

# Worship Sermon Outline

## Excelling in the Work of the Lord — Practical Application

1 Corinthians 16:1–4

Sunday Worship · March 8, 2026

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### ■ Key Verse

*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.*

(1 Corinthians 16:2)

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### Introduction: Continuing from Chapter 15

- Chapter 15 proclaimed the grand vision of Christ's resurrection and the raising of the dead — the bedrock of our faith.

- The hope of resurrection, eternal life, and victory over death → the glorious conclusion in 15:58: the command to 'excel in the work of the Lord.'

*15:58 — Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

- Question: What does it mean, concretely, to 'excel in the work of the Lord'? → 1 Corinthians 16:1–4 gives the practical answer.
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### 1) The Command to Give (16:1)

*"Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do."*

#### Purpose of This Offering

- Not for church operating expenses, but to support the impoverished believers of the Jerusalem church.

#### Three Reasons the Jerusalem Church Needed Support

- ① Intense persecution and social isolation (ongoing persecution by Jewish authorities; exclusion from the temple economy)
- ② Lingering effects of the great famine of AD 41–54, making economic recovery extremely difficult
- ③ The early church's communal assets were exhausted (worsened further by inability to find employment)

#### Theological Significance (Romans 15:26–27)

- Not merely humanitarian aid, but a response to the grace of the Gospel
  - An act of love by the Church that broke down the dividing wall between Gentiles and Jews
  - "Logia" (a voluntary offering) — not a forced levy, but a faith-based gift
  - Today's application: Domestic and international mission offerings, thanksgiving offerings — giving that extends beyond the local church is also 'the work of the Lord.'
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### 2) How to Give (16:2)

*"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."*

#### Four Biblical Principles of Giving

- ① "Each one of you" — Every believer gives according to their own judgment and responsibility. Giving is a service that every person bears personally, regardless of status (rich or poor, free or enslaved). Even a small amount is acceptable.
- ② "On the first day of every week" — Consistently, as part of worship. Not a spur-of-the-moment impulse, but a demonstration of ongoing dedication. Setting aside on Sunday — the day of the Lord's resurrection — cultivates the awareness of offering to the Lord.
- ③ "In keeping with your income" — In proportion to God's grace. The original Greek means "in proportion to how much God has prospered you." God's grace comes first; giving is our response. Reckless giving or

giving by taking on debt is not biblical.

- ④ "Saving it up" — Set it apart intentionally and in advance. Rather than scrambling to gather something at the last moment, prepare it beforehand so it may be offered quietly and with gratitude. An offering is not leftovers — it is something set apart in advance.
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### 3) How to Send the Offering (16:3–4)

*"Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem."*

- In an era without modern banking: a church-approved person carried letters of commendation and delivered the funds personally.
  - Paul's integrity and transparency: not left to individual discretion, but processed through the full approval of the church.
  - This offering was not Paul's personal project — it was the work of the Church.
  - Today's application: The management of offerings is the responsibility of the church as a whole, not a matter of trust in any one individual. Processes that maintain transparency — financial reports, audits, approvals — are essential.
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### Conclusion: The 'Work of the Lord' Born from Resurrection Hope

Why does Paul speak of 'giving' immediately after the grand message of 'resurrection'?

- Those who have conquered humanity's greatest fear — death — are also freed from earthly, material attachments.
  - There is no need to cling to what is yours; you are free to serve your neighbor willingly and joyfully.
  - Faith is not merely intellectual — it manifests in the concrete, daily 'responses to God' and 'acts of love.'
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### This Week's Practice

- Count the blessings God has given you and set apart a portion of them in advance.
  - Your offering should not be determined by how moved you were by the sermon, but offered as a planned response of faith.
  - Be assured that 'your labor in the Lord is not in vain,' and in your own discernment, excel in the work of the Lord.
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Scripture: 1 Corinthians 16:1–4 / Related: 1 Corinthians 15:58; Romans 15:25–27