

DUTIES: CONTINUING CHRISTIAN DUTIES

1 Corinthians 16

INTRODUCTION:

- A. It is very important to go through the process of becoming a Christian.
- B. But we are to continue doing God's commands in order to please Him. We never reach a level of fulfillment and retirement as a Christian.
- C. Therefore, as Paul brought 1 Corinthians to a close, he listed several "Continuing Christian Duties" that we need to be involved with.
- D. Let's notice some of them:

I. CHRISTIANS WILL ALWAYS NEED TO GIVE, 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

- A. Instructions were given to Corinth as to other congregations in Galatia.
- B. The Bible tells us when and how to give:
 - 1. WHEN: "Upon the first day of the week": indicating regularity and continuity.
 - 2. HOW: "As he purposeth in his heart...not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver," *2 Corinthians 9:7*.
- C. WHY Christians need to give continuously:
 - 1. Out of *gratitude* for blessings.
 - 2. Because we are *commanded* to do so.
 - 3. To relieve the *needs of others*.
 - 4. To *sow the seed* for return blessings.
 - 5. To *carry on the Lord's work*.
- D. Illustration: A family visited new neighbors. To make small talk, they complained of buying new shoes for their child who wore them out so quickly. The wife of the new neighbor began to cry and hurriedly left the room. He explained, "She heard your complaints and overflowed with emotion. Our child has never been able to walk.
We've never had to buy him any shoes -- but how we wish we could!" A growing, healthy church -- like a growing, healthy child -- will always have needs. Let us not complain that we have to keep on giving!
- E. "I'm glad this church needs money."

II. CHRISTIANS WILL ALWAYS NEED TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE MISSION WORK AND MISSIONARIES, 16:5-7.

- A. Paul was always traveling in spreading the gospel.
 - 1. He hoped to "winter" with them. This was an important service they could render to him.
 - 2. That you may set me forward on my journey:
 - a. They would send him on his way after winter.
 - b. It could mean supplying him with money, a means of travel, or simply encouragement.

- B. Timothy was Paul's co-worker, **16:10, 11.**
 - 1. Since Timothy also did the work of God, Paul hoped he would be properly received, verse 10.
 - 2. Paul asked them to also help Timothy on his journey, verse 11.
 - 3. Apollos would also be coming at a later time, verse 12.
- C. Missionaries we help and encourage:
 - 1. 2005 budget: Liberia, Romania, India, Barbados, Philippines, Scotland.
 - 2. Others we have helped: mission trips to Germany, Mexico,
- D. At every opportunity we need to "refresh the spirits" of missionaries, as Paul was refreshed by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, **16:17, 18.**

III. CHRISTIANS NEED TO BE ALERT TO OPPORTUNITIES, 16:8, 9.

- A. "For a great and effectual *door is opened* unto me," **verse 9.**
 - 1. That was the reason for his remaining in Ephesus until Pentecost.
 - 2. Paul often spoke of receptive hearts as open doors: ***Acts 14:27; 2 Corinthians 2:12, 13; Colossians 4:2, 3.***
- B. The household of *Stephanus* were "the firstfruits of Achaia," **verses 15, 16,** implying that they were some of the first converts and that they obeyed at their first opportunity.
- C. *Aquilla and Priscilla* used their opportunities wherever they went, **verse 19.**
 - 1. They hosted evangelists, ***Acts 18:2, 3.***
 - 2. They taught others, ***Acts 18:24-26.***
 - 3. The church met in their house, ***Romans 16:3-5.***
- D. We likewise need to look for opportunities and open doors. Often an opportunity will only knock once.

IV. CHRISTIANS MUST CONTINUE TO STRESS THE FUNDAMENTALS, 16:13, 14.

- A. Illustration: Coaches must continue to stress the "fundamentals," even to the most gifted athlete. Many with excellent physical potential as athletes still never get the big break, or else choke or flub the crucial play if they have any deficiency in the "basics," whether on offense or defense. Sometimes you see a team and hear someone make the comment, "They don't have good fundamentals."
- B. Here in Paul's final admonitions to these Christians, he reviews some "fundamentals," **verses 13, 14:**
 - 1. "*Watch*": look out, be vigilant, ***cf. 1 Peter 5:8.***
 - 2. "*Stand fast in the faith*": surrender in heart and mind to the gospel and daily abide in it.
 - 3. "*Quit you like men*" "*be brave*" (NKJ): be brave, not cowards or timid.
 - 4. "*Be strong*": trust God, live in Him and His strength will be with you.
 - 5. "*Let all that you do be done in love*": in all things have a spirit of love.
 - 6. "*Love Jesus above all*," **verse 22:**
 - a. Anathema: accursed, cut off from God, *cf. Galatians 1:9.*
 - b. Maranatha: an Aramaic word used to give greater force to the previous statement. There is some doubt as to its actual meaning.

C. Following these basics is a “Continuing Christian Duty.”

CONCLUSION:

- A. If one is a Christian, there is enough in this chapter to keep him busy for a lifetime.
- B. Imagine what this congregation could do if every member practiced enough things continuously!