

Introduction to 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Have you ever read, or heard, a scripture many times over the years and each time you encountered it a certain slightly unusual, not quite normal, less than satisfying feeling occurred, flashing only momentarily through your consciousness. I had this almost subconscious experience almost every time I read, heard or used this passage over the past 69 years. It was so short lived I did not think about it long enough to identify it until recently as I read first Corinthians 16:1-4 in the presence of a very good friend.

We had a short discussion about these verses, which prompted me to start a detailed study of this passage. Since I had never heard a detail examination of this passage from the pulpit or in a classroom, I was greatly surprised to learn that much debate had existed over the years about how to apply these verses to our Christian giving. I had always just assumed the *traditional* position that these verses were talking about our giving in the Sunday Worship service.

I have always given liberally and joyfully to the church and encouraged other to do the same, referencing this passage when I thought it appropriate. As I got deeper into this study I began to realize more and more that for the first time in my life, I was looking for scriptural justification for my past understanding of these verses. I am ashamed to admit this as it goes against everything I have tried to practice, and tell everyone else to practice, about the purpose of Bible study, i.e. "Prayerfully search for the truth, and then follow it wherever it leads!"

I was/am very stressed because I could not find what I was looking for!

I pray that you will proceed slowly in this study, not reaching any conclusion too quickly. I beg you to please read the entire article before deciding it's value. Please don't be hasty in deducing implications from this study. Remember this is an attempted exegesis of only **one** verse. Please help me to find some pertinent passage I did not consider, some passage I misused (misinterpreted) or some invalid logic, which will motivate me to reconsider my conclusion, as I am *always eager to learn any new evidence to enhance my Bible knowledge and encourage my spiritual growth, knowing there is no growth without change.*

The **one** purpose in writing this article is to answer the question: "What does 1 Corinthians 16:2 teach?" In particular: "Does verse 2 teach or support *giving* as an act of worship in our assemblies today?" (see Appendix A for definition of "Act of Worship")

I sincerely request your thoughtful critique of this article.

I present this evidence after six months of sincere prayer, diligent study and many discussions with Christian friends and several Bible professors from our Christian colleges. Although I am currently convinced this conclusion is correct, each Christian must decide for himself and look forward to discussing it with Jesus on our day of judgment, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

After thoughtful consideration, if your conclusion is different than the one presented here please know that my love and respect for you has not (and will not be) diminished as we continue to serve our Lord together to the best of our abilities.

The following is the result of my research.Cliff

P. S. Please note Appendix A and Appendix B as they are both very pertinent to this discussion.

An exegesis of 1 Corinthians 16:2

Giving on the first day of every week

This article is an effort to explain 1 Corinthians 16:2 in context. Let us look at this context from three versions:

ASV

1 ¶ Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. 2 **Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.** 3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: 4 and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.

ESV

¶ Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 **On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.** 3 And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

NIV

1 ¶ Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 **On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.** 3 Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

Verse one indicates the start of a new subject with the words “**Now** concerning the collection for the saints.” This is saying that there is to be a collection and it is to be done according to the instructions in the following verses! These same instructions had also been given to the churches in Galatia and probably also to the Macedonian churches, cf. 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Could this imply it was a common or normal practice?

The second half of verse one:

ASV

1 ... as I **gave order** (διατασσω) to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye.

ESV

1 ... as I **directed** (διατασσω) the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do.

NIV

1 ... Do what I **told** (διατασσω) the Galatian churches **to do**.

This was an important matter. This was not an optional suggestion. This Greek word (διατασσω) means *to arrange, appoint, ordain, prescribe, give order* (Thayer's Greek Lexicon). And this instruction was to *each one of you* in the church at Corinth and also to *each one of you* in the churches in Galatia and apparently to each one in the churches in Macedonia also. Is this procedure meant for us to follow today?

To aid our understanding of the broader context we should look at certain verses referring to specific actions to be performed in the assembly or as the church comes together, mentioned in chapters **11** and **14** of 1 Corinthians. In these two chapters we see many phrases that indicate the action described **did** take place **in** the assembly.

11:17 “for your meetings ...,”

11:18 “when you come together as a church...,”

11:20 “When you come together ...,”

11:33 “when you come together ...,”

Chapters 12 and 13 have no references to the assembly of the church.

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Chapter 14

14:3 “But everyone who prophesies speaks to **men ...**”

14:4 “...edifies the church.”

14:5 “...so that the church may be edified.”

14:12 “...gifts that build up the church.”

14:19 “But in the church ...”

14:23 “So if the whole church comes together ...”

14:26 “When you come together ... All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”

14:28 else “keep quiet in the church ...”

14:33b-34 “As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches.”

14:1-40 The context of the whole chapter is clearly referring to actions in the church assembly.

Chapter 15 has no reference to the assembly of the church.

None of these phrases, nor any similar phrase, is used in Chapter **16:1-4**. There simply is no mention or reference to the assembly of the church as we see so prolifically mentioned in the previous chapters of 11 and 14. (The phrase *first day of the week* is discussed in detail starting on the next page.) Could this absence in chapter 16 help us to understand the context of verses 1-4, especially since Paul now introduces a different subject than discussed previously with the words “**Now** about the collection ...” Considering the great consistency indicated in chapters 11 and 14 could we now say Paul is returning to talk about some action in the assembly with absolutely no words or phrases to say or necessarily infer that fact? It would seem that we would need some plain evidence from other scriptures to establish these actions of *putting aside* and *storing up* as taking place in the assembly when no contextual words from 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 are present to justify that conclusion.

If the Holy Spirit had wanted the subject of *putting aside* and *storing up* to be discussed in the context of the church assembly He could have instructed Paul to discuss it in chapters 11 or 14 where the church assembly was clearly the context? These **four verses** from chapter 16 could easily be placed in the context immediately following 11:16 or 11:34 or 13:13 or, in reality, almost anywhere in chapter 14. Moving 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 into any of these suggested locations would not hinder our understanding, nor add any confusion or ambiguity to any of the passages affected by this move, but it would have made clear that God wanted this *putting aside* and *storing up* to be done in a church setting. Thereby eliminating all the confusion and debate about 1 Corinthians 16:1-4. Since God did not put these verses in the context of a church worship assembly, should we?

Is it noteworthy that in chapters 11 and 14 the Holy Spirit gave much encouragement and many detail corrections concerning their partaking of the Lord’s Supper, praying, singing, and speaking (a revelation, interpretation, prophesy, etc.) in the assembly, yet no comment at all about their giving? Why no corrections, commendations nor even mention of their giving in the assembly? Can we assume their weekly congregational giving was without fault? Or is this an example of where we should remain silent where the Bible is silent?

Also, if the Holy Spirit had chosen any of the following optional wording for verse 2 (like He did in chapter 14), there would be no doubt or confusion about where the action of *putting aside* and *storing up* was to be done:

- NIV
- 1) **As you come together** each one of you should **give** a sum of money in keeping with his income
 - 2) On the first day of every week, **in your meetings** each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income
 - 3) **When you are assembled** each one of you should **give** as he has been prospered
 - 4) On the first day of every week, each one should **give to the church** in keeping with his income.

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We cannot assume any of these options to be the intent of the Holy Spirit since the words in bold print are **not** His. Any of these suggested alternatives, or by using any of the phrases used in chapters 11 or 14, would clarify that the meaning was to contribute something during the assembly, if that was His intent. Since the Holy Spirit did not add any of these phrases, should we?

I will repeat verse 2, in three versions, for convenience:

ASV 2 Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

ESV 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

NIV 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

The underlined words, above, show the different efforts to translate the same four Greek words, *παρ εαυτω τιθετω θησαυριζων*. A detail analysis of these four words is found in section **II**, starting on page 6.

As we will be discussing verse 2 in detail, we have divided the verse into three parts for convenience:

- I) Upon the first day of the week
- II) let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper
- III) that no collections be made when I come.

D) Upon the first day of the week

Most translations and 3 interlinears add the word *every* to this phrase. Therefore putting aside some money, in the manner described, should happen *every* first day of the week. This conclusion is only modified by the phrase “as he may prosper,” that is, the person is to *put aside* and *store up* in proportion to his earnings, with no reference as to how this would effect the supposed existing practice of weekly giving in the assembly.

Of the 8 times *first day of the week* occurs in the New Testament, 6 times it appears in the Gospels describing many details that happened to Jesus and His disciples on that day. We know these details only because the context specifically tells us. None of these actions are to be understood/assumed from the expression *first day of the week*. The other 2 times the phrase occurs are: **Acts 20:7**, specifying the day when they “came together” in the assembly to take the Lord’s supper, and **1 Corinthians 16:2**, specifying the day Christians were to set aside money for the poor. In each case *this phrase* only indicates the day of the event(s), not what the event was, nor where it happened. Is it valid to assume the Holy Spirit used the phrase “the first day of the week” in **16:2** to imply each person should *put aside* and *store up* some money in the assembly just because the assembly met on that day? This might be valid **if** we did not have the rest of the sentence which tells us specifically where this actions was to take place, see section **II** starting in the middle of page 6.

Please read all 8 verses where *first day of the week* appears. These examples are from **NIV**.

Mt 28:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

Mr 16:2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb

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Mr 16:9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

Lu 24:1 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.

Joh 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

Joh 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Ac 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

In America today the phrase "First day of the week" is almost always used to refer to church or religious activity. We generally use the word *Sunday* if we are referring to any other activity on that same day. Therefore it seems very natural to us to associate this phrase, when we read it in the New Testament, with the assembly of the church. But we must remember that in the first century, especially at Corinth where Paul had just recently introduced the Gospel, it simply meant the next (first) day after the Sabbath. In reading the context of each of the passages listed above, we notice no **implied** understanding nor assumption from this phrase alone. In each case this phrase only identified the day on which some activity occurred. Specific words in the context are required to understand what the activity was and/or where it occurred. Please check the context of each of the above listed passages to verify this.

Why would the Holy Spirit expect us, or the Corinthians, to assume the location of the giving to be in the assembly? Neither the book of Acts nor the synoptic Gospels were written at the time the Corinthians read this letter from Paul. The Corinthians would have no knowledge of how this phrase (*the first day of the week*) was used in Acts 20:7. Even in Acts 20:7 the context is necessary to know that the action of taking the Lord's Supper occurred at their meeting together on *the first day of the week*. **Of course**, Paul having begun the church in Corinth he would have given detail instructions as to when their meetings were to take place. They would **certainly** have known that *all* the details discussed in chapters 11 (Lord's supper) and 14 (singing, praying, revelation, interpretation, prophesy) of this letter took place in their assembly on the first day of the week! But if *the first day of the week* was to be a figure of speech implying the church assembly why not add it several times (or at least **once**) in the context of chapters 11 and 14 to help make that clear? Or should we assume *the first day of the week* implies "in the assembly" without any scriptural evidence?

What word or group of words indicate or imply that this use of the phrase "first day of the week" has a meaning in 16:1 specifying the assembly of the church as the place for the activity of *putting aside* and *storing up*? The one time *the first day of the week* is connected to the assembly, we **only** know it by the specific words that say so, in Act 20:7. So we must find some words specifying this connection in our context or give up the idea that our phrase signifies that the *putting aside* and *storing up* mentioned should/must take place in the assembly of the church. This is especially true because: **1)** the words *παρ εαυτω*, which indicates where the action of *putting aside* and *storing up* takes place means *aside, beside himself or at home* (therefore, not at/in the church) and **2)** the subject, "each of you," was to do both the putting aside and the storing (or saving up) the money, implying the one who gave the money controlled the money until Paul came, or until needed if applied to our giving today.

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This individual control could not happen if the money went into a church treasury since the church treasury is not *aside, beside himself or at (the) home* of him who performed the action of “*put aside and stored up.*”

In our passage the *what* is told by context (*putting/storing*), the *where* is told by the two Greek words, *παρ εαυτω* (aside, by himself, at home), discussed in detail in the next two pages (see Liddell & Scott lexicon, *παρα*, B.). To conclude that “*the first day of the week*” refers to more than the context specifies is unwise at best.

Though we cannot know for sure why the Holy Spirit choose “the first Day on the week” as the time for *putting aside/storing up*, maybe it was because giving was a Christian attribute to be taught and learned as a benefit to both the giver and receiver. For Christians the first day of the week would be the best time to encourage this most appropriate attribute of giving, since it was the day Christ arose, signifying the completion of his act of the most important sacrifice of giving the world had ever known, or ever will know! Therefore, it would naturally encourage the Corinthians to sacrifice for the financially poor as Christ sacrificed for us, the spiritually poor. This day would also encourage them (and us) to **extend** their giving of respect and honor to God during worship to this personal act of giving, setting aside, some money for the needy, at home. Thereby putting their faith into action.

If repetition signifies certainty (6 of the 8 times it is mentioned) then this phrase “the first day of the week” motivates us to sacrifice financially by designating that our *setting aside* be on the same day of the week as Jesus’ resurrection. Which reminds us all of the great sacrifice of His equality with God (Philippians 2:6-7) and His death on the cross as gifts to pay the debt for our sins and as a perfect example to motivate us to meet the physical needs of the poor by our financial sacrifice as Jesus met our spiritual needs by His great sacrifices!

II) let each one of you lay by him in store as he may prosper

We will be analyzing this part of our text in three ways: **A)** The Greek from 4 Interlinears, **B)** The Greek text minus the three words *παρ εαυτω* (beside), *θησαυριζων* (store up), and **C)** The English from 4 translations.

A) The Greek from 4 Interlinears, etc.

Below we have the Greek with four interlinear translations to aid us in our search for the truth.

As it is in Greek text:	εκαστος	υμων	<u>παρ εαυτω</u>	τιθετω	<u>θησαυριζων</u>	οτι	εαν	ευοδωται
Berry’s Interlinear (1897)	each	of you	by him	let put	treasuring up	whatever		he may be prosper in
Marshall’s Interlinear (1958)	each	of you	by himself	let him put	storing up	whatever		he is prospered
Brown & Comfort (1990)	each	of you	by himself	set aside	storing up	whatever		he may have prospered in
			(at home)	(something)				
Mounce’s Interlinear (2008)	each	of you	aside	should put	save it	something		as he may prosper
	Mounce’s English word order : each of you should put something aside as he may prosper and save it.							

Again it seems plain that *each of you* should *put* or *set aside* something (whatever) **and** store it up. Both verbs are singular, implying a singular subject. Even the location of the storing is specified by *παρ εαυτω*, i.e. by him, by himself, aside or by himself at home. The English meanings of these two Greek words, *παρ εαυτω*, are very important to our study. They, in this same parsing, only appear one other time in the New Testament:

Luke 9:47 “Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and made him stand beside him (*παρ εαυτω*)”

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He made the child to stand *παρ εαυτω* (beside him), answering the question “where” the action of “standing” was to be done. If we can apply this example to our discussion we could say “each of you put **beside you** some money storing it (up)” ... until needed, answering the question “where” the *putting* and *storing* was to be done.

These two Greek words, *παρ εαυτω* (next to/beside himself), have a very broad meaning. Much space is given to their English meanings in the standard lexical sources. The meaning of these two words in 1 Corinthians 16:2 is given by **each of the following lexicons/dictionaries as “at home.”** Greater details from each source is listed in Appendix C for your examination and/or verification.

- 1) **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978**, Harold Moulton,
- 2) **The Analytical Lexicon of N. T., 1993**, William Mounce,
- 3) **Thayer’s Greek lexicon of N.T.**, fourth edition, **1901**. Written **1885**, updated **1889**
- 4) **BDAG, Third Edition, of the N.T., 2000**. First edition 1957, second edition 1979.
- 5-6) **Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon**, both the Seventh edition, 1882, and the Ninth edition, 1940,
- 7) **Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, G. Abbott-Smith, 1922.**
- 8) **TDNT (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 1964), Kittel and Friedrich, V. 5, p. 731**
- 9) **Classic Greek-English and English-Greek Dictionary, 1915**, George Berry
- 10) **Dictionary of New Testament Theology, v. 3, p. 412 by Wilfred Stott, B.A., B.D., D.Phil.**
- 11) **A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Edward Robinson. 1836**

The following 5 references do not mention 1 Corinthians 16:2 specifically but each one mentions the usage of *παρα* with the dative as specifying location, in harmony with the above examples.

- 1) **A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,**
- 2) **The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament**, Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-Literary Sources; by James Moulton and George Milligan, - **1930**, p. 479.
- 3) **The New Englishman’s Greek Concordance and Lexicon, Wigram-Green, 1982**
- 4) **A Reader’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, by Sakae Kubo, **1975**.
- 5) **A Grammar Of the Greek New Testament, A. T. Robertson, printed 1934, editions: 1914,1915,1923**

In my limited experience it is very unusual to have eleven of the 16 Greek Lexicons/Dictionaries/Grammars listed above all agreeing as to the meaning of two different words appearing together, as in *παρ εαυτω*. Please notice the last 5 on the list do not define the two words together or do not reference 1 Cor. 16:2, but what they do say is compatible with the other 11 authorities. More details on these examples, plus 6 commentaries in Appendix C.

Please also note: **I could not find one** Lexicon/Grammar/dictionary to say *παρ εαυτω*, in 1 Corinthians 16:2, could be understood as describing the manner in which the “placing” and storing” was to be done, that is, in the instrumental case. All authorities were consistent in explaining *παρ εαυτω* to mean a place where the action of the two verbs was to be done, that is, in the **locative** case.

It seems to me at this point that if the phrase really is instrumental, i. e. describing how the action of the verbs was to be done, then every one of the scholars I listed, who have written over a period of **164 years** (most with several editions, i. e. opportunities to correct mistakes) must have been unable or unwilling to do the analysis required to come to the conclusion that, in our context, *παρ' εαυτω* really is instrumental and not **locative**.

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Since all these sources are mere men they could, of course, all be in error. But the evidence required to prove **all** of them wrong would be tremendous. If you have any lexical evidence that would diminish the effect of this unanimous testimony I strongly **plead** with you to please send me a copy for consideration.

Until that happens we must conclude that *παρ εαυτω* **in our context** means that the subject (“each one of you”) is instructed to put aside **at home** some offering, depending on income, and save it (store it up) until Paul’s arrival. The choice of words and their meaning are too plain to allow any other understanding.

I could only find six translations, notice the dates published, that specify “at home” in 1 Corinthians 16:2.

- ** 1 & 2) **William Tyndale, both 1526 and 1534 versions - 1 Cor. 16:2** In some Sabbath day let every one of you put aside **at home**, and lay up whatsoever he thinketh meet,
- 3) R. E. Weymouth, **1902 - 1 Cor. 16:2** On the first day of every week let each of you put on one side and store up **at his home** whatever gain has been granted to him;
- 4) New World Translation, Watchtower Bible Society, **1950 - 1 Cor. 16:2** Every first day of the week let each of you **at his own house** set something aside in store as he may prospering,
- 5) New Testament, Confraternity version, (Catholic), **1952 - 1 Cor. 16:2** On the first day of the week, let each one of you put aside **at home** and lay up whatever he has a mind to, ...
- 6) A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament, **1981. 1 Cor. 16:2** μεα σαββατου, first day of the week κατα distributive, every. παρ εαυτω **at home**. τιθετω ... set aside. θησαυριζων ... treasure, save up.

Even the more standard versions listed below; ASV/KJV- lay by him, ESV/RSV- put something aside, and NIV- set aside, are all compatible with the idea of the location of the *setting aside* being done at home. Actually for each one to *put aside by (next to) him and save up* could very reasonably (and most probably) be done at home because “at home” would be the most convenient place for each individual to store the money that he set aside. But if **any translation** had written “in your meetings,” “during the assembly,” “as you come together” or anything else to say or necessarily imply the collection **could** be done “at” or “in” the assembly then that translation would have been in direct contradiction to the unanimous decisions of the Greek Lexicographers who say “at home”!

The apostle Paul took the Gospel to Corinth and stayed there for at least a year and a half, Acts 18:11. If *giving* was to be an “act of worship” in the assembly (see Appendix A for definition of “Act of Worship”) Paul would certainly have conveyed this fact to these new Christians. If they were already giving weekly in the assembly, why give these specific details for each individual to save at home for the saints in Jerusalem instead of using, or trying to increase, the current church funds? The Holy Spirit made no effort to contrast, compare, combine or even discuss how this new *putting aside* should/would effect the current weekly assembly contribution, if there was one. It’s not like these were mature Christians who needed no continued instruction regarding how to conduct their worship service, just read 1 Corinthians 14! Is it reasonable to consider the possibility that there was no such “act of worship” in the assembly at Corinth at the time Paul gave these instructions?

B) The Greek text minus the three words παρ εαυτω and θησαυριζων

In an additional effort to illustrate the importance of these three Greek words (*παρ εαυτω, θησαυριζων*) let us try to translate the clause without these three words.

This clause in Greek:	εκαστος υμων	--	τιθετω	--	ο τι εαν	εσο δωται
Berry’s Interlinear (1897)	each of you	--	let put	--	whatever	he may be prosper in
Marshall’s Interlinear (1958)	each of you	--	let him put	--	whatever	he is prospered
Brown & Comfort (1990)	each of you	--	set aside (something)	--	whatever	he may have prospered in

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Mounce's Interlinear each of you -- should put -- something as he may prosper
in *English word order* : each of you should put something [aside]-- as he may prosper.

The *altered* English would be something like:

ASV - let each one of you lay aside --, as he may prosper,

KJV - let every one of you lay aside --, as God hath prospered him,

ESV - each of you is to put something aside --, as he may prosper,

NIV - each one of you should set aside -- a sum of money in keeping with his income,

These altered translations, **without** παρ εαυτω (next to/beside) and θησαυριζων (store up) would certainly leave open the possibility that the *putting aside* could be done in the assembly, or at church. Yet this is the very same conclusion reached by many even though the three words, παρ εαυτω and θησαυριζων, **are** included in the text. If the Holy Spirit had wanted to leave open the possibility that the action described should/could be done *at* or *in* the church why did He include these three words in the text? These three words would add no information about our giving in the assembly, if that was His intent, but would only add confusion to the command. What did the Holy Spirit accomplish by adding these three words? Or is it a reasonable possibility the Holy Spirit added these three words to assure the understanding that the *putting aside/storing up* would **not** be done in the assembly?

Remember the words, παρ εαυτω, answer the question *where* the actions of the verbs are to be performed. (Liddell & Scott lexicon, παρα, B.; BDAG, παρα: **B. with dative** ... exhibits close association-1 b *α. at home*)

Realizing it is most probable that all the Corinthians received this information at the same time from a public reading of Paul's letter in the assembly (cf. Colossians 4:16), maybe we can now understand why the three words, παρ εαυτω and θησαυριζων, were necessary in verse 2. The Holy Spirit **could** have said:

“As you come together on the first day of every week **each one should give** as he has been prospered.”

The Corinthians were probably in church at the time of hearing Paul's letter read, making this suggested alternative reading very easy to comprehend and obey. The Holy Spirit never wastes words. Why were these words (παρ εαυτω and θησαυριζων) added? Maybe these words were necessary to insure the hearers, probably “in church” at the time, would know the place for *setting aside* this money was **not** to be in the worship assembly.

C) The English from 4 translations

whole subject	compound predicate	adverbial clause
ASV - let each one of you	<u>lay</u> by him in <u>store</u> ,	as he may prosper,
KJV - let every one of you	<u>lay</u> by him in <u>store</u> ,	as God hath prospered him,
ESV - each of you	is to <u>put</u> something aside and <u>store</u> it up,	as he may prosper,
NIV - each one of you	should <u>set</u> aside a sum of money, <u>saving</u> it up,	in keeping with his income,

The simple subject is *you*. The two verbs are *lay*, *put* or *set aside* **and** *store up*. The same subject, you, is to do both the actions of laying (putting/setting) and storing (saving). This very simple observation is critical to our understanding of how we are to obey this command. Every individual who chooses to obey this passage must do so by **both** laying (aside) and storing (saving up), thereby retaining control of his savings until Paul arrives, or

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until needed if applied to our giving today. Therefore it cannot be in the church treasury which is **not** under the control of *each one of you*, nor is it located *by him, by himself, or at (the) home of the person who set aside, nor next to him* as in Luke 9:47.

As noted in chapter 1 verse 2, this letter was written to the church, not to individuals. Yes, we know **all** the information included in this letter must be followed/obeyed by **every** individual Christian, but this particular context (16:1-4) was specifically written to “each one of you” individually, not to the group/church as a whole. The additional effort taken by adding the words “of you” (Greek: υμῶν) to specify this contrast is noteworthy. It seems to be just another inference that the actions of *putting aside* **and** *saving up* are to be done individually, not *as* or *in* a group.

Would we understand it differently if the verse had said “Each of you put aside some money **to be stored up** until needed.” In this case anyone or any group could do the storing, but our passage has a compound predicate. God inspired these words, they are correct and must be understood as written.

Especially notice the very poor English wording of the ASV and KJV: “lay by him in store.” The words “*by him*” could be **mis**understood as signifying the person who did the act, i.e. the act of giving was done *by him*. Giving no information at all as to **where** the giving/saving was to be done, in direct opposition to the rules of Greek grammar.

I believe every Greek word in the Bible was chosen for a reason. Have you ever wondered why the verb *lay aside* (τιθετω) was chosen instead of the verb αποδιδωμι, meaning *give*, or any one of **13** other verbs that could be translated *give*? If the Holy Spirit had used any Greek verb which could be translated *give* it would have been very awkward, or even contradictory to the accompanying verb *store up*, which has the same subject as the verb *set-aside*, i.e. “each one of you.” The two verbs, used together, imply keeping control of the money in question, until used for the specified purpose. If Holy Spirit had wanted to convey the thought of turning the control of the money over to the church He could have easily used any one of several other verbs which could have been translated *give*. But we must accept the words as written, with their obvious implications.

Does 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 change the meaning of τιθετω from setting aside to giving? Some form of the word **give** is used 9 times in these two chapters in 2 Corinthians, all referring to the action of transferring money from the Christians in Corinth (and Macedonia) to meet the need in Jerusalem.

When some scriptures seem to contradict each other, the first question to ask is “Which one is correct?” The obvious answer is “Both (or all) of them are correct and inspired!” Therefore our understand/conclusion must allow for the inspiration of all scriptures. Since any form of **giving** implies transferring ownership/control, the **giving** referred to in chapters 8 and 9 refers to the action of sending/transferring the ownership/control of the money from Corinth (and Macedonia) to Jerusalem. When that action was performed the money was given, before that time the money was set aside at home.

III) that no collections be made when I come.

This is obviously the reason for the previous instructions. Paul did not want to wait until after he arrived to spend the required time and effort to make the several collections needed to allow everyone to participate adequately.

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Therefore they should prepare for Paul's coming by putting aside some money each week at home so that when he arrives the only action necessary was for each one to bring their savings to him, probably at the assembly, for delivery to Jerusalem. This would be the one collection mentioned in verse 1. Multiple collections would be undesirable and unnecessary. Please note the word *collection* in verse 1 is singular, in verse 2 it is plural.

It is logically necessary, in some contexts, that our understanding of a passage can and should be made based on whether a noun is singular or plural, as Paul did in Galatians 3:16.

ASV Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his **seed**. He saith not, And to **seeds**, as of many; but as of one, And to thy **seed**, which is Christ.

NIV Galatians 3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his **seed**. The Scripture does not say "and to **seeds**," meaning many people, but "and to your **seed**," meaning one person, who is Christ.

The last two verses of our context are:

3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: 4 and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.

These last two verses summarize Paul's plans as to how to handle the money given. In his second letter to the Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9, Paul continues to give much detail about how and why the collection should be taken and delivered. Reading these two chapters will complete our study of this subject.

Summary

- 1) "Now about the collection for God's people," v.1. Implies there is to be a collection.
- 2) *The first day of the week* was a phrase which only meant the day of occurrence of some activity. Only the context can tell what the event was or where it took place.
- 3) The expression "Each one of you" implies Paul is talking to each and every Christian individually, at Corinth and the churches in Galatia, and probably each church in Macedonia (2 Corinthians 8 and 9).
- 4) Each individual is to do two things: *put aside* and *store up* some money in keeping with his income until Paul comes, or until needed if these instructions apply today.
- 5) At least eleven of the 16 Greek lexicons, and at least 6 translations, agree and specify "at home" as the place for these actions to *put aside* and *store up* some money.
- 6) Paul gave these instructions so that when he came there would be no necessity for several collections to ensure that all had sufficient opportunity to give. This simple procedure of only one collection, after he arrived, implied that regular planned putting-aside/saving up over time would be much more profitable for the needy saints in Jerusalem and for those who gave, than emergency collections when he arrived.
- 7) The three key words, $\pi\alpha\rho\ \epsilon\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$ (by himself, at home) and $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\rho\iota\zeta\omega\nu$ (store up), if not present in the original Greek would certainly leave open the possibility that the *putting aside* and *storing up* could be done in the worship assembly. But their presence plainly forbid that understanding.

In closing, I ask again that you do not infer too much too quickly from this attempted exegesis. I plead with you to read this several times with sincere prayer and discussions with other Bible students/teachers.

I sincerely pray that you will consider the research presented and please share with me any evidence you may have or discover that might modify, discredit or weaken anything presented here, as I too love the truth more than my pride and will publicly change when the evidence warrants.

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We all have a personal relationship with our Savior and our God. As we study and pray about this subject we must be willing to change only when the evidence is sufficient. God will help us to determine when that has happened. If we love the truth God will give us the wisdom and strength we have prayed for, to decide correctly, 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, James 1:5-8, Philippians 4:13, 2 Corinthians 1:12-14, 2 Peter 3:16.

We have proven beyond a reasonable doubt only one point, that is, 1 Corinthians 16:2 teaches each and every first century Christian to put aside and save some money at home every Sunday, as he has been prospered, to be used to help the needy.

One necessary implication from this conclusion: This passage does not teach, nor support *giving* as an act of worship in the church assemblies. Please see Appendix A for the definition of “Act of Worship” and Appendix B to examine “A reasoned process,” an example of how some people justify giving as an act of worship.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration... ..Cliff..

Appendix A

What is an Act of Worship?

When someone does something kind to his fellow man it can be referred to as an “Act of kindness.” Likewise we commonly refer to an “Act of love,” “Act of violence,” etc. We will be using “Act of worship” in the same sense, that is, any act on our part which shows or demonstrates worship to God. Since the phrase “act of worship” is found in only one verse, in only one translation (NIV Romans 12:1), we will only discuss the phrase as used in our common English.

Most words in any language have more than one meaning. Just open any dictionary to any page and try to find a word with only one meaning. Only the context can determine which meaning is to be used.

In this paper an effort has been made to use the word *worship* consistently as Webster defines it:

"1 a) reverence or devotion for a deity" [which can be shown by individuals, outside the assembly, Matthew 14:33, 28:9, Romans 12:1, etc. -cb] **or**

"b) a church service or other rite showing this."

[as “in the assembly,” Luke 1:10 or in church, Acts 13:2, 20:7, 1 Corinthians 14, Hebrews 10:25 -cb]

Therefore any action or act, physical or mental, on our part which shows or displays reverence or devotion to God would be an “act” of worship. When we observe others it is often impossible to know if they are performing an act of worship, since we cannot know their heart and their motive. Therefore we should concentrate on our own actions and be certain that we are truly worshipping in our efforts to serve God.

Sometimes the word *worship* is used in the sense of a, that is, anytime an individual does something for God or in obedience to God or demonstrating Christian principles, it could be seen as demonstrating "reverence or devotion to God," therefore would be thought of as "an act of worship" even if it was done outside the assembly. The word *Worship* occurs over 70 times in the New Testament, usually denoting action outside the assembly.

Can any act of worship by an individual, **outside** the assembly, also be acceptable to God **in** the assembly?

Most people should think of our private prayers as an act of worship. If, while outside the assembly, we sincerely sing a religious song while thinking clearly of the meaning of the words, could this be an act of private worship? If a believer does physical exercise while at all times thanking God for the great human bodies we all have and doing the best we can to take care of it, could this be considered giving reverence or devotion to the God who created it, thereby worshiping Him? Debating with any false teacher is obeying God, as exemplified several times in the book of Acts. Would this generally be considered giving reverence or devotion to God, therefore an act of worship? A woman teaching the gospel to her neighbor is certainly respecting and reverencing God, therefore worshipping. But could all these private acts of worship be repeated in the assembly? Most Christians would agree that having a false teacher proclaim his doctrine in a church worship assembly, even in a debate, would not be acceptable to God. Having several people vocalizing personal prayers at the same time, especially if others were singing at the same time, would certainly violate most of the instructions in chapter 14, especially verse 40: “But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.” Thus God has **added restrictions to the public assembly** that are not applicable to the private (individual) acts of worship outside the assembly. Is God even more specific than this in His directions regarding our acts of worship in the assembly? When we say “Act of worship” in the assembly we mean any action planned for the entire Christian audience to perform together as a group which shows respect or devotion to God.

Appendix A

What is an Act of Worship?

Can we find enough evidence to prove that any valid private act of worship, demonstrating respect/love for God, can only be acceptable **in** the public worship assembly **if** it is specified by scripture? Let us consider the following four points in our effort to answer that question.

First, let us look at Leviticus 10:1-3,

1 ¶ Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command ["which the Lord did not command them" - Septuagint, ASV, KJV, ESP -cb]. 2 So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3 ¶ Moses then said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke of when he said: "Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored."" Aaron remained silent.

Other versions say "Strange fire, unholy fire or profane fire" in describing the fire actually used by Aaron's sons. The point is: God is very particular about how we worship Him in the assembly, if God specifies we can't generalize! God specified the type of fire to use, Nadab and Abihu should not have generalized the type of fire to anything other than what God specified! We can't add anything at all to God's specifications for worship in the assembly, else we could do things like: physical exercise, have instrumental music, women teaching the Bible and religious debates, etc., as we worship together in the assembly. In the above example Nadab and Abihu simply lit their incense burners with a strange or unauthorized fire, that is, a fire from a different source than what God specified. Today God has specified singing, He did not specify any particular songs nor any attribute of singing, such as speed, frequency, volume (except properly and orderly), etc. so we can choose any spiritual song and can vary our singing in speed, volume, frequency, etc. But we can't generalize to a different type of music, such as instrumental. I am sure we all understand that anytime God specifies anything, for example in public worship, we have the privilege to choose any **sub** category of the thing specified. We do not have the authority to choose a different choice in the same category. This is true of anything God specifies. For example God specified that a man can marry any woman. Any female will qualify as a possible mate without further restrictions, **BUT** we can not generalize man's mate to be any human being! All males and young females were prohibited by God when His specified "**woman.**" When God says "A man [singular] should leave his father and mother and be united to his wife [singular]" He is automatically prohibiting multiple women married to one man, and multiple men married to one woman. When God specifies singular we can't generalize to accept the plural.

Given Paul's admonition in Romans 15:4 ("*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope,*") what can we learn from this story of Nadab and Abihu? They were told to use a specific fire. They could not add another fire to the list of approved fires! I am sure they thought the new fire was "just as good" as the one specified and probably said something like "It's no big deal, no one will ever know!!" They were wrong! If God specifies we can't generalize!

Second, what did Paul say in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34,

17 ¶ In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. ... 20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, 21 for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. 22 Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!

23 ¶ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31 But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. 32 When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. 33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. 34 If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.

There are many, many lessons to be learned from this passage, but we will restrict our comments here to the point Paul is making about their eating a meal with the Lord's Supper. This practice by the Corinthians was condemned and eliminated from the worship, verses 33 and 34.

The Corinthians had generalized the eating of the Lord's Supper into eating anything they wanted? How serious was their practice of adding an unauthorized act of eating a common meal to the worship service? Please read again verses 27-30.

27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

Taking the Lord's Supper "in an unworthy manner," for example, eating a common meal at the same time, had caused spiritual weakness, sickness and some to fall asleep. The most severe consequences, even spiritual death, could result from adding anything to God's specifications for Lord's Supper. Could this concern of God's be only for the communion, or is He equally concerned about all aspects of the public worship service?

If God specifies we can't generalize! Does this imply that only *authorized* acts of worship can be practiced in the assembly?

Third Paul also says in 1 Corinthians 14:34 that women are to keep silent in all the congregations of the saints. Paul brought the Gospel to Corinth and stayed there for a year and a half. Because Paul was inspired he taught them how to worship correctly, using men for all public speaking. Maybe Paul assumed they would only do what he had told them to do in the assembly. God specified that men are to speak in the assembly. We cannot generalize this to include women. The women speaking in the assemblies is another example of something unauthorized and is therefore eliminated, again emphasizing "if God specifies we can't generalize!"

Fourth Marriage was originated by God for the benefit of mankind. When two Christians marry they are honoring God by following His instructions, thanking Him for this great blessing, and especially for the new lifelong mate who will help them face the difficulties of life and enjoy the many blessings of our existence on this earth. Referring to God though prayer and Bible reading are included procedures in most Christian weddings. And the process is usually ended with something like "What God has joined together let no man separate." What a great example of showing "reverence or devotion" to God, therefore it is an "act of worship." Although most Christian marriages occur in a church building, can we all agree there is no authority to have a marriage ceremony conducted in the worship service? But if it is acceptable to God to have **any** act of worship in the public worship assembly, then marriage ceremonies must also be considered acceptable! Since God specified certain actions for Christians to perform in the worship assembly and at the same time eliminated certain other

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actions (eating a meal, women speaking and any action which is not “done in a fitting and orderly way.”) how then can anyone generalize God’s plan for public worship by adding any “Act of worship” not specified by God?

All these restrictions to our public worship are clear and exemplify the strictness God applies to the public assemblies. Therefore we cannot even consider adding anything to the assembly worship beyond what God specifies in His **complete and holy** word, 2 Peter 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17!

Of course the Lord's Supper is only observed under the **b** definition of worship (listed above), that is, in the assembly according to Acts 20:7, and 1 Corinthians 11:17 ff. Whereas our praying, singing, speaking/preaching can be done **in** the assembly (1 Corinthians 14) **or** outside the assembly as exemplified in many scriptures in the New Testament.

This implies an interesting question. God has only specificized that the Lord’s Supper be taken in the assembly, would it be acceptable for us to generalize God’s procedure by taking it anywhere outside the assembly? If God specifies can we generalize? No. But God can. God specified praying, singing and speaking in the assembly, and He also generalized those actions outside the assembly; singing: Acts 5:13 and James 5:13, praying and speaking/preaching: scriptures to numerous to list. There are no scriptures to generalize taking the Lord’s supper outside the assembly.

Therefore the assembly must be planned at a set time in such a way as to be readily understood by the whole congregation, else how would we know when to abstain from eating our Sunday meals, and when to have women be silent?

Also 1 Corinthians 14:40 says “*But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way*” in context, is talking about specific actions **in** the assembly, implying a recognizable time frame. We must have a practical why to determine the time *the assembly* starts and stops. The only **specified** reason for our assemblies is to partake of the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7) through which we show reverence and devotion to God. The other acts of worship; singing, praying and speaking, are all **necessarily** implied by 1 Corinthians 14.

Paul says in chapter 11:17 the Corinthian’s assembly did more harm than good, therefore **our** assembly **could** do more harm than good. One way to ensure our assemblies will be “harmful” is to have planned congregational actions during the assembly which are not authorized by scriptures, like the Corinthians did when they added a common meal or even when they did the approved actions in a disorderly fashion. Look closely at verses 11:17-34 and the entire chapter 14 (especially verse 40) to see the many things Paul is correcting because they are harmful to the congregational worship.

Therefore, would it be reasonable to consider that only those acts of worship specified by scripture are acceptable to God **in** the assembly?

Please give close attention to these two verses, 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

If these two verses do not require scriptural justification for any planned/scheduled actions for all members during the congregational worship time, please explain why they do not. Our group worship as a church family certainly qualifies as a *good work*, therefore the **scriptures** will **thoroughly equip** us to do this in a manner acceptable to God. Therefore any action that is planned and intended for participation by all members in

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attendance must be scripturally specified, else it must be left out of our worship as we come together in the assembly.

If God specifies, only He can generalize! If God did not specify something for the assembly, neither can we!

Appendix B

A Reasoned Process

By *A Reasoned Process* I simply mean a process of human reasoning whereby some activity by a Christian is justified, as opposed to an activity that is the direct result of a scriptural command, a necessary inference, or an approved example. If any activity by a Christian is the direct result of following/obeying a command (e.g. always telling the truth), a necessary inference (e.g. taking the Lord's supper *every* week) or an approved example (e.g. the assembly meeting in a private home) then we can feel save and confident this activity by a Christian is approved by God.

For any **other** activity by a Christian to be approved by God it must have had some indirect scriptural basis. That is, there must have been some scripturally approved action from which we can correctly reason, through various steps of valid logic, to justify the action in question. Only then will the resulting activity be approved by God.

If a reasoned process and the resulting activity by a Christian is deduced by valid human reasoning, is it therefore approved by God? This is a very broad question. Can such a generalized question be answered simply "yes" or "no"? I sincerely hope you will agree the variables are far too numerous, complex and important for such a simple answer. It seems the only acceptable response to this question might be ... each and every reasoned process and its resulting activity must be examined on its own merits with much time spent on the validity of the logic of each step in the process, and *at least* equal time spent in scriptural analysis and open minded prayer seeking God's help, before any reasoned process can be accepted **or** rejected.

Please examine the following example of *A Reasoned Process*:

1) This reasoned process deals with how is "helping the needy" financed? Is this example a valid reasoned process, and is the resulting activity by a Christian, stated in the conclusion, acceptable to God?

Step 1: **Both** individuals and churches are encouraged/commanded to help the poor, Acts 2:47, 4:32-37, 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, etc. **And** certain people (seven men) were put in charge of feeding the poor in Jerusalem to ensure efficiency, i.e. so that no one would be overlooked, Acts 6:1-6. This is certainly an approved example of some type of simple organization for the purpose of efficiency.

Step 2: **Since** this procedure was acceptable in Jerusalem it should be acceptable in any other city where the need was sufficiently similar.

Step 3: **Therefore**, it is reasonable that the elders in Judea who received the funds mentioned in Acts 11:27-30 **could** have used some similar procedure for the distribution of those funds. Likewise when the funds from Corinth were sent to Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:3) those funds **could** certainly have been distributed the same way.

Step 4: **Given the above conclusions**, it would certainly be reasonable by human standards to have a common source for the funds needed to accomplish the task assigned to these seven men in Jerusalem or a similar team in any other city.

Step 5: **Therefore**, it would have certainly been much more efficient and reasonable to have each Christian regularly put their freewill offering into a common fund from which these seven men could withdraw the necessary **daily** expenses, as opposed to having each of the seven men search out individual donors each day seeking the amount of money/food needed for that day, and/or to wait for the donors to show up with the needed supplies/money.

Step 6: **Therefore** it is reasonable today for the elders to use such an organization/procedure/common fund to accomplish the same result of meeting the daily *physical needs* of the poor, i.e. feeding/helping the poor in an efficient manner.

Appendix B

A Reasoned Process

Step 7: Therefore it is equally reasonable to use this fund to expedite the meeting of ourselves together by building/buying a meeting room for an assembly too large to meet in any one home.

[Think about Step 7 for a minute. Notice in step 6 the use of *physical needs* in the context of helping the poor/needy and then reasoning that if we can meet the *physical needs* of the poor surely we can also meet the *physical needs* of non-poor Christians, then concluding that meeting the physical needs of all Christians can be met by using the same collected fund. Then concluding that meeting the physical needs of all Christians includes providing a larger meeting room/building for the assembly. Is it valid for Step 7 to be included in this reasoned process? Or is this step “the edge of the wedge” which can be used to separate man’s actions from God’s law which completely furnishes us for every good work, 2 Timothy 3:16-17?]

Step 8: Therefore it is equally reasonable to use this fund to meet any other physical needs of Christians in the assembly as defined by the elders, for example, air conditioning for the place of worship, full time secretary, paid song leader, a janitor for the church building, etc.

Step 9: ... Etc., etc.

Conclusion: Therefore it is reasonable today for the elders to use this procedure/fund to meet any need defined by the elders.

Is this reasoned process logically valid? Can we be confident this conclusion is in keeping with God’s will for His church? When we explain our decision to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10) will He say “Well done good and faithful servant, enter into my rest!” Or will He say “Depart from me ...” (Matt. 7:21-23, 25:41-46) because this conclusion has strayed to far away from the details of His complete Word?

One of the biggest problems with a reasoned process is the difficulty locating which step violates the principle that we must use only the scriptures for all we do and teach in God’s church. In step 7, we have changed the purpose for the money collected into the fund! In scripture the purpose was providing food and other *needs* for the poor! Once we justify the changing of God’s stated purpose from helping the poor to meeting “our” convenience we are launched into a never ending spiral of using his fund for literally **anything!!** Consider the following *extension* of God’s stated purpose:

- 1) Is it acceptable to change the purpose of baptism from forgiveness of sins, to using it just to join a church?
- 2) Can we be baptized every so often (e.g. a tenth anniversary) just to renew our spiritual commitment??
- 3) Can we change the purpose of singing in the assembly from worshipping God to entertaining ourselves?
- 4) Can we change the purpose of preaching for salvation of souls to preaching for earning money?
- 5) If we do anything God tells us to do because we love Him and want to obey Him then He is pleased with us.
Is He pleased with us if we do the same thing to gain popularity, influence, power or money?

For instance, if we accept step 6 must we therefore also accept step 7?

Before you answer please consider other things done in the worship service of denominations? Could this reasoning process be used to justify almost any activity desired by church leaders? For example could we add a step 9?

Step 9: Therefore, it is equally reasonable to use this fund to meet other desires of the majority of Christians (or the elders) in the assembly, for example, instrumental music?

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If **Step 9** is acceptable could we also add other types of entertainment (e.g. a performance by a magician) or other scripturally unsupported activities to the worship service?

While in China we had many very unusual Bible studies. I remember one in particular that sheds light on this question. A young lady came for a study. Shortly after the study began we were on the subject of how to worship in the assembly. Suddenly she asked "Can I dance in the worship service?" I was shocked by what I thought was a very unusual question. I very calmly said "No. The Bible does not allow dancing in the worship service." She was very upset and said "But I am a professional dancer. That is how I express myself!" I stressed I was only talking about the 2 or 3 hours each week during the worship service. She never recovered from the disappointment. She left shortly after that and I am very sad to say I never heard from her again.

God has blessed us all with a great variety of talents to do many things. If we give credit to God for our talents **as we use them** in His service, are we not, in fact, showing Him honor and respect (thereby worshipping Him) as we do so? But would anyone say using one's talent to sing justifies a operatic solo (in a foreign language) in the worship service?

Maybe some would suggest that we just eliminate Step 9. But, remember the purpose of the fund established in Step 1 was to meet the needs of the poor. Can any reasoned process which changes the purpose for a God given activity be acceptable to God? For example, changing our singing to praise God in worship service to singing in our assembly for entertainment? Or can we change teaching the gospel for the purpose of saving souls to preaching the gospel for the purpose public acclaim or a large salary? Is either example acceptable to God?

Is it possible that the one thing that separates the saved from the lost in (NIV) Matt. 7:21-23, 25:41-46 is the purpose for their action or inaction?

7:21 ¶ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' 44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' 45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, [Maybe because we spent our funds on physical comforts for the congregation. -cb] you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

How can someone who accepts a reasoned process that justifies using funds for a different purpose than that specified by God then object to using the funds for **any needs(?)** of the congregation established by the elders or the majority? How will Jesus respond to such an explanation when we have to give an account of our actions to Him on our judgment day? 2 Corinthians 5:10 ... Do you really want to find out??

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The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978, Harold Moulton,

εαυτου, ... παρ' εαυτω, *with one's self, at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

παρα, ... παρ' εαυτω, *at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

The Analytical Lexicon of N. T., 1993, William Mounce,

εαυτου: ... παρ εαυτω, *with one's self, at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

παρα: ... **παρ εαυτω**, *at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

Thayer's Greek lexicon of N.T., fourth edition, **1901**. Written **1885**, updated **1889**

εαυτου: ... παρ εαυτω, *by him, i.e. at his home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

παρα: ... **II.** with the DATIVE, παρα indicates that something is or is done either in the immediate vicinity of some one, or (metaph.) in his mind, near by, beside, in the power of, in the presence of, with, ...

b. with, i.e. in one's house; in one's town; in one's society: ...

... **παρ εαυτω** *at his home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

BDAG, Third Edition, of the N.T., 2000. First edition 1957, second edition 1979.

εαυτου: **(1) indicator of identity with the person speaking or acting, self - (a) ... η. παρ εαυτω**, put something aside **1 Corinthians 16:2**

παρα: **B. with dative**, the case that exhibits close association -

¶ marker of nearness in space, at/by (the side of), beside, near, with, according to the standpoint from which the relationship is viewed.

(b) in (someone's) house, city, company, etc.

α. house:- so probably also εκοστος παρ εαυτω *each one at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2**

Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon,

Seventh edition, 1882,

εαυτου, dative. reflexive pronoun 3rd person. ... παρ εαυτω *at his own house*

παρα ... **B.** WITH DATIVE *beside, alongside of, by*, with verbs implying rest, used to answer the question *where?* ... **II.** of persons, ... **2.** ... *at one's house*, μενιεν παρα τινι **Ib.**

Ninth edition, 1940,

εαυτου: ...; παρ εαυτω *at his own house*

παρα: ... **B.** WITH DATIVE denoting rest *by the side of* any person or thing, **answering the question where?**
II. of persons, beside, ... **2.** *at one's house or place, with one.*

Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, G. Abbott-Smith, 1922.

εαυτου, ... reflexive pronoun; **1.** ... added to an active verb, Acts 14:14, ... παρ εαυτω, *at his own home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2;**

παρα, **I.** C. gen. pers., ... **II.** C. dative pers. (exc. John 19:25, παρα τω σταρω) *by the side of, beside, by, with, ...*; παρ εαυτω, *at home*, **1 Corinthians 16:2;**

TDNT (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 1964), Kittel and Friedrich, V. 5, p. 731

παρα: **B. παρα with the dative (Locative)** - [no other type of Dative is mentioned with παρα. - cb]
1. Spatial: **a.** with things: ... **b.** With persons: ...

In the NT sense (Of direct proximity, "beside") occurs at Luke 9:47 "εστησεν αυτο παρ εαυτω." For the sense (Of a wider circle, "with," "by") compare **1 Corinthians 16:2: παρ εαυτω, "at home."**

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Classic Greek-English and English-Greek Dictionary, 1915, George Berry

εαυτου, ...:- Reflexive pronoun of 3rd person, *of himself, herself, itself, etc.*, ...

παρα, I. with dative *by the side of, beside, alongside of, by*, both of places and things, as also of persons; παρ εμοι, *before me*; ...; παρ εαυτω *at one's home*.

The New Englishman's Greek Concordance and Lexicon, Wigram-Green, 1982

εαυτου, pronoun reflexive. (a) third person s. and pl., *himself, herself, itself, themselves*, Matt. 9:3,21; (b) first, second person pl., *ourselves, yourselves*, 2 Cor. 7:1,11; (c) as recip. pronoun, *one another*, Eph. 4:32; (d) as possessive pronoun, *his, her, their*, Matt. 8:22.

παρα, prep. (a) with gen. *from, of*; (b) with dative, *at, by, beside, near*, John 19:25, before, in the sight of, Romans 2:13; among, Matt. 28:15; (c) with acc., *against, more than, beyond*, ...

A Reader's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Sakae Kubo, 1975.

Appendix I, ... 80 εαυτου oneself ... 219 παρα ... with dative, at, by, beside, near.

A Grammar Of the Greek New Testament by A. T. Robertson, printed 1934, editions: 1914,1915,1923

Chapter XIII, PREPOSITIONS, ... (k) Παρα 1. ... 2. ... [Quotation starts at the bottom of page 613 - cb]

3. ... Παρα occurs in the N.T. with three cases. The locative has 50 examples, the accusative 60, the ablative 78. [**παρα is not used with the instrumental case in N. T.**, according to Robertson. -cb]

4. *With the Locative.* Παρα with the locative is nearly confined to persons. Only one other example appears, *ιστηκεισαν παρα τω σταυρω* (Jo. 19 : 25). This confining of παρα to persons is like the usual Greek idiom, though Homer¹ used it freely with both. Homer used it also as an adverb and in the shortened form παρ. The only instance in the N. T. of the locative with παρα after a verb of motion is in Luke 9:47, *εστησεν αυτο παρ εαυτω*, though here D reads *ταυτον*. The locative with παρα leaves the etymological idea unchanged so that we see the preposition in its simplest usage. Cf. *ον απλειτον παρα Καρτω* (2 Tim. 4 : 13) **as a typical example of the use with persons which is much like apud in Latin, 'at one's house'** (Jo. 1:40), 'in his society,' etc. So *καταλυσαι παρα* (Lu. 19 : 7), *μενω παρα* (John 14 : 17), *ξενιζω παρα* (Ac. 21 : 16). Cf. Ac. 21 : 8. In Rev. 2 : 13; Mt. 28 : 15, παρα has the idea of 'among.' The phrase παρα τω θεω (Lu. 1 : 30) is common. The word is used in ethical relations,² also like παρ εμοι (2 Cor. 1 : 17). Cf. *τι απιστον κρινεται παρ υμιν* (Ac. 26 : 8) and *φρονιμοι παρ' εαυτοις* (Ro. 12 : 16). Παρα with the locative does not occur in Hebrews. ... [compare other references on pages 567, 569, especially **570, ... 3.** -cb]

A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, by F. Blass and A. Debrunner, 1896 with ten editions through 1960. (A translation and Revision of the nineteenth German Edition ... by Robert W. Funk)

§ 238. (page 124) Παρα with dative. The dative is least used with παρα (on account of the competition of προς §239). Nevertheless, it is found in all NT books except Hebrews and Jude. **The meaning 'by, near, beside' answering the question 'where?'** only with persons (predominantly also in classical; Hellenistic, s. Wifstrand, K. Hum. Vet. -samf. i Lund, Arsber. 1933-4 rv 60ff.) with the exception of Jn 19:25 παρα τω σταυρω (Homil Clem 11.15.2 παρα τη θεου θρησκευια κηρυσσεται νηφειν..., παρα δε τοις λεγομενοις θεοις τα εναντια γινεται). And not just of immediate proximity (Lk 9: 47 εστησεν αυτο παρ εαυτω, D εαυτον): not καθησθαι παρα, but μετα Rev 3: 21, συν A 8: 31, προσ Mt 26:55

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CD. On the other hand, 'in someone's house' (Lk 19:7, Jn 1:40, A 10:6) or with a group of people (Rev 2: 13). Moreover in a figurative sense:

Lk 1 : 30 ευρες χαριν παρα τω θεω, R 2 : 1 1 ουκ εστιν προσωπολημψια παρα τω θεω, Mt 19:26 δυνατον, αδυνατον παρα τινι. Especially 'in the judgment of someone' (class.):R 12: 16 φρονιμοι παρ' εαυτοις (11: 25 s. §188(2)), 1 C 3: 19 μωρια παρα τω θεω, also A 26:8 απιστον κρινεται παρ' υμιν (Mt 21:25 διελογιζοντο παρ' εαυτοις, however εν BL al. as in 16:8 etc.). C 3: 19 προς αυταις □⁴⁶ is an error for προς αυτας. — Mayser n 2, 487ff.

(This work was created by Friedrich Blass, professor of classical philology at the University of Halle-Wittenberg, and was continued after his death by Albert Debrunner, professor of Indo-European and classical philology at the University of Bern until his retirement in 1954.) **This grammar has passed through ten editions from 1896 to 1960.**

Robert W. Funk, in translating this long-established classic, has also revised it and, in doing so, has incorporated the notes which Professor Debrunner had prepared for a new German edition on which he was working at the time of his death in 1958. Dr. Funk has also had the cooperation of leading British, Continental, and American scholars. The translation places in the hands of English-speaking students a book that belongs in their libraries and in the libraries of every theologian, philologist and pastor alongside the Gingrich-Danker Greek-English Lexicon.)

The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-Literary Sources; by James Moulton and George Milligan, - **1930**, p. 479.

παρα

- (1) **c. genitive** indicating source or origin “from the side of,” “from,” used of persons after verbs of
- (2) **c. dative “by” “beside”** is used only of persons in the N. T. except in John 19:25, with which we compare to *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Vol. I, 120²³ (P Oxy I 120²³) (ii/A.D.) = ?2nd century? A.D. ... [etc., etc. from non-biblical sources. - cb]

Dictionary of New Testament Theology, v. 3, p. 412 by Wilfred Stott, B.A., B.D., D.Phil.

3. The Theological Deductions. If, as we have suggested, "the Lord's Day" referred to the Christian Sunday, the first day of the week, in order to see its theological significance it will be necessary to examine other passages which refer to the first day of the week. The earliest reference is in 1 Cor. 16:2 where Paul asks the Corinthian Christians to lay something aside on each first day of the week. It seems unlikely that this was a pay-day and more likely that, while the laying aside was at home, the day's connexion with Christian worship. ...

A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Edward Robinson. 1836

παρα (p. 612)

II. With the Dative, both of person and thing, expressing rest or position *near, hard by, with*, and c. dat. plur. *among*. See Pfessow, Buttm. Matth.I. c. Winer § 52. p. 337.

- a) pp. of place, after verbs implying rest or remaining in a place, (a) gear. and c. dat of thing, John 19: 25 ειστηκεισαν δε παρα τω σταυρω του Ιησου. Seq. dat, of pen. as indicating

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place, Matt 6: 1 μισθον ουκ εχετε παρα τω πατρι υμων. etc. ... 1 Cor. 16:2 παρ' εαυτω τιθετω, with himself, Fr. *chez soi*, i. e. **at home**.

Commentaries. Out of curiosity, I decided to check my own limited library to see what my commentaries would say on this subject. The following is the result of that check. I only found seven.

William Barclay. He spent four pages discussing verses 1-12, but not one word on the meaning of παρα εαυτω. Some very good observations on the Christian character of giving, i. e. advantages to the giver and receiver. Just no help in our discussion.

David Lipscomb. p. 249. "Some contend that the storing was to be done at home, but that would be incompatible with the idea 'that no collections be made when I come,' for if stored at home, it would have to be gathered when he came. It was to be separated at home from the amount not given, then cast into the treasury."

R. C. H. Lenski. (Bottom of p. 759) "Each member is to deposit with himself each Sunday the amount of his gift for that week and preserve it as a store or treasure, θησαυριζων. The participle completes the idea of the main verb: "let him lay by treasuring up"; the future participle of purpose is usually used thus, B.-D. 351, but because of the repetition involved Paul here has the present. Each member is to keep the growing amount **"by him," παρ' εαυτω, in his own home**, and is not to deposit it with the church at once. The probable reason for this advice is the fact that at this early date the churches supervised by Paul were not yet organized to the extent of having official treasurers who were duly appointed to take charge of congregational funds."

F. W. Grosheide. "2 Upon the first day, i. e., on every Sunday. The reference is not to the church services but to a personal assignment which everyone had to perform. But the fact that Paul speaks of the first day of the week and calls that the day for the collection implies that Sunday was destined for the special service of the Lord. Paul trusts the Corinthians: **he does not ask them to hand in their collection on a weekly basis, they are allowed to keep the collected money** and thus little by little a sufficient amount will be saved up. Everybody is to give what he is able to give. The giving must be voluntary (II Cor. 8 : 1 1 , 12), and the church is permitted to fix the amount of its contribution itself. The main point is that there will be a fair amount when Paul arrives at Corinth.

Gordon D. Fee. p. 813. [please check each of the footnotes in the following two paragraphs]

(1 Cor. 16:) verse 2 With this sentence Paul proceeds to detail the instructions he had given to the churches of Galatia, which the Corinthians are now to follow as well. For them it is all very matter-of-fact; for us there are some intriguing items for which there is a degree of uncertainty. This is particularly true of the first two phrases, "on the first day of every week" and (literally) "let each one by himself."²¹ Some have argued that "by himself" means "let him take to himself what he means to give";²² in other words, each is to bring to the assembly what he or she has determined "privately" to give. But there is very little linguistic warrant for such a suggestion, not to mention that the participle translated "saving it up"²³ implies that "each person" is to store up what is set aside until the designated time. The phrase **"by himself" almost certainly means "at home."**²⁴

If so, why then does Paul mention "on the first day of every week"? Traditionally this has been one of three NT texts that have been used to support Christians' use of Sunday, rather than the Jewish Sabbath, as their day of worship.²⁵ Although one should not assert more than such a passing reference allows, some observations need to be made: (1) The fact that Paul makes such a reference at all implies that there is some significance to their

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setting money aside on this day rather than, for example, "once a week." (2) Although that significance may have been only a matter of when people were paid, it seems far more likely that it is a weekly reckoning with religious significance, ...

21 Gk. παρ εαυτω. See the discussion in BAGD, κατα as distributive.

22 Cf. Hodge, 364, whose words these are; cf. Morris, 238; Mare, 293; Gromacki, 200. But this assumes a contemporary picture of the church, including church officials, regular offerings, and a building.

23 Gk. θησαυριζω (= storing something up as a treasure); this word in particular assumes the accumulation of many smaller amounts.

24 See, e.g., Xenophon, mem. 3.13.3 ("who complained that the drinking **water at home**[παρ εαυτω]) was warm"); Philo, *cher.* 48 ("rather, as stewards guard the treasure [θησαυρον] **in your own keeping**[παρ' εαυτοις]"); *leg. ad Gai.* 271 ("cheer up, you are **staying at home** [παρ' αυτω]

25 The other two are Acts 20:7 and Rev. 1:10.

--- skip one paragraph ---

(p. 814) Thus, even though they were not necessarily to bring their gift to the assembly on this day, it was the fact that this day marked for them the specifically Christian day in their week that probably made it convenient for Paul to note it as the time for them to remember the poor among the brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. ...

DNTT, V. 3, p. 412.

3. *The Theological Deductions.* ... (skip to end of line 5 of this paragraph.) "...It seems unlikely that this was a pay-day and more likely that, **while the laying aside was at home**, the day's connexion with Christian worship would make it easy to remember this duty.

The New Testament, An expanded Translation, by Kenneth S. Wuest, 1961. "The result (*This book*) is what I have called an expanded translation. It is intended as a companion to, or commentary on, the standard translations, ..."

1 Corinthians 16:2, "On every first day of the week let each one of you have the habit of putting aside at home whatever he may be prospered in, accumulating and keeping it in reserve, in order that when I may come, then there may not be any collections."