

# How the Church May Use Its Money

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

On the first day of the week, the church takes up a collection. Why? What is that money used for? Are there any instructions or principles in the New Testament that would inform us about the use of that money? We will consider that in this lesson.

## The Concept of a “Church Treasury”

- Many argue that this shouldn't exist because it's not mentioned in the NT – not by name, but the concept is
- Churches had a way to collect money from their members (Acts 4:32-35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
- Paul indicated that money collected was to be saved until it was used (1 Corinthians 16:2) – no special collections

## Philosophies Regarding the Use of the Treasury

- It can be used any way we want – this cannot be true; we must do all things by the authority of Christ (Colossians 3:17)
- It can be used any way that an individual Christian is authorized to use his money – this also cannot be true; there are some good works that churches should not be involved with (1 Timothy 5:16), only individuals or households
- It can be used only in the ways described in the New Testament – this is what we're left with; we will look at what this means in this lesson

## The Works of the Church

- Important – in order to determine how the church may use its money, we have to know what it can do; again, this will be more limited than what we as individual Christians may be authorized to do
- Evangelism (1 Timothy 3:15) – support local preachers (Acts 11:25-26); sending preachers (Acts 13:1-3; cf. Romans 10:15); supporting preachers elsewhere (2 Corinthians 11:8; Philippians 4:15-16)
- Edification (Ephesians 4:16) – by “leaders” (Ephesians 4:11-12) and all members (Hebrews 3:12-13; 10:24-25)
- Benevolence (Acts 4:34-35) – only for saints (Acts 4:32; 11:29; Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:4); under exceptional circumstances (Acts 11:28-29); meant to be temporary (2 Corinthians 8:14)
- Worship (Acts 2:42, 46-47) – church gathered regularly (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Hebrews 10:25); Lord's Supper and giving on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2)

16:1-2); other times may also include singing (Colossians 3:16), praying (Acts 2:42), and preaching/teaching (Acts 11:26)

- Many want to include various types of social work – meals, activities, entertainment, etc.; these may be good for individuals or households to do, but are not the work of the church (1 Corinthians 11:22, 34)

### **Treasury Used Autonomously**

- The Lord's design is that local churches would be autonomous – self-governing, independent; clearly seen in the role of elders (1 Peter 5:2)
- Not to send money to an organization to take over its work – ex: missionary society (1 Timothy 3:15; 2 Corinthians 11:8); ex: benevolent institution (1 Timothy 5:16; James 1:27; Acts 11:29-30)
- Not to send money to another church to fund its work – ex: sponsoring church arrangement (1 Timothy 3:15; Acts 20:28)

### **Conclusion**

- It is a privilege to be able to financially support the Lord's work – it is also an obligation we have as part of a local church
- But we are not free to use those funds in any way we wish – it is, in essence, “the Lord's money”
- We need to recognize the work He has given the church to do – then use the treasury to support that work in ways that are authorized, expedient, and wise as good stewards