

All in the Family  
“Reunion”  
1 Corinthians 16:1-24

I. Series Review

- a. Week 1 – DNA – What does it mean to be in the family of God.
- b. Week 2 – Division – We have unity because we are all saved by faith in Jesus.
- c. Week 3 – Inside Jokes – We must remember that the gospel is a message for the whole world.
- d. Week 4 – Secret – Our family secret—Jesus crucified for our sins—has already been revealed by the Spirit
- e. Week 5 – Chores – Our Heavenly Father assigns us chores to do that cause us to grow and mature into the image of Jesus.
- f. Week 6 – Imitating – Who are we patterning our lives after?
- g. Week 7 – Discipline – When we have to practice tough love in the family.
- h. Week 8 – Dysfunction – When family relationships break down.
- i. Week 9 – Brokenness – Abandoning our brokenness to pursue holiness.
- j. Week 10 – Intimacy – Embracing God’s design for our marriages

- k. Week 11 – Dedication – What are we dedicated to?
  - l. Week 12 – Mealtimes – Placing value on people instead of food.
  - m. Week 13 – Provision – Trusting in our Father’s provision for us.
  - n. Week 14 – History – Learning from our past.
  - o. Week 15 – Respect – Honoring the name of Jesus.
  - p. Week 16 – Authority – Respecting God’s design for God’s glory
  - q. Week 17 – Celebrations – Celebrating Jesus selfless sacrifice
  - r. Week 18 – Serving – Using God’s gifts to bless God’s people
  - s. Week 19 – Loving – Impacting eternity by loving others
  - t. Week 20 – Submitting – Respecting others by submitting to God.
  - u. Week 21 – Leaving – Understanding our hope in the resurrection.
  - v. Today – Reunion – Preparing to reunite with our family.
- II. Prayer
- III. Hook
- a. A prospective father-in-law was talking to his prospective son-in-law and said, “Do you think you can support a

family?” The young man looked surprised and said, “I was planning on supporting your daughter, but I think the rest of you will have to fend for yourselves.”

#### IV. Message

- a. Over time families can become scattered and even though travel and communication is much easier today than in Paul’s time reunions are still special. In reading this chapter I was impressed by the depth of Paul’s relationships and his desire to reunite with people.
- b. The plans for a reunion (1 Corinthians 16:1-9).
  - i. Preparing for Paul’s visit (1-4)
    1. **1 Corinthians 16:1-4** - Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 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. Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.
    2. The gift that was being sent was “for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem” (Romans 15:26). It was the regular practice for Jews living outside Jerusalem to send money to Jerusalem to aide those who were poor. In part this was to help support the role the Jerusalem inhabitants played in hosting Jewish pilgrims for the festivals. The

Christian Jews by this time were likely cut off from this support and so were dependent upon what the other believers could send.

3. Paul wanted the believers to practice the weekly discipline of setting aside some of the resources God had blessed them with in order to bless others.

ii. Planning for Paul's visit (5-9)

1. **1 Corinthians 16:5-9** - After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. Perhaps I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

2. Because of Paul's concern for the Corinthian church he couldn't wait and made a hurried visit to see them while still at Ephesus (2 Cor. 1:15-16; 2:1-4). Later Paul visits after leaving Ephesus because of the opposition there (Acts 19). It was during this second visit (Acts 20:2-3) that Paul received the collection to take to Jerusalem.

b. The people of a reunion (1 Corinthians 16:10-24).

- i. Paul advocates for Timothy (10-11).

1. **1 Corinthians 16:10-11** - If Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. No one, then, should refuse to accept him. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.
  2. It was common in the first century for someone in authority to send a letter of introduction with a lesser known individual. Today we call this advocating which is a form of mentoring. As a leader in the church Paul advocated for Timothy helping his grow as a leader.
  3. Those in leadership within the church can play an important role in mentoring and advocating for others who show potential for ministry leadership.
  4. Jim Williams
- ii. Paul anticipates sending Apollos (12-14).
1. **1 Corinthians 16:12-14** - Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was quite unwilling to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity. Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.
  2. Apollos had already had a successful ministry in Corinth.
  3. Verses 13-14 serve as a summary to the entire letter. There are five commands present here.

- a. Be on guard & stand firm refer to dealing with the doctrinal issues Paul addressed.
  - b. Courageous & Strong is an admonition to follow through on confronting those who were in sin in the church.
  - c. Do everything in love is a reminder that whether dealing with food (ch. 8) or the Lord's Supper (ch 11) or exercising gifts (ch. 13), love must direct our actions.
- iii. Paul calls them to submit to godly leaders (15-18).
1. **1 Corinthians 16:15-18** - You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it. I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.
  2. Paul again advocates for other leaders here giving them his authority to deliver the letter and lead in the church. Paul acknowledges that their labor and the risk involved in their travels sets an example for the rest to follow.
- iv. Paul's final words of encouragement (19-24).

1. **1 Corinthians 16:19-24** - The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. All the brothers here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord—a curse be on him. Come, O Lord! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen

2. Originally from Rome Aquila & Priscilla first met Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:2), they then joined Paul (Acts 18:18) and remained at Ephesus (Acts 18:19). They disciple Apollos and sent him to Corinth (Acts 18:26-27).

v. Paul placed a high value on the team of people that he ministered with. He never operated as a lone ranger. In each of Paul's letters you are reminded that he was surrounded by others who were serving God as well.

## V. Conclusion

a. In thinking about the reunion Paul anticipated with the Corinthians as well as others I can't help but think of the reunion we anticipate with Jesus and the entire family of God.

b. As we saw in this chapter a reunion requires three things.

i. First a plan has to be made.

1. **Ephesians 1:4-5** - For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be

adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will...

ii. Second a price must be paid.

1. **1 Peter 1:18-19** - ...it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed..., but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

iii. Third, it isn't a reunion without people to reunite with.

1. **Revelation 19:6-7** - Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude,...shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!"

c. From *Safely Home* by Randy Alcorn

“How Long O Lord?” the voices of millions cried out.

“Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise,” said the King. “I will rescue them.”

The King stood in front of his throne. His eyes—and all those across the heavens—were fixed now on a young locksmith from Pushan, who languished in prison, dying of tuberculosis, coughing up blood. As Li Shen's life faded, the King gripped the hilt of the sword, then unsheathed it. He lifted it up, stretched out his arm. He whistled to a white stallion, a creature unlike any other. It flew to him, dancing and snorting, rising up on its back legs, eager to run to battle. The King, shining with the brilliance of a thousand quasars, mounted his great steed.

All heaven watched the young man breathe his last at the feet of his tormentors. At that moment the Warrior-King,



eyes wet and white-hot, cried out with a voice that shook heaven and earth: “No longer!”

Michael threw his arm forward, the hosts of heaven shouted, and millions of horses gathered, mounted by warriors of every tribe, nation, and tongue. Eternity’s door swung open on its hinges. Out of one realm and into another rode an army like there had never been...

Warriors slapped each other on the back. The delivered hugged their deliverers, enjoying a great reunion with those once parted from them. In the milling crowd two men came face-to-face. Their eyes locked on each other. Li Quan and Ben Fielding embraced.

The multitudes innumerable began to sing the song for which they had been made, a song that echoed off a trillion planets and reverberated in a quadrillion places in every nook and cranny of the creation’s expanse. Audience and orchestra and choir all blended into one great symphony, one grand cantata of rhapsodic melodies and powerful sustaining harmonies. All were participants. Only one was an audience, the Audience of One. The smile of the King’s approval swept through the choir like fire across dry wheat fields.

When the song was complete, the Audience of One stood and raised his great arms, then clapped his scarred hands together in thunderous applause, shaking ground and sky, jarring every corner of the cosmos. His applause went on and on, unstoppable and unceasing. Among the great throngs of worshippers of Jesus, standing side by side, were the families of Li Quan and Ben Fielding, women and children seeing each other for the first time, but not the last.

Every one of them realized something with undiminished clarity in that instant. They wondered why they had not seen it all along. What they knew in that moment, in every fiber of their beings, was that this Person and this Place were all they had ever longed for...and ever would.