

### **Prayer List**

Cyndie, Nichole & Lauren  
Sheila  
Ophelia  
Josh  
Daniel  
Olene

### **Services:**

#### **Sunday**

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.  
Assembly 9:50 a.m.  
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

#### **Wednesday**

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

# *Pinole Tidings*

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## **Giving**

BY COX, STAN, ON FEBRUARY 1ST, 2004

Our Lord serves as a wonderful example of sacrificial giving. Though divine, he gave up his position in heaven to dwell on earth as a man, *"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross"* (Philippians 2:8). Of this action, Paul told the Corinthians, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

*God's command to give "as he may prosper" (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:2), allows His children to follow their Lord's example of sacrifice. Such sacrifice enriches us spiritually even as we contribute to the Lord's cause. We have received so much, it is only proper that we give back a portion of that with which we have been blessed.*

Giving monetarily to the Lord's work is not only a privilege we enjoy as Christians, it is also a required duty. As we do not have the option of declining the Lord's Supper, or of remaining mute as others sing, we can not "opt out" of this

### **Elders:**

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### **This Week's Question:**

What prophet had a vision of the four winds lashing the surface of the oceans?

### **Answer To Last Week's Question:**

The wicked - Psalms 1:4

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aspect of Christian worship. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, **as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also**: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Much can be done by local churches to further the cause of our Lord. Benevolent responsibilities, the support of preaching, and needs for the edification of the saints are met through such gifts of good will. As with all acts of worship, it is important to know what God requires of us with regard to giving.

The aforementioned text in 1 Corinthians 16 concisely states God's plan regarding the contribution. It states **When** it is to be done, "Upon the first day of the week"; **Who** is to do it, "Each one of you"; and **How much** is to be given, "As he may prosper." Other passages serve to further illustrate what is required.

For example, with regard to **how much** must be given, we have the following from Paul: "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Rather than fixing any particular amount or percentage, the Holy Spirit indicates that the heart dictates the amount we are to give. The amount must be sacrificial, proportional to our income, and bountiful if we are to please God.

Further, God requires we give **cheerfully**. Though a duty, God expects our sacrifice to be willing. This is true not only with regard to our monetary giving, but the sacrifice of ourselves. Paul wrote to the Romans, "I beseech you

*therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, **which is your reasonable service**"* (Romans 12:1). What God requires of us is not out of line. It is not unreasonable. It is not onerous. We dare not resent what He requires.

The Macedonians serve as a wonderful example of proper generosity. Paul wrote of them, "...that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing..." (2 Corinthians 8:2-3).

Conversely, when the Jews failed to bring the offerings and tithes which God required, He termed it robbery. "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings" (Malachi 3:8).

Great work can be done for the cause of Christ by the local church. But, such work of benevolence, evangelism and edification takes money. God has supplied the method by which this money is to be collected — the free-will offering of His saints. A refusal to fulfill our duty not only indicts us before God, it hampers the work of our Lord.

As in all acts of worship to God, our service in this must be rendered in "spirit and in truth" (cf. John 4:24). We must examine our hearts, and give ourselves first, that our liberality will commend us to God. In so doing, as it was with the Philippians, God "shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).