



GOD'S PERFECT PLAN FOR CHURCH FINANCE

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Money is needed for most of the things we do. This is true in the church as well as in our personal lives. It is the work of the church to (1) Preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15,16; 1 Timothy 3:14,15), (2) Edify the saved (Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 4:11-16), and (3) Help the needy (Galatians 6:10; James 1:27). This work requires money. How can the church get the money to carry out the work God has given it to do?

The Plans of Men

Denominational churches, established by men, have devised many schemes for raising money. Some of them run businesses such as selling second hand clothing and use the profits for church work. Others raise money by having fairs or festivals where members pay for food or entertainment. The profits go to the work of the denomination. Some churches established by men even use gambling to raise funds. They have games such as bingo or raffles and sell "chances" to people who hope to win something. These methods are worldly. They appeal to the selfish nature of man. There is NO authority in God's Word for such schemes (Isaiah 8:20; Colossians 3:17; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18, 19).

God's Plan

God has given a plan by which His church can finance the work He has given it to do. God's plan is recorded in I Corinthians 16:1,2: "*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*"

Please notice the parts of God's perfect plan: (1) **WHAT?** "*the collection for the saints*" (2) **WHEN?** "*upon the first day of the week*" (3) **WHO?** "*every one of*

you." (4) **DO WHAT?** "*lay by him in store*" (5) **HOW MUCH?** "*As God hath prospered him*" (6) **WHY?** "*that there be no gatherings when I come.*"

Paul was collecting money from Gentile churches to help the poor in Jerusalem (Romans 16:25-27; 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9; Galatians 6:6-10). God used this occasion to set forth His pattern of church finance. It was to be done upon the first day of the week for this is the time the church assembles to worship (Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:9). It involves every member of the church. None is left out. It tells us how much we are to give. It is not a tithe as was the practice under the Law of Moses, for we are not under that law today (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 8:6-13). The more we have, the more we are required to give. It tells us the reason for giving. Funds will be available when needed.

Is This Binding Today?

God has given a perfect pattern for the work, worship, and organization of His church. This plan is to be followed in all places, in all ages, until Christ comes again (Jude 3). Concerning the things Paul wrote in his letter to the Corinthians, he said: "**If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord**" (1 Corinthians 14:37). First Corinthians was addressed, not only to the church at Corinth, but also "**to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**" (1:2). This means it was addressed to those of us who are Christians today as well as to all the churches of Christ in the first century when Paul wrote. Paul also said that he taught the same doctrines at Corinth that he taught "**every where in every church**" (4:17).

God's way is best! His plans works if it is put into practice! If we will follow God's plan for church finance, His church will have all the money it needs to do all the work God wants it to do!