

# Studies in 1 Corinthians-14 1 Cor 16

by William MacDonald

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*William MacDonald discusses the principles of giving and financial stewardship in the church as outlined in 1 Corinthians 16.*

**Duration:** 49:57

**Scripture:** John 10:27

**Topics:** "Church Support", "Eternal Security"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the collection for the saints in Jerusalem, highlighting the financial need of believers who had faced persecution and loss of livelihood. The sermon emphasizes God's will for the Church to support those in need and promote equality. The preacher also leads the congregation in singing hymns that focus on praising and adoring God, as well as a chorus that emphasizes the eternal security of believers based on John 10:28. The congregation is encouraged to sing with volume and passion, reflecting their faith and commitment.

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## Transcript

I appreciate some help in passing out these choruses. We're going to try praise and adore him once more. This is the last time in this series anyway.

And you've done very well in the past. The ladies take the top part and the men what would normally be the alto part. It will depend on the ladies to work on their volume and the men to work on the beauty of their singing.

You could play it and just so it'll be familiar to us Carolyn. Okay, try it and give us the volume sisters. Ready? Okay, now the real test.

Don't look at the words or the music. See how we can do. Do you think you have it? Try it.

Oh, I think you can do it. Yeah. Try it.

Very good. Nothing the matter with that. Turn in your books to 379 for a chorus that I don't think we've ever sung before.

It's a good one. It emphasizes the eternal security of the believer. It's all scripture.

Notice the words are in quotation marks. My sheep hear my voice begins with a quotation mark and pluck them out of my hand closes the quotation. In other words, if you know this chorus, you've memorized John 10 28.

And everybody should memorize that verse. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. You won't have any trouble with it except that pluck them out of my hand.

Notice that out of has two notes. Out has two notes. Out of my hand.

Two notes for out. Try it. Just play it through and then we're going to sing it.

I don't think you'll have any trouble with it. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out. Good start.

I couldn't hear you because I was singing so loudly myself. This time I'll tone it down and you sing. Ready? My sheep hear my voice and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

More volume. This is your chance to turn up the volume. Just give it all you have.

Ready? My sheep hear my voice. Better. And I know them and they follow me and pluck them out of my hand.

Thank you very much. We've learned a new chorus. If you want to pass praise and adore hymn chorus to the middle, we'll collect them and maybe a couple of brothers would pass out the outlines.

We're on 1 Corinthians 16 today and I hope that you have your outline from last week. I'd like to make sure that the visitors get one of this one. Raise your hand if you do not have a copy of the outline of 1 Corinthians 16.

It was on the latter part of 1 Corinthians 15 outline. And the rest of you can be turning in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 16. Well, I knew we wouldn't have enough, so maybe you can share the outlines with those who don't have them.

I knew we wouldn't have enough. 1 Corinthians 16, verse 1. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also. On the first day of the week, let each one of you lay something aside, storing up, as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters, I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me. Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia, for I am passing through Macedonia, but it may be that I will remain or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey wherever I go.

For I do not wish to see you now on the way, but I hope to stay a while with you if the Lord permits. But I will carry an emphasis until Pentecost, for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. Now as Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear, for he does the work of the Lord as I also do.

Therefore let no one despise him, but send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me, for I am waiting for him with the brethren. Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time. However, he will come when he has a convenient time.

Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong, but all that you do be done with love. I urge you, brethren, you know the household of Stephanus, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints, that you also submit to such and to everyone who works and labors with us. I am glad about the coming of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied, for they refreshed my spirit, and yours therefore acknowledge such men.

The churches of Asia greet you, Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord with the church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you, greet one another with a holy kiss. The salutation with my own hand, all.

If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, my love be with you, all in Christ Jesus.

Amen. Now, if you have the outline, you'll notice that the first four verses have to do with the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. We don't know exactly what had happened in Jerusalem.

Perhaps it was a famine in Jerusalem, or perhaps it was because those dear believers had turned from Judaism to Christianity, and as a result of that they had lost their jobs, they had been disinherited, they had been thrown out of the synagogue, and had suffered all kinds of persecution for the namesake of the Lord Jesus. The fact of the matter is they were in financial need. God's will in the church of Jesus Christ is that when there's a financial need, the funds will flow, that there be an equality.

It's as if I take two hollow glass rods here and connect them at the bottom, and I pour water into this one, well the water will come up till it equalizes. And Paul in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 shows that that's the way it should be in the church. When there's a need, the funds should flow freely to meet that need.

And it's rather an interesting thing that here it is Gentile believers that are sending money to meet the needs of Jewish believers. It shows that the middle wall of partition, the greatest barrier between human beings that has ever existed, the difference between Gentile and Jew, is broken down. And now believing Gentiles and believing Jews are all one in Christ Jesus.

So these instructions in verses 1 through 4 are for a specific need in Jerusalem, the saints. We don't know the details, it's not necessary to know the details. Um, notice that the apostle Paul didn't mind speaking about the needs of other people.

He never spoke about his own needs. That's what we believe. We believe that it's perfectly permissible for a servant of the Lord, for instance, to tell about any needs that he knows of in the work of God, but not his own needs.

If I know that God has called me to the work of the Lord, I don't have to go around begging. I'd rather be a suppliant at the door of my heavenly Father than a beggar at the door of worldly men. And so we do not.

We do not make our own needs known. We make them known to God alone. And God provides.

God does provide. It was Hudson Taylor that said, God's work carried on in God's way will never lack God's resources. That's true.

And I'm here to bear witness to that fact today. We don't like to talk about finances. In our little assemblies, we don't like to.

You come here and there's no collection ever taken here. It's a Sunday morning. Nobody ever asks for your money.

So if you're sitting here on pins and needles today and afraid that your wallet is going to be attacked, relax. You'll have as much when you leave as when you came. We don't like to talk about finances, but here people think that we're asking also because so many people today say all the church wants is your money.

I don't blame them for saying that. When you think of the terrible begging campaigns that are going on and the terrible devices that are used to raise money. In past years, it was either orphans or communism, anti-communism crusades.

That was the best way to get money. Raise it for orphans or raise it for anti-communist crusades. Well, the communist crusades all had to go, hasn't it? So we'll have to think of something else.

We don't like to talk about money for fear we'd be misinterpreted. Anyway, as far as unsaved people are concerned, God doesn't really want their money, does he? People go to churches today and the collection is passed and unsaved people, people who don't know the Lord, they're asked to put money in. And when they do that, they say, well, my money's all right for God.

I must be all right for God. God doesn't want the money of unsaved people. What he wants is their faith.

He wants their repentance and their faith in him, and then out of a full heart to give to him as he leaves. Now, concerning the collection for the saints, and as I say, these were the saints in Jerusalem, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia. Paul had already told about this need when he was passing through the middle of Asia Minor, known in these days as Galatia.

So you must do also. This is Paul as an apostle telling them what they should do. Okay.

Notice the time. On the first day of the week. On the first day of the week.

This is the time of the collection. This shows that the Jewish Sabbath had passed and a new day for Christianity had come up. The first day of the week.

People might say, why don't you keep the Sabbath, Saturday, the seventh day of the week? Because in the New Testament, Christians are never told to keep the Sabbath. And the first day of the week is the day of Christianity. The first day of the week is the day of the resurrection of Christ, isn't it? The first day of the week is the day when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost.

The first day of the week is when the disciples gathered together to break bread. The first day of the week is when they were told to lay by them in store as the Lord had prospered them. The first day of the week is the day of a new beginning, and that's the day of Christianity.

So, the time is the first day of the week. The participants, let each one of you, let each one of you. I think that emphasizes that it's an individual thing and it applies to everyone who is a true believer in the Lord

Jesus Christ.

And then there's the amount. Lay by, lay something aside, storing up as he may, as he may prosper. How much are you supposed to give? Well, in the Old Testament, they gave tithes and offerings.

A tithe was a tenth of their income. But in addition, they gave offerings a tenth. Christians are not told to give a tenth.

If a Jew under law gave a tenth, a Christian under grace should do better than that, shouldn't he? And here is the exact amount that he should give as the Lord may prosper. I think that's wonderful. It will vary with different people.

Maybe somebody gets a raise. Well, then the amount that he gives should rise proportionately. And the situation to avoid at the end of verse two is that there be no collections when I come.

Other portions of the Word of God tell us that we're to give liberally. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the generosity of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was poor, yet for your sins, yet for your sake he became, he was poor that you might be rich.

Wait a minute. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor that you through his poverty might be rich.

The word grace there really means generosity. The generosity of the Lord Jesus was that he impoverished himself, born in a stable, born in a cow barn, and living in poverty and the world is hands at bay so that we might be enriched. And he's given as the example for us.

And then we're to give cheerfully. Don't have to have these emotional appeals to give. It should come from a heart of love to the Lord Jesus.

God loves a cheerful giver. We're to give proportionately as we've seen. We're to give systematically.

We're to give honestly. Ananias and Sapphira, they gave. They professed to give all, but they held back a part.

And they paid for it too. They paid with their lives for it. We're to give honestly to the Lord.

And then we're to give without public show. The Lord Jesus emphasizes that in the Sermon on the Mount. When you give, don't blow the trumpet.

You don't have a bronze plaque placed on the building so everyone know that you gave. Don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing. Now there are some situations in life today where you can't do that exactly.

If you give a check, whoever the treasurer is knows that you gave the check. It doesn't refer to that at all. It doesn't refer to that at all.

It means giving with the idea of being seen of men. The Lord says you have to reward if you do that. To whom are we to give? Well, certainly we're to give to the local fellowship.

Any fellowship like this has expenses connected with it. In this case, it happens to be rent. We're not buying a building, we're renting a building.

And everybody who partakes of the privileges of the assembly should feel a responsibility to give for the upkeep of the assembly. Is it not true? We're to give to any genuine case of need. Now I emphasize that, any genuine case of need.

There are a lot of, quote, needs today that are not so genuine. I opened my mail on Friday night and read again about the great Nigeria scam. There are people in Nigeria that send, they get the addresses of Christians in this country, and they send the most heart-tugging letters.

Little girls in school, and actually they all write the same letter to different people. It's just a coded letter. And the money flows to Nigeria.

It's a scam. It's nothing to it at all. No genuine case of need.

This is true with a lot of television and radio broadcasts today. Sorry to say, not all, but people sitting on millions of dollars and begging money from Christian people. It goes on today.

You know about some of them. You've read about some of them, men living in luxury and begging from God's people. Could be a genuine case of need.

If a man comes up to me and he asks me for a quarter or a dollar, what it is, and he's smoking a cigarette, I don't give him any. Why don't I give it to him? Because I'm not going to subsidize the cancer-producing habit, that's why. To me, it's not a genuine need.

If he has money to buy cigarettes, and I'll take him into a restaurant and buy him food, I'll do that. But I don't give him money, or if he has the smell of alcohol in his breath, I'm not going to give him money. He has money to buy Johnny Walker.

He doesn't need my money. It's a genuine case of need. I like to give to people who are doing a good work for God, who I know are doing a good work for God.

Let me just say, if you're in doubt about anything, ask some of the elders, ask some of the Christians if they know anything about it. And it is amazing how much we do know behind the scenes of what goes on. You're in doubt, you feel led to give to somebody.

We're not going to dictate how you give. I'd be glad to give advice to you. I like to give to people who are really doing a work for God, when I know that something's happening for God.

I like to give to works that don't have a heavy overhead. You know, people sometimes give to organizations if they knew the truth, 90% of their dollar goes to overhead and 10% maybe goes to the work. Of course, you read about this United Fund recently, didn't you? And the man in charge of it, United Fund, and the salary that he was getting, raising money for poor people.

It was all over the papers. I like to give to men who are building on New Testament assembly principles. I feel an obligation to them.

Who are going according to the word of God and building in strict accordance with the word of God. I like to give to that kind of a work. And those are guidelines for us in our in our giving.

I like to give to people who don't beg for money. I get all kinds of begging letters and I have a circular file of which I use, which I use for them. I just toss them away.

Because I feel a special obligation to those who go out in faith in the Lord, looking to the Lord to supply their needs. When I give, I try to be exercised before the Lord about it. And one of the great joys of life is to be able to give and then get a letter back and say your gift came at just the right time, in just the right amount.

Then I know God really led me to do it. There's a joy connected with true Christian giving. Now, Paul goes on.

Perhaps some of you, when I read this, you think, well, what's the importance of this chapter? And how would we be any poorer if this wasn't in the Bible? Notice verses 3 and 4. It says, When I come, whomever you approve by your letters, I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me. What's important there? Well, it's very important.

Paul is here talking about how money is to be handled in the church. That's what he's talking about. And it's not to be handled by one man.

They will go with me. Men will be appointed, plural, to handle the money. Why? So that there won't be any suspicion of misappropriating funds, that's why.

For instance, if I were the treasurer of this assembly and the collection is taken at the break in a bread service and it has to be counted and deposited back, I would never do that alone. I would insist that somebody else be there. Because even if I were perfectly honest and trusted myself and the Christians trusted me, it's still good to have somebody else there.

I think that's suggested here by Paul's words. And he himself would go along if it was fitting. That would be three men carrying the gift from Corinth to Jerusalem, avoiding the very appearance of evil, the Scripture says.

We have to be careful. We have to be careful. And, you know, we're all made of flesh anyway.

Years ago when I was in Chicago, I used to go to a certain fellowship and speak in one. One day I got a call from them and they said, do you have a list of all the gifts you've received from us in the last three years? And I said, sure. I have to keep such a list for income tax purposes.

They said, would you give us a list of all of the gifts that you've received? I said, didn't happen to be very many. What had happened? Well, it happened that the treasurer handled the money alone and he had a wife that needed more and more expensive luxuries, a bigger and better house, hot and cold, folding doors and all the rest, you know. And he was under tremendous financial pressure and he dipped his hand into the funds.

The funds were earmarked for me that I never got, which didn't bother me at all, you know. But he had to be put out of fellowship in that local assembly. Why? Because he didn't have somebody else with him when he was handling the funds.

And Paul is saying here, there's a certain ethical behavior that you must follow in the church. You must be above reproach in all of these matters. Then Paul goes on to speak about his plans for the future, and especially in verses five through seven, a forthcoming visit to Corinth en route from Macedonia.

Macedonia was the northern part of Greece, Achaia was the second part, and Corinth is located down in the lower part. You say, why does he discuss all his plans? Well, I'm glad he does. I'm glad he discusses his plans here.

You know, sometimes guidance is very, very clear. Sometimes it's not so clear. And I know that Paul uses the expression here, if the Lord wills, if the Lord wills.

There's a certain teaching in evangelical circles, certain evangelical circles that you should never say, if the Lord wills. That shows a lack of faith. Well, it doesn't show a lack of faith at all, because Paul uses it here.

Verse seven, if the Lord permits. We're not, we don't have perfect knowledge, and we're cast upon the Lord, and we commit our lives to him and ask him to lead us step by step. And so he tells them, yes, I am coming to you in Corinth, not right away, may be a delay.

I do plan to see you and spend a while with you, if the Lord permits, but I'm going to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost. And then I'm very fond of that verse nine, a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. Many, and that's a nice little microcosm of Christian service.

Christian service. You always have those two things. You have open doors, and you have opposition.

Wherever God is working, you're going to have opposition. The devil opposes the work of God. And so we shouldn't become discouraged by that when we have opposition.

You say, well, praise God. God is working. God is still on the throne, and he cares for his own.

A great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. I think if I'm in the work of the Lord, and everything is moonlight and roses and gloria and excelsis and mountaintop experiences, I don't think anything's being accomplished for the Lord. That's not the story of Christ.

Or the little girl who said, the Bible opens with Genesis and closes with revolution. Well, this is true. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is unsettling.

People don't like it. And frankly, I think I notice in the United States today an increasing hatred of Christ and of Christianity. I think if you read your newspapers and magazines carefully, you'll find out that people just don't tolerate it anymore.

It's very outspoken and blasphemous. I don't know if you followed that National Endowment for the Arts. Some of the terribly blasphemous things about the Lord Jesus Christ.

I don't remember it was ever like this before. I hope it means that the coming of the Lord is near. But certainly the truth remains, and verse 9 suggests that a great and effective door... Think about wide open doors today.

And I'm sorry to say this, I think most of the wide open doors today aren't in the United States. They're elsewhere. If I were a young man today, I think under God I'd go where God is working, and that isn't this country.

I was in the Philippines, as you know, at the beginning of the year. God is working in the Philippines. He's working in the Philippines in a way he's not working here.

We had a men's conference. How many men were there at that men's conference? Huh? 258. 258 men for a men's conference.

And one of the question and answer periods went from 2 to 6 in the afternoon. 2 to 6. I haven't had any question and answer periods in this country from 2 to 6, have you? People start getting fidgety and need a cup of coffee or something. And that's true in Europe too.

You think of what's going on in Austria and in Germany today in Europe. Not all over, but in places. Strange, isn't it, that our discipleship training program here in San Leandro at the present time, we have one man from the United States and all the rest from other countries.

What does it mean? It means God is passing by this country. There are wide open doors in many parts. Think of Eastern Europe.

Wouldn't it be hard for me to get excited about going to Russia? Wide open doors. Imagine the Russian army coming to the United States and asking help in setting up chaplaincy in the Russian army. They're asking for that.

They want chaplains in their army, on her lot, the Russian army. And there are many adversaries. And of course there are two kinds of adversaries.

You get opposition from without and you get opposition from within. Opposition from without is easiest to take. Opposition from the world, easy to take that.

But opposition from within, conflict and strife and gossiping and rumor mongering of all the rest that divides the work of God. Well, I think Paul here is speaking especially of opposition from without. Then he speaks about Timothy and his forthcoming visit, verses 10 and 11.

Timothy, as you know, was a younger believer. He was Paul's right-hand man, one of his right-hand men. Paul really loved Timothy.

Why did he like him? He was like-minded. It says in Philippians 2, I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your estate. Very touching to me to think of the bond that existed between the great apostle and this young man.

And he says here in verse 10, Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear. What's that all about? Well, first of all, he was a young fellow and he might have been very timid. A lot of people think he had a nervous stomach, which is not impossible.

Or people may have kind of looked down their theological nose at him just because he was young. Paul says he does the work of the Lord as I also do. I think it's easy for us to forget that when Jesus called the disciples, he called young men, probably in their 20s when he called them, not bearded old fishermen.

Therefore, let no one despise him, but send him on his journey in peace that he may come to me for I am waiting for him with the brethren. Now I like verses 12 about Apollos. Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time.

However, he will come when he has a convenient time. Now why is that verse in the Bible? I like to do this when I study my Bible. I like to think, why, what good does that verse do me? Well, it shows me that although the apostle Paul would advise a man like Apollos, he didn't dominate him.

He didn't rule his faith. That Apollos still had liberty in the Lord to do what he felt the Lord was guiding him to do. Isn't that right? That's right.

We don't believe in dominating the faith of people come to me for advice. Well, I give them my advice, but they don't accept it. That's perfectly all right, too.

That's perfectly all right. They don't choose to accept my advice. That's up to them, between them and the Lord.

That's their problem. And scriptures anticipate that this will be the case. But there you have the freedom, the liberty among servants of the Lord.

Apollos was a servant of the Lord, and Paul had expressed his will to him. Apollos didn't see it that way. Paul doesn't condemn him for it.

And then he gives some standing orders in verses 13 and 14. Watch. Be on guard.

You have to stand fast in the faith. When others around you are abandoning great principles of the word of God, you be true to the scriptures. You stand for them.

Be brave. Well, we need bravery in the things of the Lord. If we have a weak spine, if we're jellyfish, we won't go very far.

For the Lord will never make history for him. Be strong. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Let all that you do be done in love. And then he enjoined submission to some of these dear Christians. I urge you, brethren, you know the household of Stephanus, the firstfruits of Achaia.

That is, they were the first believers, the household of Stephanus, the first believers in the southern part of Greece. They have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints. That you also submit to such and to everyone who works and labors with you, with us.

Well, I can imagine that the people of Stephanus' household, they just served the Lord the way you do in your daily occupations, those of you who are believers. They little thought that their record would be the subject of discussion in San Leandro, California in 1992. You know, the Christian life is really a wonderful life.

And what's done for the Lord is forever. It's written with an eternal pen. And I think that's thrilling that your service for the Lord today may record it in heaven, and you little know when the day starts out how long-lasting it will be.

This speaks to me very loudly. Then three men to acknowledge, verses 17 and 18. Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus.

And they had been able to perform some service for Paul that Corinthians hadn't been able to do. Not necessarily through neglect. I don't, I wouldn't come down hard on the Corinthians here.

After all, they didn't have mail service. They didn't have fax machines or anything like that. Somebody had to get on a mule and ride or walk, hike.

Communications weren't then what they are now, and so these men were able to do something, some errand for Paul that that the Corinthians had not been able to do. I don't think he's, I don't think he's criticizing for it. And then you notice the greetings.

And this is very, very important in Scripture, and you know it's important in most parts of the world today. Like if you're traveling in Europe, it's customary to get up and say, the assembly in San Leandro sends its greetings. That's the German, and you go down to Italy, and I'm in an assembly in Rome, the customary thing is to say, the assembly in Munich sends its greetings to you.

And if you don't do it, somebody's apt to come up and say, didn't the assembly in Munich send greetings? That's how real it is. That's how real the bond between Christians overseas, we've lost that in this country. We just don't have it.

But in case any of you travel, it's good to know that. It's good to know the courtesy to be followed in those countries. Well, they get it here, of course, in the Word of God.

Churches of Asia greet you, Quilla and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord with a church that's in their house. Gives you a simple view of what church life was like in the early days of Christianity, the church that is in their house. They didn't have cathedrals.

They didn't have fancy buildings. They didn't have anything as nice as this. They met in homes, the household church.

The home, the universal place of gathering, right? Nobody is, nobody's put off by going into a home. Some people are put off by going into churches with velvet pews and stained glass windows and electric organs, but home, you'd be quite relaxed going into a home. All the brethren greet you, greet one another with a holy kiss.

And once again, there's something that's followed in most, in many countries of the world today, still the holy kiss is used. You go to Poland, for instance. The men kiss one another three times.

Garlic, onions, and all. But it means something to them. They say, why don't we do that? Well, the reason we don't do it here, it might have a bad connotation as far as the world is concerned, you know? Once again, you've got to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Charles Colson found that out working among prisoners. He would never allow himself to be photographed, for instance, kissing another prisoner. You know what it would say for the world.

And yet there was a real deep bond of love between Charles Colson and those prisoners. They had to be careful. Some parts of the world you go to, it still follows.

The last verses are really tremendous. It says, if anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be a curse. People talk about the unpardonable sin.

Here is an unpardonable sin, a failure to love the Lord Jesus Christ. And loving him, what does that mean, loving the Lord Jesus Christ? It doesn't mean just having a sentimental attraction to him. It doesn't mean observing Christmas and Easter.

It means the person has come to the Lord Jesus in repentance of his sins, acknowledging before God what a wretch he is. It means that that person has given up any thought of saving himself or even

contributing to his own salvation. He's abandoned any idea that there's anything he can do to make himself fit for heaven.

It means that that person, by faith, has seen the Lord Jesus dying as his substitute on the cross of Calvary. That's what it means. That the Savior wasn't dying there for sins he had committed, the sins I had committed.

That he was paying the penalty that my sins deserve. And then it means that that person just bows the knees at the Lord Jesus. I accept you as my Lord and Savior, the best way I know how.

I accept you as my Lord and Savior. Not just a matter of the lips, but a matter of the heart, the deep confession of the heart. That's the kind of a person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it says if anybody doesn't love the Lord Jesus, let him be a curse. What does that mean? It means the curse of God is upon him. What is the curse of God? Death.

Not only physical death, but eternal death. If you go out of this world and you don't love the Lord Jesus, it's the blackness of darkness forever and ever. That's what it is.

The curse of time. It's to be in a place that was created for the devil and his angels. To be in a place where there's no fellowship, no love, no joy, no happiness.

To be there forever and ever and ever. An unpardonable sin. Not to love the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are two words here in the Greek. You can live a normal life without knowing this, but it says, let him be anathema. Anathema.

And then the very next word is maranatha. And maranatha means, oh Lord, come. You know, the only people I know who are saying maranatha are believers.

The only people I know who really want the Lord to come are those who've been redeemed by precious blood. And I want to tell you, as I travel around and meet people, and not people, but young people as well, they're saying maranatha these days. I get letters from young people and they're just longing for the Lord to come.

Take them home to be with himself. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. Maranatha.

Then Paul closes with his customary of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Paul begins his letters with grace and he ends them with grace. Grace is one of the key words in his life and rightly so.

Salvation is all of grace. God's dealings with us are all of grace. Grace from beginning to end.

Undeserved favor. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

And so he closes this wonderful epistle in which he has taken up so many problems that arise in the Christian life and in the Christian church and he solved them one by one and we're the beneficiaries of all of that today. It's a wonderful book and I commend it to you to go over and over again. Now before we close in prayer I'd like to sing that chorus with you.

I mean I'd like to have you sing it to me. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

I think I hope this will be ringing through your heart during the week. Try to remember it.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12608.mp3>

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