

church of Christ at Greenwood

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Scriptures to Guide Our Weekly Collection

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From the time of Jesus' ministry, a common treasury with funds for the support and work was a part of the apostolic pattern. Several women are noted in Luke 8 as supporting Jesus *"from their substance"* (8:1-3). Philip mentions the *"two hundred denarii"* the apostles had at their disposal before Jesus feeds 5,000 in John 6 (6:7). Judas is the apostolic treasurer as John notes, "he was a thief, and had the money box" (John 12:6).

So, as the early church is formed we also begin to see the regular habit of taking up a collection for the purpose of having an operational treasury. Right after the first 3,000 are baptized, for example, *"they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."* The apostles did not stop being supported after the death of Jesus. Disciples *"continued"* to listen to the apostolic teaching and continued in their *"fellowship"* with them. This word "fellowship" comes from the Greek KOINONIA in Scripture which often refers to the financial support given and received from those we are in spiritual *"fellowship"* with (see Philippians 4:14-17 where this word is used of Paul's financial support from Philippi). Other references to giving include Luke 10:7 and Galatians 6:6.

In Paul's letters he offers specific instructions, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, about how Christians and churches were to handle the giving toward the church's treasury. Consider a few points from these texts to help guide you in your giving.

Our giving is to be **pleasant** and with **purpose**. 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, *"So let each one of you give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."* Do you have a plan and the willpower to give and does it give you pleasure to give to the Lord's work?

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Our giving is to be **periodic**. Specifically, “*On the first day of the week...*” Some try to skirt around this responsibility on a weekly basis, but what makes this text any less binding than Acts 20:7 regarding the regularity of our communion together weekly?

Our giving is to be **personal**. 1 Corinthians 16:2 goes on to say, “...*let each one of you lay something aside...*” This is not just a command for the rich, the heads of family, or the leaders of a church. Any one earning an income has a responsibility to set aside something to give in the weekly offering.

Our giving is to be **prepared**. We “*lay something aside*” from our income to prepare for this collection. Christians must make sure the work of God is in their budget. Plan for it.

Our giving is **proportionate**. 1 Corinthians 16:2 says we are “*storing up as he may prosper...*” Not all can give in the same proportions because not all prosper or have expenditures of the same proportions. The teen may not give to the same degree as the CEO. The empty nest couple with dual incomes may give more than the single mom of three with a single income.

Our giving is **preventive**. Paul wants a regular collection so money is ready “*when I come*” (16:2). Consistent giving and a common treasury helps churches be prepared to meet the needs which arise “when they come.”

May these divine principles guide us as we give according to the divine pattern to the Lord’s work.