
Theme: A healthy church is an international, local fellowship led by leaders who serve the saints toward loving attraction of both belief and opposition.

ONE: Aim to become an international local fellowship 16.1, 3, 5, 15, 19

¹ 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. ⁵ I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia, ⁶ and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my journey, wherever I go. ⁷ For I do not want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits.

Koinonia: 2 Cor 8.4: taking part in the relief of the saints; Rom 15.26: to make some contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

Eph 2.15 *that he might create in himself one new man in the place of two, so making peace*

TWO: Aim to lovingly create attraction and expect opposition

⁸ But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹ for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

To preach the gospel of Christ is to preach both good news and bad news to both insiders and outsiders for our this-creation nature will forever distort what God is like.

THREE: Aim to be a church led by households devoted to the service of the saints

¹⁰ When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. ¹¹ So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers. ¹² Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but it was not at all his will to come now. He will come when he has opportunity. ¹³ Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done in love. ¹⁵ Now I urge you, brothers--you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints-- ¹⁶ be subject to such as these, and to every fellow worker and laborer. ¹⁷ I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, ¹⁸ for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men.

Learn to recognize new-creation leadership

Learn to care together for the saints

in their worship and thinking,

in their relating and forgiving

in their working and serving,

in their earning and giving...

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL MEDITATION OR GROUP INTERACTION:

1. In this passage Paul writes of a church in five different cultures with leaders coming and going among them. How will understanding the unifying work of being brothers and sisters in a new-creation work affect who is welcomed in a local body?
2. What is it about the gospel that leads from lovingly preaching the gospel in word and deed to attracting both new belief and new opposition? In what ways might this lead us to greater boldness as a church in Tulsa?
3. Paul describes some important characteristics of real leadership re: Stephanus' household. How does a new-birth, new-creation understanding affect how we view good leadership? Why are those like Stephanus to be followed (16.16)?