

## **“FINAL THOUGHTS?”**

**(1Corinthians 16:1-24)**

*May 7, 2016*

**Paul begins with a healthy corrective.**

### **I. The COLLECTION**

**Paul had been faithful to urge the churches wherever he went to participate in a special offering for Jerusalem. He had several reasons:**

**1. Paul's friends and acquaintances were SUFFERING.**

**That made it PERSONAL.**

**2. The gift might draw Jewish and Gentile believers CLOSER.**

**He also lays out details for taking the collection: do it WEEKLY when they gather to worship; give in relation to how God has BLESSED you; designate some TRUSTWORTHY men to take the offering to Jerusalem and decide if you need Paul to accompany them; do it ahead of time, not waiting for Paul to arrive.**

**The principles are SOUND ones.**

### **II. The COMMITMENT**

**Paul lays out his TENTATIVE plans to the Corinthians regarding a future visit with them. In the meantime, he is staying in Ephesus a while for two reasons: there is an open door there for God's work. He must SEIZE the opportunities.**

**Secondly, there are those who OPPOSE him. Paul may be hoping that his letter will calm the waters and make his future visit more FRUITFUL.**

### **III. The COWORKERS**

**Jesus Christ did not call Lone Rangers to the ministry – EVEN Paul. Every one of his letters mentions several others, who were crucial to the advancement of the Gospel.**

**Stephanas, Fortunatas and Achaicus have just arrived to encourage and support Paul. We ALL need that.**

#### **IV. The CHALLENGES**

**There will be challengers to the Gospel, challengers to the Scriptures, challengers to the resurrection, challengers to the truth. There ALWAYS are.**

**The church must stand strong – TOGETHER.**

#### **V. The CLOSING words**

**Paul now says he is picking up the pen to write the closing words in his own hand.**

**The first words SEEM harsh – but it really cements the fact that Paul is an unabashed evangelist who tells it like it is.**

**Anyone who does not love the Lord IS cursed! They ARE doomed for eternity and Paul wants to remind the church, so that they don't forget their mission.**

**It is by God's grace that we are saved – there is NO other way.**

**The words of encouragement and the words of correction throughout this letter have all come out of the SAME deep source – Paul's love for the church – in Christ Jesus.**

**Amen, indeed!**