**DO EVERYTHING IN LOVE**

1 Corinthians 16:1-24

Key Verse 13-14

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.”

**Introduction**



 In this passage Paul gives final words to Corinthian believers. He gave them instruction about offering for the poor and shared his journey plan to Corinth. He also encouraged them to welcome his coworkers who were sent to help Corinthian believers. He also expressed his love and shepherd heart toward them in his greetings. Paul himself experienced the love of Jesus personally. He was a compassionate shepherd who had the heart of Jesus. Above all Paul was a good shepherd for his flocks despite many issues in troubled the Corinthian church. We see his personal care for the saints and heart of love for God’s people in his epilogue to the Corinthians. He encouraged the flocks of God in Corinth by saying, “Do everything in love.” God may bless us to stand firm in the gospel faith and practice the love of Christ in our practical daily walks of life. May God bless us to learn the shepherd heart of Jesus by becoming doers of his love through today’s message!

**1. Read verses 1-4. What did Paul ask the Corinthian believers to do? (1-2, Ro 15:25-27) How did Paul advise them to use their offerings? (3, 4) What can we learn from Paul’s instruction about offering?**

**1-1. Read verses 1-4.**

 *Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 3 Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.*

1-2. **What did Paul ask the Corinthian believers to do?** (1-2, Ro 15:25-27)

***Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.***

***25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord’s people there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord’s people in Jerusalem. 27 They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. (Ro 15:25-27)***

· The collection for the Lord’s people: It was collection to support believers in Jerusalem. There were poor believers in Jerusalem church (Ro 15:25-27) Also there was big famine in Israel area at that time (Acts 11:28)

· Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to help the brothers in poverty.

· It should be encouraged to take care of brothers and sisters in need through practical support such as financial support.

· Offering for the poor is expression of grace, the way of having fellowship with other brothers and sisters in the Lord, expression of service, and expression of blessing.

· Many churches participated in the collection to support Jerusalem church at that time. It helped for unity between believers in Jerusalem and Gentile church believers. Also they were bound in love through this expression of love.

. Sharing with others is a beautiful thing in the sight of God. When we give our contributions to the needy, we have to do it cheerfully and voluntarily. God loves a cheerful giver.

. Why should we offer our money to God? We believe that God is the source of all material blessings. God as the creator of the heavens and the earth is the giver of all things. Therefore, we share our possessions with others. Then God will open heavenly treasure and pour out his blessings when we offer money to God as our thanks.

. Paul also encouraged the Corinthian Christians to collect money to assist other Christians in spite of their spiritual problems. In this way they were able to participate in God’s work and had inner strength to outgrow their problems as well. Thank God!

 ***On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made*.**

- First day of every week : the day after Sabbath, Lord’s day( celebrate Jesus’ resurrection)

- The collection(offering) happens on the Lord’s day.

- Each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income : Everyone is supposed to participate in the offering not just those who have much money. People can offer according to their income. It is right for the rich to offer more because they received more from the Lord who gave them ability to collect more.

- Offering should be offered after being well prepared. It is because we offer it with our hearts together. It is good to prepare in advance with heart instead of offering in a hurry without preparation.

**1-3. How did Paul advise them to use their offerings? (3, 4)**

 ***I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem***

 – Paul didn’t want to carry the collection to Jerusalem. Instead he let others carry it to avoid any kind misunderstanding or suspicion about the collection.

· We should manage church finance wisely to avoid any misunderstanding.

  ***If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me*.**

–Paul didn’t know whether he needed to go with the people who were carrying the collection or not. He wanted to go if the amount would be big. Paul ended up going with them because they got big collection. (Act 20:4)

**1-4. What can we learn from Paul’s instruction about offering?**

· We need to share what we have with other brothers and sisters who are in need through our offering.

· Offering should be prepared in advance with our heart.

· Supporting other brothers and sisters through offering is the practical way of support and building up unity and loving relationship.

**2. Read verses 5-12. What was Paul's journey plan? (5-7) Why was he compelled to stay in Ephesus despite opposition? (8-9) What instructions did Paul give regarding Timothy? (10-11, 4:16-17) Why did Paul mention Apollos? (12)**

**2-1. Read verses 5-12.**

 After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. 6 Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7 For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.10 When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. 11 No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.

12 Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was quite unwilling to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity.

**2-2. What was Paul's journey plan? (5-7)**

  ***After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia.***

*–*Paul was writing this letter at Ephesus, Paul’s original plan wasto visit Corinth first and go to Macedonia and come back to Corinth and leave for Jerusalem(Act 19:21, 2Co 1:16). But he planned to go to Macedonia first.

 ***Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go.***

– As he planned Paul stayed in Corinth during end of A.D 57 and early A.D 58 for three months. While he staying there he helped the church to solve the problem. He also wrote book of Romans during this period.(Act 20:1-3). Paul encouraged Corinthians to support his mission journey by providing what he needed so that the church may participate in the mission. Church can serve the world mission by supporting the missionaries.

 ***For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits.***

*-* Paul didn’t want to visit them just for the offering for the poor but wanted to help them to solve the problem. He was a good shepherd who spent time with his sheep and struggle together to help them to solve the problem even though it was tough and unpleasant work.

· If the Lord permits- Paul serve God’s work according to God’s will. He really took care of things as God’s servant. Even though he eagerly wanted to spend time in Corinth because of their problem but still he wanted to follow God’s will. Also he acknowledged God’s sovereignty for all things because he knew that if God doesn’t permit his plan cannot be done. We can do things as much as God permits. As his servant we should seek his will first all the time humbly recognizing his sovereignty.

**2-3. Why was he compelled to stay in Ephesus despite opposition? (8-9)**

 ***But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.***

· Paul wanted to stay at Ephesus because he had great chance to preach the gospel (Acts 14:27) but he had to leave Ephesus because of opposition (Act 19, 20:1)

· Paul wanted to use all the opportunities to preach the gospel and make disciples as effective work even though he faced a lot of oppositions. We should not be fearful of opposition and preach the gospel boldly if there is any chance. If we stop preaching because of the opposition we are losing to Satan.

**2-4. What instructions did Paul give regarding Timothy? (10-11, 4:16-17)**

 ***When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. 11 No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers*.**

 **Paul sent Timothy first to deal with Corinthian church problem. *17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. (1Co 4:16-17)***

· Paul was a strong, powerful leader. But Timothy was timid and shy. Paul worried that in the troublesome Corinthian church some members would intimidate Timothy and make him fearful. Proud people offend God, and God's servants. Selfish people create an atmosphere of criticism and division.

. So Paul warned the Corinthians, "...see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am". When the Corinthians respected Timothy, as they did Paul, God would bless them.

. Paul knew Timothy very well and made a good environment for Timothy to serve God’s flocks in Corinth without any problem. Paul’s personal care for Timothy was great. Timothy was lucky to have such caring shepherd as his spiritual father. We see Paul’s personal touch everywhere.

. Paul wanted Corinthians to welcome Timothy and let him deal with the issues without fear. Paul knew that people could despise him because of his young age and there were some people who would oppose with false teaching.

· Paul encouraged them to treat Timothy gently that he may carry on the work and let him come back in peace.

· Timothy was the most trusted coworker to Paul. He was great help to Paul and worked together with Paul that he may serve God’s work powerfully and effectively. We should make effort to be the Lord’s trustworthy servants and be useful coworkers to other servants.

· We have to support God’s servants to do the work of the Lord without fear and discouragement. We should support them to do God’s work with joy and encouragement. Discouraging God’s servant is discouraging the work of the Lord.

**2-5. Why did Paul mention Apollos? (12)**

 ***Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was quite unwilling to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity*.**

· Corinthian church people might want Apollos to come for the issues that they had. Apollos was popular among Corinthians. Paul encouraged him to go with other brothers but he was not willing probably because of his other work. But Paul mentioned that Apollos would go when he would have opportunity.

**3. Read verses 13-24. What was Paul’s exhortation? (13-14) Why is it important to do everything in love? Why did Paul urge the Corinthians to submit to Stephanas and his coworkers? (15-18) What can we learn from Paul’s greetings? (19-24)**

**3-1. Read verses 13-24.**

 *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. 14 Do everything in love.15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, 16 to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. 17 I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition 19 The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla[a] greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. 20 All the brothers and sisters here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.* 21 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord[b]! 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.24 My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**3-2. What was Paul’s exhortation? (13)**

***· Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith***

- Paul encouraged Corinthians to be on guard against false teaching and stand firm on the gospel of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

· We hear many false teachings and wrong messages from the world and even within the churches. We should guard ourselves with the words of God and stand firm on the gospel of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

 ***be courageous; be strong***

– we should be courageous and strong for keeping our faith and practicing and preaching the gospel of Jesus.

**3-3. Why is it important to do everything in love? (14)**

 ***Do everything in love.***

· Paul reemphasized doing all things in love. Everything should be done out of love and all things we should be our expression of love.

· Whatever we do, the purpose of doing things should be bearing fruit of love.

· The love is the best and love is the ultimate fruit that we should bear in Jesus.

· When we do things in love, the action is beautiful and meaningful and we can bear fruit inside and out.

**3-4. Why did Paul urge the Corinthians to submit to Stephanas and his coworkers? (15-18)**

 ***15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people. I urge you, brothers and sisters,***

· Stephanas and his household were converted when Paul preached the gospel in Athens area. They devoted themselves to serve other believers. They were the good example of converted Christian.

· Once we became Christian we are supposed to devote ourselves to serve Jesus’ church and his people.

 **\*\*16 *submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it.***

- Paul encouraged the Corinthians to follow Stephanas and his household example and do the same thing.

- Paul recognized their leadership and urged the Corinthians "to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it"

- This verse shows that Paul’s successful mission life came from his personal care and appreciation to the people around him. Many think that Paul was fruitful because he was a systematic theologian. But this is not true.

- Paul was fruitful because he regarded his coworkers as precious servants of God. To be a successful gospel worker, we must pay a careful attention to our helpers and fellow members in each fellowship.

  ***17 I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition***

· Fortunatus and Achaicus were known as slaves or used be slaves. They served the word of Lord together with Stephanas.

· They have supplied what was lacking from you. – Corinthians lacked love of sharing. The three servants delivered Paul’s love and words for the Corinthians.

· The three servants also delivered Corinthians’ love for Paul to him. Through this Paul was refreshed and Corinthians were also refreshed.

· Paul encouraged them to recognize them. Those who bring comfort and refreshment to other believers through their service are supposed to be recognized.

· The beautiful story of serving others is always encouraging to those who hear of it.

**3-5 What can we learn from Paul’s greetings? (19-24)**

 ***The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.***

· Paul greeted as representative of churches in Asia (Asia minor). Paul was in Ephesus at that time. Aquila and Priscilla helped Paul when he was establishing Corinthian church.

 ***All the brothers and sisters here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.***

* holy kiss : kissing forehead as expression of unity and intimacy. Kiss is a symbol of love. Love covers multitude of sins and gives us life.
* Though Paul had said many things to them in his letter, some of which were hard to digest, he ends with the grace of Christ, and love.
* The grace of Christ is greater than all our sin. The love of God unites us in the body of Christ, even though we have many weaknesses and problems.

 ***21 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.***

*- For* Most of Paul’s letter, writers wrote down as Paul dictated. But for the last part, especially greeting part, Paul wrote in his own hand to show that the letter was from personal his love and care.

 ***22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord!***

*-* ‘let that person be cursed’ Paul said the word to give the warning to the people in Corinthian church who didn’t listen to the word of God keeping their own thoughts and false teaching without love for God.

- Come, Lord : it was longing for Jesus’ coming with the hope that Jesus will finish all the conflicts and unrighteous things and suffering.

 ***23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.***

*-* Even though Corinthian church had much problem, Paul still wished Lord’s grace may be with them so that they may get mature in love.

  ***24 My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.***

- Paul showed his love to all Corinthians believers despite of all their problems.

**Conclusion**

 It is right to support brothers and sisters who are in need through practical support such as financial provision according to God’s wisdom. It is also right to support God’s servants who are doing the work of the Lord. By supporting the servants we can support the work of the Lord. We need to do everything in love so that we may bear fruit of love through whatever we do. Supporting each other in love is the greatest way to build up Jesus’ church and God’s work of salvation. Apostle Paul set a good example as a caring shepherd with Jesus’ mindset and love. May the Lord help us to grow in the love of Jesus! Knowledge puffs up but love builds up!

**One word: Do everything in love!**