1 Corinthians: The Word of the Cross, 821-22).

Societal polarization adversely affects the church, turning it into a gospel issue as churches fall into the trap of dividing along polarized lines. If our churches become as polarized as our country, we run the danger of losing our gospel priority and vitality. We glean five ways from 1 Corinthians 16:1-11 to keep us from the danger of losing our gospel priority and vitality. (Tim Armitage, 1 Corinthians 16: Sermon Notes).

Plan for Generosity (16:1-3)

1. According to verse 1, what is Paul's instruction to the Corinthian believers?

2. According to verses 2-3, what do we understand about the practice of giving?

Reflection: “Here’s biblical wisdom regarding generosity: (1) Tithing is a percentage, priority, personal gift that is planned for ... “First day of the week ... each person ... set aside” and (2) Offering is additional generosity reserved for the church, missions, community, etc. But without planning ... we miss out.” (Tim Armitage, 1 Corinthians 16: Sermon Notes).

Plan Faithfully with Sovereignty in View (15:4-7)

3. Read verses 4-7 carefully and notice phrases that indicate planning. What do the phrases tell us about Paul in regard to ministry? What can we learn from Paul’s faithful planning with sovereignty in view?

Reflection: “We need a wide range of planning to serve and reach a wide range of people – we need to plan with gospel priority.” (Tim Armitage, 1 Corinthians 16: Sermon Notes).

Plan with Gospel Priority (16:8-9a)

4. In verses 8-9a Paul writes about open door for ministry. What do we understand about Paul’s heart and strategic plan for ministry from these verses?

Reflection: “Becoming a faithful servant of the Lord does not begin with some great opportunity, but with doing the best possible work for Him in the routine things. If we do not give God our best where we are, there is no assurance we will give Him our best anywhere else. The only opportunity we can be sure of having is the one we have now” (MacArthur, 1695).

Plan for Spiritual Margin (16:9b)

5. In verses 8-9a, Paul says that he “will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened for me.” In verse 9b he says, “and there are many adversaries.” What do we learn about opportunity and opposition for ministry from Paul?

Reflection: “Doing the Lord’s work in the Lord’s way is accepting opposition as a challenge rather than as a hindrance. In the present age there is no such thing as an authentic ministry without problems and opposition of some sort. A work that has little opposition from the antagonistic system of Satan is one that is doing little work for the Lord” (MacArthur, 1236).

Plan with Others in Mind (16:10-11)

6. What prompted Paul to instruct the Corinthians on how to receive Timothy in verses 10–11?

Reflection: “We need to get to know, *really* get to know, people who are different from us. We must begin to share life with others and get deeply into their lives and allow them to enter deeply into ours, so we can actually start to call them friends. There are plenty of people in our communities who are different from us” (Um, 599).

PRAYER

PRAYER GUIDE

November 25-29, 2024

Read 1 Corinthians 16

Monday: 16:1-2 “Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the church of Galatia, so you are also to do. *On the first of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.*” Giving is an aspect of worship. Consider how your giving has been. As you read these verses pray that you will have a steadfast determination to give as often as our income is refreshed knowing that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

Tuesday 16:3 “*And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem.*” Paul told the Corinthians to recommend men of integrity and honesty to transport the money collected for a stated purpose. So, what we see here is that trust is important in the ministry with whatever task we are assigned to do. Pray that we will be trustworthy individuals as we serve God in the church.

Wednesday: 16:9 “*For a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*” “Paul faced he two variables every person in ministry faces – every pastor, every evangelist, every missionary, every layperson living the Christian life: opportunity and opposition. But take heart because all the opposition in the world cannot slam the door on the gospel when the opportunity to share the gospel presents itself” (Daniel Akin and James Merritt, *Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians*, 863).

Thursday: 16:13 “*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.*” The Corinthians were to always be on their guard and never go to sleep at their theological post, making sure that false teaching did not corrupt the church. In this hostile world, it is essential that believers in Christ be courageous and strong. Ask God to help you to be watchful, to stand firm in the faith, and be strong. Pray the same for fellow believers at Briarcliff Church.

Friday: 16:14 “*Let all that you do be done in love.*” “This reminder was very important for a church riddled with strife. So, Paul reiterated that love for God and neighbors was to motivate and govern everything they did” (Richard Pratt, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 761). Examine your heart and see if your words, thoughts, and deeds are governed by love. May our prayer today be to do all things in love.