



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Wise to Remember

Tuesday, 4 November 2014

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CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

monthly (interim) schedule

*** 1st Tuesday of the month ***

TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2014

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Studies are held the *first* Tuesday of every month at 12 Noon. The Bible study is nonpartisan and nondenominational. We are currently studying First Corinthians, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. I pray that this study will be edifying to you. The ministry of Capitol Commission exists *solely* to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

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First Corinthians 16 – “Wise to Remember”

We all know the embarrassment (and offense) that arises from identifying certain individuals and forgetting to name others. We are always wise not to forget, and to remember vital details. There is an old account concerning a Greek General, named Metaxas, who was invited to inspect an airbase. The base commander invited the General to test a new flying boat. General Metaxas piloted the boat exceptionally well, and continued to do so until the commander noticed that he was attempting to land on the base’s runway.

“Excuse me. Excellency, but it would be more suitable to come down on the sea as this is a hydroplane.” Just in time, the General swerved quickly, and landed the flying boat safely and skillfully upon the water. He turned to his host, the commander, and remarked, “I must compliment you on the task with which you drew my attention to the incredible blunder that I nearly made.” Upon making that remark, the General opened the door and stepped into the water.

REMEMBER TO HAVE WISE FORESIGHT

(16:1-4) The final chapter of First Corinthians begins with directives that are both particular and practical. Chapter 16 begins with a phrase used previously: “now concerning” (Gk. *peri de*), which indicates that the Corinthians had posed specific questions for the Apostle Paul to answer. Probably they had asked concerning the proper procedures for “the collection for the saints” in Jerusalem.

The closing chapter is the least confrontational section within First Corinthians, even though there is still some indication of tension. (Problems regarding “the collection” are addressed in 2 Corinthians 8). Although this chapter may seem unrelated to present needs, it truly

addresses several aspects of stewardship, with regard to finances (vv. 1-4), opportunities (vv. 5-9), and people (vv. 10-24). First Corinthians 16 teaches how to be wise regarding three outstanding resources available to Christians, and thus how not to waste them.

One of the most important ministries that the Apostle Paul experienced on his third missionary journey was to receive collections to assist the material needs of believers in Jerusalem (because of a famine; cf. Acts 2:41-47; 4:33-37; 11:27-30). Several truths may be gleaned from the initial verses of First Corinthians 16.

Scripture is evident that nothing more was expected from the Corinthian church than from the churches of Galatia. Fairness is the emphasis. The Apostle Paul advised, “every week, each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.” Paul did not want to plead for gifts when he arrived, and anticipating the possible problems that could arise in association with the transmission of finances, and thus as a matter of immense magnitude, he was vigilant to avoid those issues.

AVOIDING ANY POSSIBILITY OF A SCANDAL ARISING WITH REGARD TO MONEY IS AN INVALUABLE, BIBLICAL EXAMPLE TO HEED TODAY.

First, individuals were appointed – of whom the churches approved – to carry the gift to Jerusalem. *Secondly*, written credentials would be sent to authenticate the relationship of these persons not only with the church at Corinth but also with respect to the Apostle. *Finally*, if advisable, Paul would accompany the individuals. Avoiding any possibility of a scandal arising with regard to money is an invaluable, biblical example to heed today.

The reality that is readily identifiable between the Apostle Paul and the church is the conscientiousness to anticipate potential difficulties, and to formulate an arrangement to avoid those problems. The wise leader is prepared to resolve difficulties, if they arise, and to have an action plan to ensure anyone concerned that any difficulty will be remedied properly should the need arise.

The context of 16:1-4 is important when we recall the prior discussion concerning the resurrection. The original manuscripts of the Holy Bible do not contain chapter divisions; consequently, one would read the brief doxology of thanks to God, and then immediately read the discussion regarding finances. Just as doctrine and practice correspond with each other, so also does worship and works. Giving “is not *in vain*” because “Christ has been raised from the dead.” The resurrection power of the Lord motivates believers to give and serve.

REMEMBER TO HAVE WISE COMMUNICATION

(16:5-12) The next subject addressed is the Apostle’s travel plans (vv. 5-9) which was important so that others would know his intentions

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Capitol Commission Georgia

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and would be prepared for his visit (v. 6). Not only was the Apostle's communication wise, but also it was courteous and loving so that his visit was not tumultuous, especially considering that the visit may be fairly lengthy (vv. 6-7). Nevertheless, all plans were carefully conditioned as based upon the Lord's permission (v. 7).

One indication of a mature relationship with the Lord is that we do not think we control our future (i.e. we are masters of our fate and captains of our destiny, as Invictus foolishly believed). Wisdom is evident in recognizing that the Lord's plans may differ from our own, and thus we must communicate prudently so that others do not think a change in plans is the result of some capricious reason. All the qualifications – “perhaps,” “or even,” “I hope,” “if the Lord permits” (vv. 6-7) – demonstrate acuity so that confusion does not ensue.

... ALL PLANS WERE CAREFULLY CONDITIONED AS BASED UPON THE LORD'S PERMISSION. ...

“Instead, *you ought* to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that’” (Jas 4:15). The brevity of human life, and the need for wisdom to live well in light of this fact is also noted frequently in the Old Testament. For example, life is a “breath” (Job 7:7; Ps 39:5, 11; 144:4); it is like grass that withers (Ps 103:15-16; Isa 40:6), and similar to chaff that is scattered by the wind (Isa 40:23-24; Hos 13:3).

“THE SUREST SIGN OF GOD'S WILL AND GOD'S POWER IS THE DEVIL'S GROWL.”

Many relationship conflicts are the result of a failure to qualify statements that are regarded by others as absolute (e.g. “you promised,” to which one replies, “that was my intent”). Tremendous care is needed in expressing intentions or plans, so that they are always dependent upon God's providential working of circumstances (i.e. “if the Lord permits”). Conflicts and disappointments would be far less if our intentions and plans were carefully qualified.

The intent to “remain in Ephesus” was the result of “a wide door for effective *service*” (1 Cor 16:8). Nevertheless, there were “many adversaries.” Does it not seem to be a law that in pursuing the eternal purposes and will of God that spiritual opportunity is always accompanied by opposition? If the Lord God is using you, the devil is certainly fighting against you. Charles Spurgeon, the prince of preachers, once remarked, “The surest sign of God's will and God's power is the devil's growl.”

We all need someone to convince us in the midst of personal timidity (vv. 10-11). Not everyone is the same. Some people can be a marvelous blessing in our lives; however, because they may be timid, we might miss that occasion. Still others may need to be urged for different reasons than being hesitant (v. 12). The fact that Apollos was urged “to come now” proves the importance of godly leadership.

REMEMBER TO EXHORT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

(16:13-24) First Corinthians concludes with several exhortations (16:13-14). *First*, one is urged to “be on the alert,” especially to expect the Lord's return (cf. Mark 13:35; Acts 20:30; Col 4:2; 1 Thess 5:6). *Second*, for one to “stand firm in the faith” is to affirm commitments in the midst of adversity and strife (cf. Phil 1:27; 4:1; 2 Thess 2:15). The *third* and *fourth* commands are closely related: “act like men, be strong.” The expressions are derived from several Old Testament passages in which men and women are encouraged to be strong and courageous (cf. Josh 1:6-7; 2 Sam 10:12), which is possible because the victory is sure through the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:33). *Fifthly*, we should remember the importance of a theme that has been dominant throughout First Corinthians, that is, love. The reminder to do all “in love” was important for those who were overwhelmed with strife.

The mention of love resulted in several final issues to be mentioned (1 Cor 16:15-18), particularly to respect the godly leadership of certain individuals. Gratitude could be demonstrated by helping “in the work and labors” of those with challenging responsibilities (cf. Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5:5). Certain people are to be acknowledged because they bear Christ's authority in their service, which is the means of their ability to refresh the spirit of others (1 Cor 16:18).

THE REMINDER TO DO ALL “IN LOVE” WAS IMPORTANT FOR THOSE WHO WERE OVERWHELMED WITH STRIFE.

Good relations between local churches are always a priority. For instance, the New Testament conveys greetings from one church to another (vv. 19-20). Unfortunately, there are times in which local churches (and even Christian leaders) attempt to rival one another. Scripture demands affection and respect for all believers. In light of the unity of affection and faith, believers are encouraged to express love to one another. The adjective “holy” indicates that nothing romantic or sexual is involved (v. 20).

To be consistent with the spirit of affection, the Apostle Paul wrote a final greeting in his own hand (since he typically used an amanuensis for most of his writings), and also to authenticate the inerrancy and inspiration of 1 Corinthians. A malediction (“accursed”) and a benediction (“Maranatha”) conclude the letter. Curses are upon the one who will not receive the Word of the Lord and who persists in opposing the work of Jesus Christ. As concerns love for God and fellow believers, Amen (“may it be so”).

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the honor to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers teach ongoing verse-by-verse Bible studies for the entire Capitol community, and also meet personally with many government leaders (and their staff) to proclaim God's grace, to encourage our leaders, pray with them, and provide biblical counsel. Capitol Commission is a charitable and religious nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Capitol Commission is supported by the generous gifts of businesses, churches, and individuals. Capitol Commission is not state-funded; rather, those with a heart for the Capitol community fund it. *Please join us in this ministry!*

**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:
TUESDAY, 2 DECEMBER @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP
(always the 1st Tuesday of each month, during interim)**

