

Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians 16

To successfully move forward into the future, we must have a good financial plan.

- Poor Planning is the Perfect Pathway to Panic.
- If you fail to plan you plan to fail.
- SYSTEM: *Saving You Stress Time Energy Money*
- Jesus said...who goes to build a tower who doesn't sit down first and get his plan together and determine whether he has the resources to build?

Notice, Paul had a Financial Plan

- Here is what we're going to do, how we're going to do it, and the system we're going to use to insure proper management and disbursement of it. He had a plan for revenue, expenses, internal control of cash, etc...

Notice this plan...

The when in the plan: "Upon the first day of the week" (v. 2)

Giving was to be systematic.

The who in the plan: "Everyone" (v. 2)

- Paul expected everyone to give something every time, whether they were rich or poor!
- Even in the law of Moses, no one was exempted from giving an offering.
- God doesn't intend for you to be a Hoarder. He intends for you to be a giver.
- Our entire salvation has been based upon giving, for it is God who gave His only begotten son.
- An open heart cannot maintain a closed hand.

The where in the plan: "Lay by him in store" (v. 2)

- In the Greek, he uses the present tense of the verb "*to lay by him in store*" to indicate that every believer must do so regularly.

The what in the plan: "As God hath prospered him" (v. 2)

- Giving was to be proportionate.
- You only have what you have because of God's grace toward you!
- He is the one who has given you the power to get wealth.

The why in the plan: “That there be no gatherings when I come” (v. 2)

- Because he didn't want to be constantly talking about money and offerings when he came! (I wish he would write a letter to some Christian Television stations and some of the TV evangelists!--wait, he did. 1 Cor. 16!!!)

The management in the plan: “

- The money was to be handled honestly and with integrity.
 - The various churches involved in this special offering were to appoint delegates to help Paul manage it and take it safely to Jerusalem (See 2 Cor. 8:16-24...the “finance committee” that assisted Paul).
 - Paul was very careful not to allow anything to happen that would give his enemies opportunity to accuse him of a lack of financial integrity (2 Cor. 8:20-21).
- Every ministry ought to be businesslike in its financial affairs.

Beware of those who collect money from you but are vague about what happens to it.

- I've seen preachers who could preach the paint off the walls, but couldn't balance a checkbook.
- Every time they go to Walmart and write a check, they have to BIND THE SPIRIT OF TELECHECK to keep it from bouncing!
- They never succeeded, not because they couldn't preach, but because they couldn't administrate the ministry. They failed at taking the oversight.

Jesus said it like this in Luke 16:11,
“If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches.”

To successfully move forward into the future, we must seize God-given Opportunities (v. 9).

When I looked at this verse, I immediately saw the second half of a SWOT Analysis. SWOT is an acronym that stands for Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats

What is a SWOT Analysis or a SWOT matrix?

It is a **structured planning method** used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats involved in a project or business venture. It involves specifying the objective or the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective.

Notice, he mentions the last section of a SWOT analysis: Opportunities and Threats.

So Paul was not blind nor naive. He saw both the opportunities and the obstacles.

- Most people expect “smooth sailing” when they are in the will of God.
 - Too many people think adversity is proof they missed God’s will.
 - However, that was not the way Paul looked at it.
- Paul was saying the Lord had given him a great opportunity to share the Gospel in Ephesus, but there was much opposition.
 - **Great Opportunities and Great Opposition usually go together!**
 - But Paul didn’t run when the adversaries showed up.
 - He had just mentioned fighting with beasts at Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32), and the book of Acts records that he was eventually “run out of town,” nearly losing his life (Acts 19:23-20:1).
 - In Acts 16:9, Paul was directed by the Lord in a vision to preach in Macedonia, yet within just a matter of hours after he arrived there, he was in stocks in the lowest part of the prison.
 - **Most people would have thought they had missed God. But Anytime you go to do something for God, there will be opposition.**
 - **But you wouldn’t even know anything about David if it wasn’t for Goliath!**

Attack is the proof that your enemy anticipates your success!

Losers focus on what they are going THROUGH; Champions focus on what they are going TO!

Paul practiced “Spirit-led Decision Making.” He was sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

v. 4: If it be meet that I go also...

v. 6: And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you...

v. 7: I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit

- **His plans were dependent on God’s providential leading:** “if the Lord permit.”
- We see this in Acts 16:6-8 “...they were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia...they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.”
- Your spirit knows more than your mind does, because the HS dwells in your spirit, and He is omniscient. He’s all knowing.
- The Holy Spirit is the best Global Positioning System one could ever have!
 - After we’ve done all we can to determine the leading of the Lord, we must decide and act.
 - The key is that we sincerely want to do His will. If we miss it, we believe that he will work in such a way that we will then know the will of God.
 - Remember, He guides us “for his name’s sake” (Ps. 23:3), and it is His reputation that is at stake.
 - The key is we need to depend on God’s Word generally, and the voice of the Holy Spirit specifically, as our guide.
 - Once we are assured through these, and have a green light, we should move forward.
 - **And if God be for you, it doesn’t matter who or what is against you!**

Many people are so afraid to make a mistake, that they make no decision at all.

People have the tendency to talk things to death.

I was born on a Tuesday, was in church on Sunday, and haven't missed since. And 45 years in church has taught me that after all is said and done, more has been said than done.

- **Eph. 5:15-16 NIV** says, “Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”
 - **No Christian can afford to kill time or waste opportunities.**
 - **Once we know what to do, we must do it and not delay.**
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To successfully move forward into the future, we must guard ourselves spiritually (16:13-14).

Watch Ye (v. 13)

- Be alert, be on guard against evil.
- Evil is so subtle, it has to be watched and guarded against constantly.
- Failure to “watch” can result in being blindsided by evil and temptation.

Stand Fast in the faith (v. 13)

- False teachers abounded in Corinth who endeavored to lead the saints astray into false doctrine.
- We need to be so grounded in biblical truth that we fail to be blown about by every wind of doctrine.

Quit ye like men (v. 13)

- The word quit is short for acquit--to perform or act.
- It was a call to courageous manliness at an hour when mature leadership was needed.
- In other words, GROW UP!
- So many church members belong in the nursery spiritually.
- They react to every affront like a child. Constantly whimpering around.

Be strong (v. 13)

- In Joshua chapter one, God repeatedly emphasizes to Joshua that he is to be strong and courageous.
- Paul had many adversaries. When you're a true leader, you're going to make some people mad. It just comes with the territory.
 - And if you're not strong, you'll never make it in the ministry!

Let all things be done with charity (v. 14)

- Even manliness needs to be balanced with love, lest leadership become dictatorship.
 - Notice with Apollos that Paul didn't Lord over him, but allowed him to make his own decision (v. 12).
 - Carl Sandburg, when addressing the United States Congress, said that Abraham Lincoln was a man of "velvet steel."
 - That is a good image for the Christian to borrow, for true manliness does not exclude tenderness.
 - Christian leadership is the perfect balance between strength and gentleness.
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To successfully move forward into the future, we must have people.

- **Money and opportunities are valueless without people.**
- The church's greatest asset is people, and yet too often the church takes people for granted.
- Jesus invested three years training His disciples so they might seize the opportunities He would present them.
- If people are prepared, then God will supply both the opportunities and the money so that His work will be accomplished.

• The Honor for the Helpers (1:15-16)

- Paul was desirous that those who were helpers in the Lord's work should be duly recognized and respected.
- **"Everyone"** who helped Paul was to be honored.
 - There were no big "I's" and little "you's."
- **"Helpeth"** means to cooperate, work together.
 - Those who helped Paul were not hindering him.

- Sometimes people in church think they are helping when in fact they are hindering.
- Always remember, we're in the ministry of helps, not the ministry of hurts!
- **“Laboreth”**--the character of the conduct to be honored was hard work.
 - “Laboreth” means to toil to fatigue and to toil even in pain.”
 - Thus Paul is speaking of extraordinary work.
 - Today we do so little and expend very little effort but expect much reward and respect.
 - However, Paul is asking for honor for those who have merited honor in serving the Lord.
- **The Help from the Helpers (v. 17-18)**
- “I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus.”
 - The coming of these three men to visit and help Paul brought much rejoicing to Paul.
 - He said, “For they have refreshed my spirit” (v. 18).
 - **You’ll be remembered for one of two things: The Problems you solve, or the problems you create.**
 - **Be a problem solver, not a problem creator.**

“For that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.”

- They made up the slack that was caused by the deficient support by the Corinthians.

“They have refreshed my spirit and yours.”

- They not only gave good help, but their very presence was a blessing and an inspiration.

“Therefore acknowledge ye them that are such”

- Paul began this section by insisting that those who help in the Lord’s work should be supported by giving them due respect and he ends this section the same way.
 - **“Acknowledge them”**--this word involves learning about their helpers’ work and lauding the workers. Paul insists that the believers in Corinth support these helpers by giving these servants due honor.

- The church today has a tendency to honor the unhonorable but not those deserving honor, and as a result it discourages much service in the Lord's work.

Notice, Paul was not only a soul-winner, he was a friend maker!

- In this chapter he mentions: Timothy, Apollos, Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, Aquilla and Priscilla, etc...

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Let us learn...

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