

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

Acts 18

INTRODUCTION:

The city was situated on isthmus connected by the upper part of Greece with the lower part. The government was proconsular. Whenever the government of a Roman province is called proconsul - that means that it is senatorial province. If it is (imperial) province, then the emperor at Rome appoints without any council it's chief officer. And the very word proconsul proves that this was a senatorial province.

This church then was located with a seaport to the East and to the West and had (facilities) for transporting commerce across the isthmus. It is believed that it was a prominent place for commerce.

Standing high above the city is the mountain capped with buildings. One could see into both seas. The upper and the lower parts of Greece.

It was also famous for games - where athletics were held. Athletes from all parts of the world competed in boxing, foot racing, and in throwing quoits. I suppose this would be what we call in modern times, the football game which is played around the world.

The athletes from far and near contested here in the games and sports and business, pleasure and profit, lecture and pride, riches and poverty, wickedness and crime - made it the most wicked city since Sodom and Gomorrah.

record tells us that he was there a year and a half with sometime before and many days afterwards. So we might be correct in saying he spent about two years here at Corinth. Paul went from Athens to Corinth. He went here by himself. Timothy was at Athens. Silas was at Berea. And Luke had remained at Philippi. And he was alone when he arrived here at Corinth. Upon his arrival, of course, our story tonight is - The Church At Corinth. I would like to discuss this under three heads and you may take down notes of the outline for your future reference.

- I. The Development Of The Church.
- II. Disorders Within the Church.
- III. Directions For the Church.

I think these three things summerize Paul's activities here with reference to this church.

I. The Development Of The Church - Acts 18:1

And Paul departed from Athens.

V. 2 - And he found a certain Jew named Aquila. And his wife Priscilla. It is interesting to note that when Paul arrived he was heart-sick at what he had seen but his first acquaintances here were a devout Jewish couple - Aquila and Priscilla. They were natives of Pontus on the Black Sea. And they were later expelled from Rome. And upon his arrival in this new place, he made contact with this married couple. They were dedicated. They were good and both of them were great people. They lived part of their time in Rome and Claudius at that time had vanished his Jews from Rome. So being Jews, they came over to Corinth.

It was also a celebrated city in that they had a temple of Venus. This was a goddess who was worshipped in the most vile way. The worship of Aphrodite Venus had a thousand priestess, who were dedicated to it and this made Corinth a cesspool of impurity.

The word Corinthian became a synonym for pollution.

The men of this city worshipped the almighty dollar. And they drank deep of the fountain of pleasure. As they rested in luxury, waller in vice, and lived for the things seen and temporal.

Their theatres, temples, were decked with gold.

Now the colony of Corinth was founded by Caesar and in Paul's time the Roman proconsul resided here. It was the appointee of the Senate. Being the center of trade, a resort for pleasure, it was also the seat of political power. His heart was sick over the idolatry of Athens. His spirit was sad over this cultured environment and yet a sinful place.

Historians tell us that if you wanted to think of the condition of the Corinthians, you would simply think of Sodom and Gomorrah. They had the highest culture in the world but religion was rotten in the sight of God. One historian said, no decent tongue could describe what occurred under the name of religion. It was just as common and everyday as eating a family meal. It was a commercial place of great importance. A place where games from all over the world were played. A place where there was vanity, races, all forms of gambling.

There were a multitude of Jews there. The place contained a multitude of slaves. Not Negro slaves but captives of war (of any nation) who had been brought in and reduced to slavery. Paul was here for nearly two years. The

Now we find these people at Rome. And we found them at Ephesus last week. And in Rome they had a church in their own home. Now there is no use talking about a faithful New Testament, and living outside of the church. If there wasn't a church, then these two Christians would establish one. I always enjoy reading about this. They are the ones who take young preachers in charge, who haven't learned all about the Gospel, and teach them. And they help them from making mistakes. They are a very fatherly and motherly couple.

When Paul arrived here, we know that he first went about his own labor. And he really didn't make enough to live on. Paul made these wise and choice friends.

And this is an index of good advice today. When you go to a new place - in a strange city, what you enter is important. There are those who enter the theatre. There are those who go to the race track. There are those who go to the dance hall. There are those who go to the gambling hall. And then, there are those who go to the House of God.

When Paul went to Corinth - he did not go to the temple of Venus. He did not go to the arena for the games. Nor did he go to the marketplace. But he went to the synagogue. Now all of these places were open on the Sabbath day. Just like Chesapeake, Norfolk, Chicago, New York. Paul stayed at that place and he chose the best place. He went here to bear good tidings to the Jews. He was working with his hands for substance for six days and every seventh day he preached and tried to win over both Jews and Greeks. Single-handedly and alone he labored until the arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia.

Paul knew the situation there in that city. And if you read the 2 Cor. you will find out that he did not ask these people at that time for support.

He later asked them, however, to forgive him for doing them a wrong. Because for two years he had supported himself and he felt that they should have supported the preacher and really it was a slam on them. But he had a special reason. Everybody in Corinth worked (for gain) and this preacher came - the first question to be asked was what ax has he to grind. What selfish interest does he have. He is working (for the money). And so seeing the public Senate ^{front} he is determined that they should not give him a nickle. He claimed, however, that he had a right to a living. He worked so hard everyday, to get enough to support him, that he could use the 7th day, the Sabbath - in discussing the Scriptures with those who gathered at the synagogue.

v.4
In the development of the church, Paul used as his theme that Jesus is the Messiah. The Messiah of the Old Testament, Jesus of Nazareth. The Jewish Messiah was to be a suffering Messiah. And Jesus was that Messiah. Acts. 18:4. He read the Scripture - and it said that he persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Now of course, the Jews opposed him and meet with the usual results. Jesus had given instructions about his apostles. Shaking off the dust of their feet. As a witness against those who rejected them. Luke 9:5. Paul and Barnabas had obeyed these instructions literally. Acts 13:5.

v.6
Now for the second time we read in Acts 18:6, and when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

v.7
The opposition was tremendous. And so all that Paul did was declare himself free because he had delivered the message to them. The Bible seems to say that he went across the street to another house or else to the house next door - in the 7th Verse. Where he entered the house of a man named Justus. This man

worshipped God and it said that his house joined hard to the synagogue. Paul continued his discussions, with a group who followed him, and he continued to preach.

V, 8
Crispus (V. 8) the chief leader of the synagogue believed on the Lord and so did all of his household. Now all of this preaching was heard in that house. Evidently there was no such eloquence - but the converting power of the Spirit. It was not earthly wisdom but it was the hidden wisdom which had entered into the heart of this man.

Paul was not sensational - he did not use philosophical themes. He had one persistent unchangeable theme. Jesus Christ, in him crucified. And so he had nothing he would boast upon.

From time to time many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and they were baptized. These prominent men such as Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanus. All had the distinction of being baptized by Paul.

Now Silas and Timothy baptized the other converts. And here as everywhere, the subject is mentioned - faith preceded baptism. Here also is significant concerning baptism. Paul actually thanked God, that he baptized only a few. A statement that would lead us to know that baptism does not bring regeneration.

I Cor. 1:14. Paul says that I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius. Lest these could say that I have baptized in my own name. He was there to proclaim the good news to them and of course the development of his church - Paul was discouraged and depressed at times. Even as a preacher might be today. The heaviness of the responsibility, makes for discouragement.

And Paul was carrying a heavy load. He had reached a place of discouragement.

Here in the development of his church and he had to move to another house. Perhaps if we think of our own situation and think of Paul - Paul had a strainuous life. Manual labor six days and preaching on the 7th. This was enough for a strong man to stand and of course this may be why one little boy once said, in connection with his concept of preaching. Somebody asked him - would you not like to be a preacher. The preacher has (nothing to do six days. I want something to do everyday.)

V, 3
Paul with his poverty and inadequate food - wages were very low. And he was poor and perhaps half starved. Acts 18:3 - he was a tent maker. He was not robust. And he said here at Corinth - I was with you in weakness and in fear. There was bitter and hard opposition. The Jews opposed him with their prejudices and their pride. And I think Paul must have had some dread of personal violence. He was a sensible man and did not want to die.

The care of the churches. The Galatian Churches had already grieved him and he would protect the faith and not their turning away from the Gospel. This added anguish to Paul's spirit, as he endeavored to correct their views through the two Epistles written from Corinth. The unconsecrated wealth. Where trade flourished and wealth was a plenty. Men and their morals decayed. There was trouble with the devil, with prostitution.

I imagine that Paul lost a great deal of (sleep) He labored perhaps long hours and then had a great deal of anxiety which disturbed even the quiet hours which he had. And this was a mental reaction for Paul to be what we would say, (down in the dumps.) The sky was black in all of his distresses and his troubles.

v. 9

Now this took place during the development of the church there. God came to his relief. Just as God appeared to Moses at the burning bush and Joshua at Jericho. Paul had many visions. He had one in Jerusalem following the last trial. Acts. 23:11. The Lord assured him that he must bear witness in Rome. He had a second vision in a storm on a voyage to Rome. Acts 27:23. God assured him that all aboard would be spared and that he would stand before Caesar. The third time, Acts 18:9, the Lord comes in a vision to his servant. He tells him to be not afraid. But speak. Hold not thy peace. I am with thee and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee - for I have much people in this city."

It is enough to break an iron nerve. But God says yours shall not break. Dismiss your fears, go on speaking. There are many people who are blind to heathenism. They are captured by sin. You do not know who they are. Neither do they know that I know. And I will call them through your preaching.

That vision brought to him two or three things. First, keep a stout heart. Second, keep on preaching. Third, no one shall hurt you. And Fourth, I have much people in this city. Because I am with you.

The Jews persist in spiritual blindness and they resisted the best man of their race. And for a considerable time, Paul evangelized here in Corinth. Multitudes were saved. I Cor. 6:9. All sorts of fornicators, idolators, thieves, drunkards, and even unmentionable sins. And Paul addressed himself to the problem. And he presented to them a new way of life. A higher code of morals. And a motive for conquering corruption. This is the age long struggle we have had in the churches of Christ against intemperance, immorality, and social vice. Trying to get men to live purer lives. To correct the impure environment.

It required two years for Paul to establish this church that was distracted by luxury, theatre, the show, the dance, and prostitution. There is probably not a church in all of our bounds whose members are guilty of the gross immorality that shamed the Corinthians.

But Paul helps us to see the church in it's strength and it's weakness, it's lights and it's shadows, it's scars and it's wrinkles. Many of these people, virtue and vice were nothing in themselves. And they felt that they could cultivate and enjoy all of these. And that since vice did not cause pain - they could continue with this same passion.

Paul sought to develop this church on the foundation described in I. Cor. 3:10 according to the grace of God which was given to me as a wise master builder - I layed a foundation, for other foundations no one can lay which is Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the development was accordance with the hymn - the church is one foundation, is Jesus Christ, her Lord. She is his new creation by water and the Word. From Heaven he came and sought her, to be his holy bride. And with his own blood he bought her, and for her life, he died.

Paul brought in conceited Jews - cultured Greeks. Some free men, some were slaves, some were high rank in society. Many of them were from the humble stations of life. This congregation was a mixed congregation of all kinds of people and all classes. I Cor. 1:17. Those that had personal vanity. I Cor. 2:21. Those who had a disposition for intellectual things. I Cor. 5:2. Those who were lax in manners and morals. I Cor. 5:11, 6:9. And those who denied even the idea of a future life. I Cor. 13.

II. Disorders Within The Church

1 Cor. 1:10

In the development of the church we discover that they had some noteable conversions. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue - and his entire family. Stephanus, and all of his household. Erastus, who was a man of influence. And then a large number of the lower class of people. Slaves, debased men - some of them were liars, some were drunkards, some thieves - subject to all sorts of beastly life.

In less than 3 years elapsed after Paul first visited and developed this church, we discover that information reached him that the disorder - deplorable things were taking place in the congregation.

The household of Chloe were his informants. He would not listen to secret slander. He must know for sure what was taking place. He talked with Stephanus. He also sent Timothy to conduct a private inquiry. There was no ground for accusing a brother in the church. Paul felt, unless there was facts to substantiate it. But they accused themselves. He praised their virtues and he investigated thoroughly the facts that needed to be corrected. What an example for all preachers, and all church leaders. By letter, by personal representative, and by a personal visit - Paul sought to take care of serious situations. What were the conditions.

First, there was the division over preachers. Four factions had developed in the church and brought about a disorder.

Apollos - one factions preferred him as a preacher. He was an eloquent man from Alexander - who had come to visit in Corinth. He preached there after Paul left. His sentences were stately and his language was correct. His voice was pleasing. His gestures were graceful. His presence was imposing and

impressive. Now this fact, depreciated Paul because he was a man of simple language, simple speech, and of ordinary appearance.

Peter - there was another faction who said that Peter is our kind of preacher. The Corinthians had never seen him. The brethren had come over from Judea and told them about Peter. And how that he could preach and move a congregation to tears.

A third group was a Paul group. Now they were for the founder of the church and they said that he was more zealous. He was the kind of preacher that suited them.

Fourth, there were those who called themselves Christians - they simply said, we are Christians. And we are proud of it. And so this perhaps, was one of the worst of all.

Paul did not encourage his friends - he rebuked them all. He would not be a part of dividing the church. Or of bringing about such a disorder. God would destroy the influence and usefulness of him who destroyed the church. And so these divisions did and do work destruction. To the preacher and to the cause he is interested in. Paul would exhalt Christ as the only unifying bond. He asked them, is Christ cut up. And parcelled out among you. Was I crucified for you. Did I baptize you.

How often do we hear disbutes about preachers - even in our own times. Now a great orator does not save men. The cross saves. Worldly wisdom did not devise the plan of salvation. And but few of the wise and great are saved. And when we begin to think of the man instead of the message - we are missing the truth. Preachers are only labors and of different efficiency. The substancial work is God's.

You put down all personal rivaries in the church - they are childish and unspiritual. Somehow, if after nearly 20 centuries, we only learn this lesson which Paul has taught us.

A second disorder had to do with morals. Now the contention over preachers was bad enough. It created an atmosphere in which other disorders grew. Jealousy was followed by immorality. In controversy, indifference, etc. Paul advised that the incestous persons be expelled, for his sake and for the sake of the church.

Paul's says if he were a Christian at heart - he would come back. Because the ll of evil permeates the whole lump. And offenders generally were not to be held in spiritual intercourse.

Contentions before the world were to be avoided. Grave crimes - such as law suits were being carried on. And Paul advised the brethren that they should not go to the law before the court. He said the saints will judge the world - and the church court is fair, more just, and less expensive. Now he says, this was given to the church - Paul's advise. Given to the city with the most complicated commercial life, where differences of oppinion might arise, between buyers and sellers - traders, masters, and slaves. And there was a bitter experience that should have taught God's people the truth. That there was a more excellent way as Christians.

There was a pioneer preacher in Virginia by the name of Samuel Harris. A man owed him some money. And told him that his family was in need. And asked him to pay it. He said I can't pay. The man said I want some wheat. You have a field of it. But the man said, I have other uses for it. Not until you sue for it. Brother Harris went and prayed. Dear Lord, shall I quit thy cause, to suit him - or wilt thou open up some other way. Harris kept on preaching. I

will become security for the payment. The preacher sent a receipted bill to the debtor. Not paid you - the debtor said. You said not til the end of a suit. And elder Harris said, I sued you at the court of Heaven.

Jesus agreed to pay me - so I have given you his discharge. In a short time the preacher received enough wheat to pay the debt in full.

Indifference to the conscience was causing disorder. They were eating the meat left over from the heathen sacrifices. Now this may not hurt an enlightened Christian - but the idol may mean nothing. But for unenlightened brethren, Christian liberty is restrained by the thought of the need to others. This is why Paul preached without charge - ignoring self for the benefit of others. Self-restraint is hard but you are obligated to practice it.

Another disorder in the church was vanity. It is a vice. Women are particular susceptible to this temptation. They like to wear fine clothes - perhaps more to be seen of women - than of men. Men are sometimes freakish - but long hair and a veil do not become men. These are women's ornaments. Man represents the likeness and the supremacy of God. Woman represents the supremacy of man. Man was not made from woman. Woman was made from man. And woman does not exist apart from man. For as the woman was made for man - man was made for woman. And women should not gossip or even make hastie questions. But Paul said they should wait until they get home and ask their husband's in quiet.

They even had other disorders - such as problems of marriage in this church at Corinth. And he tells them in I. Cor. 9:5 - that the apostles and brothers of Jesus were all married. He advises against marriage were support is in distress - this made it inadvisable. My advice to you is to let every man

have his own wife and every woman her own husband. Marriage was his figure of the mystical union between Christ and his church. He was opposed to believers entering into marriage bonds with unbelievers. He was also opposed to a Christian who became such after marriage - leaving the unbelieving party. If the unbeliever refused to live with the Christian - then they should live apart. But not secure a divorce.

Now Paul never discussed the grounds for divorce. Jesus said infidelity to the marriage vow was the one and only cause for divorce. That dissolved the bond. Annulled the contract. And that left the innocent party free to marry.

Paul said widows and widowers might marry if they wished. And in writing to Timothy, he urged young widows to marry. Every social and domestic question could be settled in a righteous fashion by applying the rules that Paul lays down here concerning the disorders in the church at Corinth.

Gluttony preverted and desecrated the Lord's Supper, at Corinth. Paul had passed on to them this right which he received from the Lord. And it was instituted to help feeble, forgetful, discouraged, doubting disciples to remember Jesus. Remembering Jesus is the end - doing this is the means.

The Corinthians made the supper a social meal. Everyone reached for food - some went hungry, some got drunk. They would have to answer for that. It was a sin against the body and blood of the Lord. He who eats and drinks - mark it were to partake of both elements. Without a proper sense of the body - broken and bleeding, does so to his own condemnation. Many who ate and drank were ill and infirmed. *And a number even dead.* Beware of preverting the Lord's Supper. This church, the Corinthians, were the first perverters.

They offered, perhaps, the communion even to heathen. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and also, of the table of demons. I. Cor. 11:21.

Now they were not to partake of the supper as a click, or as an individual. Because it made it impossible to eat the Lord's Supper. I Cor. 2:20.

Now Paul defined the Lord's Supper - the cup of blessing - which we bless. Is that not participating in the blood of Christ. The bread we break - is that not participating in the body of Christ. I Cor. 10:16.

There was also another disorder - the abuse of Charisms. Now the church here was one of the most gifted churches and yet in everything, ye are rich. By Him, all utterance of knowledge. So that ye came behind no one in gifts. There were gifts of miracles, healing, helps, governing, discerning of spirits, various kinds of tongues, prophesy.

They were credentials that were accredited to this church. And many of these were not intended to be perpetual. If one claims these Charisms today, then we ought to demand the truth.

Let him speak a foreign language without studied preparation. Let him heal the sick instantaneously. Let him raise the dead. Christ's church was fully attested by them.

Now the Scriptures said that they were temporary. There are prophesies - they shall be done away. Whether tongues - they shall cease.

There were remarkable displays of spiritual power in the number of people who felt these pentecostal signs, we would call them today - speaking with tongues, miracle working power, gifts of the spirit, mountain moving faith. No church in the New Testament had such a display of supernatural power as this church at Corinth. And it was the wonder of the world to see a man saved - get up and speak of other tongues as the Spirit gave him utterance.

A man, who the week before was a drunkard, would turn away from that sin and speak the praises of God under the mighty power of that Spirit. The meetings were stirring.

But they must use these supernatural gifts - they misused them and magnified them above the grace of the Spirit - love, faith, hope and Christian character. They thought that getting hold of this tremendous power was the biggest thing in the world. And he doesn't want to talk about or think about anything else. So when he would get into a meeting with others who had received this gift, 25 or 30 would be standing up at the same time - some singing, some praying, some testifying.

Now Paul writes to them and says, if an infidel or an ignorant man should come upon you during such a time - he would say you are crazy. And therefore he wrote these three marvelous chapters. The 12th Chapter, the 13th, and 14th Chapters of I Corinthians. Which is one great exposition - if you choose to call it, the baptism of the spirit. As found in the New Testament.

In fact, I think we are glad they were this way - and we have I Cor. 13 that teaches us that love is the greatest thing in the world. That this is superior to even faith and hope. That these other signs were given - whether there be tongues, they shall cease. Prophecies, they shall fail. But love is

going to abide. Somehow we need again as the old time Methodists used to call it - the sanctified row, in the church at Corinth.

Now these should divinely bestow special Charismas in the church were shamefully mis-used. They became a source of pride. Those who had received them looked down upon the common place Christians who had not. Pride in the crowd. And those who possessed these special gifts were interrupting each other in the congregation until the believers thought they were insane.

The sudden ability to speak in foreign languages was deemed more brilliant than to interpret the word of God. Now Paul informs the Corinthians that these various kinds of gifts are from the same spirit and are for the same common good.

In the church he would rather speak five intelligible words which instruct others than 10,000 words in a foreign tongue.

Now the test of a man is whether he builds up the church or whether he builds up himself. Even scholarship if he parades it in the pulpit for self glorification - it is desirable only as it informs and edifies the congregation.

I think the same thing applies with singing. I think singing ought to be understood. And I think today Paul would condemn a great deal of the music. I think this is a rule for speaking and singing - that it ought to be for the understanding and to bless these people in the congregation.

This church had some Jews in it - many heathen in it. Slaves in it. Recently converted drunkards, liars, and thieves. But all of these were babes in Christ. We would call them mere toddlers. Without training and experience. And they misunderstood the Lord's Supper. And the public services. And yet

these Christians needed a leader and needed discipline.

Stalker says if you should take a look at the New Testament Church - the church at Corinth, you would not be filled with despair if you had vexations or problems in the church to which you are now a member of. What have you in our times. Among the decent American people - anything at all comparable to the problems of the New Testament Church here that we are speaking of tonight.

The remedy of all of these disorders, provisions, and adjustments - and misuses could be solved with love. Always seek to excell in the greatest gift, in the way of life which transcends all others. The gift - the way of love. They had such a place in the heart that nothing could interrupt. Therefore Paul ended this with the personal message of love. And only one at the close of any of his Epistles is comparable.

I. Cor. 16:23 - The pastor who loves his people beyond even a venture of a doubt can say any needful thing or word and still retain their love and that exactly is what Paul is doing.

III. Directions For The Church

1 Cor. 16:1-4

The development of the church took place over the two years or so and then we discover many disorders after Paul left. In closing I would like for us to discern some of the directions Paul gave them.

Time, being an element, we will talk just a moment about direction of administering the affairs of the church. And for the financial needs of the

church. These two things were very necessary - that the whole local church was responsible for the good behavior of the group and of the individual. There was no human authority outside of the brotherhood of believers.

There were men who by their wise counsel - their gifts, their service - should be honored and the congregation had authority in these cases of discipline. Paul did not shy around this. He gave them instructions.

They could exercise the expulsion of a member. I. Cor. 5:4.

Also, restoration to fellowship. II Cor. 2:7.

The decisions were arrived at by the majority of the congregation. II Cor. 2:6.

They appointed messengers to represent the church. And gave them letters of commendation to other meetings. I Cor. 16:3, II Cor. 3:1, 8:19.

For settling disputes without going to a court, was pressed upon the congregation. I Cor. 6:1.

Paul in giving directions commended these people for paying attention to his counsel. Titus had conveyed the first letter to Corinth. And joined Paul in Macedonia. He reported that they cordially received him and the letters. And they were grieved over their revolt against Paul. They sorrowed over their division. And there[^] was godly sorrow that worked repentance. And repentance called for earnest eagerness to clear themselves and they turned in their devotion to Paul and it was manifest in the sight of God. 2 Cor. 7. Paul says that I rejoice that I have absolute confidence in you. This tells us that his direction for administering their affairs and clearing up these disorders have been taken to heart.

The striking thing about this church - Paul had not received any financial support while he was there as he argues in I. Cor. 9 - that first from a human standpoint - human conduct he should have been supported - like the soldier that gets his support from the government. Or the vine dresser who eats the fruit of the vine. Or the shepherd who eats or drinks of the flock.

He argues again from the law of Moses - that the ox had spread out the grain. And ate of that.

He who receives spiritual benefit is entitled to material support.

The temple services, the Jewish priests were maintained by the sacrifices of the workers. The Lord also directs those who proclaim the good news. To maintain themselves by the good news.

Missionary reason prompted Paul to support himself at Corinth. He waived his right - less his motives be misunderstood. In a city where money was worshipped. The heathen must know that he was not seeking their goods.

Now for similar reason today, our missionaries must be supported by the home churches. And after the work is begun, the converts are instructed in how to show support. And this is a wonderful instruction here for all time. I Cor. 16:1-4, II Cor. 8, 9. Give authority in helping sister churches.

The church at Corinth considered it a large offering to support Jerusalem. We discover that the pulpit was used to make known their needs. And they talked about money. And Paul had a habit of boasting about his church at Corinth. Talking about the good givers and this inspired the church.

Finally the directions here for carrying on the missionary work. They are very practical and have permanent value, for us today in our churches. If every church would do this.

First, (systematically) on the first day of every week let him put aside the money for the collection. And whenever Paul came, the funds would be available.

Second, as (God prospers.)

Third, (voluntarily.) Of a willing mind.

Fourth, (cheerfully.) Not grudgingly.

Fifth, (sincerely.) You must first give yourself.

To me, these directions which Paul gave his church are workable today. And they would first of all, equalize the burden. Second, this is the example. Third, the laws of the harvest. Thanks be to God. And we would be able to complete a work that Paul began.