

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – **Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221**; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1 CORINTHIANS:

THEME: 1 Corinthians 1:10

"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Brief Outline- (adapted from Dexter Sammons)

INTRODUCTION (1:1-9)

1. PROBLEMS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE OF CHLOE (1:10-6:20)

- A. FACTIONS IN THE CHURCH (1:1-4:21)
- B. SEXUAL IMMORALITY (5:1-13)
- C. LAWSUITS AMONG BRETHREN (6:1-11)
- D. MORAL DEFILEMENTS (6:12-20)

2. PROBLEMS MENTIONED IN THE LETTER FROM CORINTH (7:1-16:9)

- A. MARRIAGE & CELIBACY (7:1-40)
- B. EATING MEATS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS (8:1-11:1)
- C. WOMEN PRAYING AND PROPHESYING WITH HEADS UNCOVERED (11:2-16)
- D. THE LORD'S SUPPER (11:17-34)
- E. SPIRITUAL GIFTS (12:1-14:40)
- F. RESURRECTION (15:1-58)
- G. COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS (16:1-4)

CONCLUDING REMARKS, INSTRUCTIONS, AND BENEDICTION (16:5-24)

TO DWELL IN UNITY – Maranatha Music - Psalm 133: 1

Behold how good and how pleasant it is For brethren dwell together

Behold how good and how pleasant it is For brethren dwell together

In unity to dwell in unity Lai lai lai... lai lai lai lai lai lai... lai

In unity to dwell in unity Lai lai lai... lai lai lai lai lai lai... lai

INTRODUCTION: The Apostle Paul on his second missionary journey in Asia, was forbidden to go to Bithynia, heard a call from Macedonia. (*Acts 16*). He went to Philippi, where his ministry in Europe begins. He was arrested, beaten severely and put in prison. He went from there to Thessalonica (*Act. 17:1-9*), then on to Athens (*Acts 17:22-34*) and from there to Corinth (*Acts 18:1-17*). The Apostle had limited fruit from his message on Mar's Hill. It would appear that Paul may have had more time to think in how he will reach the more carnal city of Corinth, a larger, more prosperous and more immoral city than Athens. Drunkards and promiscuous women were known as “Corinthians” Now notice Paul’s approach. It seems a bit different. **1Co 2:1-2** *And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. [2] For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

Paul remained there in Corinth for **about eighteen months**, establishing the church. The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision and said I have many people in this city. Paul went from Corinth to Ephesus and stayed there three years, sharing with them more fully the gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit. It was toward the end of Paul’s three years in Ephesus (*Acts 20:31*) that he wrote this letter to the church in Corinth. He had received word of some of the problems that had developed in the church in Corinth after he left. There were **factions that had developed**. Paul wrote to them about these, **separating yourself, and dividing the body of Christ into different factions**. There were problems with **immorality**, Also with the way that **they celebrated the Lord’s Supper**. There were problems with in **their exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit**, in the public assemblies and in **their theology concerning their resurrection** from the dead. Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthians, basically as a corrective epistle, to correct some of the problems that existed in the church of Corinth that had come to his attention. Now in writing letters in those days, the letters usually began with the person who was writing the letter, then those to whom the letter was written, and then a salutation, then usually followed by a thanksgiving. These were the four elements by which most of the letters written in those days began. Who is writing it. To whom it is written. Words of greetings and then words of thanksgiving. We find Paul following this typical style of letter writing.



Review Questions for the Introduction

- On which journey did the apostle Paul establish the church in Corinth? - **His second journey**
- Where do we read of the establishment of the Corinthian church? - **Ac 18:1-18**
- What two people did Paul first stay with in Corinth? What did they have in common? (*Ac 18:1-3*) - **Aquila and Priscilla, Tentmakers by trade**
- Which chief ruler of the synagogue was converted? (*Ac 18:8*) - **Crispus**
- Approximately how long did Paul stay in Corinth? (*Ac 18:11*) - **A year and six months**
- Who did Aquila and Priscilla convert in Ephesus who later went to Corinth? (*Ac 18:24-19:1*) - **Apollos**
- From where did Paul write this first epistle to Corinth? (*16:8*) - **Ephesus**
- What is the approximate date of writing? - The spring of 57 A.D. Corinth church believed to be **about 4 yrs. old**
- What things existed in Corinth that appeared to have an adverse effect on the church? – **Division, Intellectualism, Immorality**
- What is the purpose of this epistle? - To **correct sinful practices and refute false doctrine**

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Greeting:

1Co 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle (literally, “a called apostle”, giving him authority) ***of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,***
1Co 1:2 To the church (ekklesia - a calling out, a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation - Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both: - assembly, church.) of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified (hagiazō, make holy, an instrument set aside exclusively for the use of God) in Christ Jesus, called to be saints (hagios, holy), with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord (in 13 vs. 1 Cor.), ***both theirs and ours:***
1Co 1:3 Grace (charis-Greek) ***to you and peace*** (shalom-Hebrew) ***from God our Father and the Lord*** (kurios-title) ***Jesus*** (Iesous-name) ***Christ*** (Christos-Promised Messiah - His mission).

Thanksgiving/Spiritual Gifts at Corinth:

1Co 1:4 I thank my God always concerning (on your behalf) ***you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,***
1Co 1:5 that you were enriched (spiritually are millionaires) ***in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,***
1Co 1:6 even as the testimony of Christ (the gospel) ***was confirmed in you,***

v. 1 There were four elements by which most of the letters written in those days began. **Who** is writing it (vs. 1). **To whom it is written** (vs. 2). **Words of greetings** (vs. 3) and then **words of thanksgiving** (vs. 4-6). So, we find Paul following this typical style of letter writing from that age. Here we have Paul identified as the writer, although he obviously is writing under the influence of the real writer, the Holy Spirit! We see here the statement of Paul’s apostleship “*through the will of God*”! He a “*called apostle*”. Not of man or men, but of God!

v. 2 The letter is being written to the church at Corinth. The church is “at” Corinth, but it is “in” Christ! The word for church is *ekklesia*, a calling out. The **church is always the people, not the building!** *Saints* – not an especially pious or revered or canonized person, but a reference to everyone who by salvation has been set apart from sin in Christ Jesus. Notice the church here is identified as those who are set apart in Christ Jesus in Corinth and in every place where He is called upon. Notice the unity, the sameness here. – *both theirs and ours!* Jesus Christ our Lord, their Lord, our Lord.

v. 3 Grace and peace (always in that order) summarize his entire gospel. **Grace is the source of every blessing, and peace is the result in the life of a man who accepts the grace of God.** These great blessings come from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Note the mention of the Lord Jesus in the same breath with God our Father. **Lord Jesus Christ - His title, His name, His mission.**

v. 4 In looking at their lives, **Paul gives thanks to God**, not to them for how they are doing in their lives and in their church. He can’t thank them for their witness. Not only their calling to be saints, and **to be sanctified in Christ Jesus**; but for the various spiritual gifts which they had received, as specified in the succeeding verses.

v. 5 In all doctrine; for so the word should certainly be translated and understood. All the truths of God relative to their salvation had been explicitly declared to them; and they had all knowledge; so that they perfectly comprehended the doctrines which they had heard.

v. 6 The **testimony of Christ is the Gospel** which the apostle had preached, and which had been confirmed by giving their lives to the Lord and by the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, and miracles wrought by the apostle.

v. 1 through the will of God – Are you where you are and doing what you’re doing, by the will of God? Do you know what God has called you to be? Paul knows that he is called to be an apostle and that is God’s will for my life. **But what is God’s will for your life? To what are you called? Do you know? Because you should!** Make your calling and election sure. You see, you have only one life and it will soon be past. Only what you do for Christ is going to last. **It’s important that you know what you are by the will of God. Or that you know what God’s will is for your life. Nothing else is an important as fulfilling the will and purpose of God for your life!**

v. 2 The location of the “church” isn’t so important as, **are you “in Christ”?**

Do you see yourself as a *saint* (set aside to God)? **He’s called you to be a saint.** As one who by salvation has been set apart from sin in Christ Jesus? We become saints because of our position in Christ, not by what we do!

v. 3 **How deep is your understanding and appreciation of the grace of God?** Have you apprehended His grace? How much are you living in the peace of God? For all time? And for right now? Are you still struggling in your works to be accepted or **are you resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ That brings peace, where as a life based on works results in no peace. I know that is true as to the order of my life but what about right now? God blesses me because of what I do? No but only by His grace. Is your relationship with the Lord completely based His grace? Or partially on your works?**

vs. 4-6 **We need to find things in all people to be thankful for.** Here Paul had nothing to thank the Corinthians for, but gave thanksgiving to the Lord for His faithfulness. Salvation is a gracious gift from God; but when you are saved, you are also given spiritual gifts. (Paul explained this in detail in 1 Cor. 12-14.) The Greek word translated “enriched” gives us our English word plutocrat, “a very wealthy person.” The Corinthians were especially rich in spiritual gifts (2Co 8:7), but were not using these gifts in a spiritual manner. The fact that God has called us, set us apart, and enriched us ought to encourage us to live holy lives. **How true is that in your case? In mine?**

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 1:7 so that you come short (behind) in no gift, eagerly waiting (awaiting, expectantly looking for) for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ (to be occupied with Him), 1Co 1:8 who will also confirm (legal term--a guarantee) you to the end, that you may be blameless (they certainly weren't blameless in that day) in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Co 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship (koinōnia, partnership) of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

1Co 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions (schisma) among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind (mind of Christ) and in the same judgment.

1Co 1:11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions (eris, strife, quarreling) among you.

1Co 1:12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas (still identified with Jerusalem)," or "I am of Christ (probably a super spiritual person)."

v. 7 *come short in no gift*, The church in Corinth was a church that had many of the gifts of the Spirit in operation in that church, but there was an abuse of the gifts of the Spirit. They had prophecy: they spoke in tongues, but they were poor witnesses – division; sexual immorality; bring lawsuits against one another; getting drunk at communion. Expectantly waiting for the Lord's return will affect the way we live!

v. 8 Our Lord Jesus Christ will guarantee you to the end that you will be blameless in the day of our Lord. They certainly weren't blameless at that point, being involved in division, immorality, suing each other and getting drunk.

v. 9 . Two tremendous statements – “*God is faithful*” and we are “*called into the fellowship of His Son*”! What God has begun, even in carnal people, He is faithful to bring it to completion, all the way to heaven's glory! One day we're going to stand before Him faultless and blameless because of Christ, not based on our faithfulness but on His! *Fellowship* (partnership) - Christ is interested me and I am interested in Him!

v. 10 We now have the first problem addressed, **that of division**. The body dividing as they come against each other. Here is a call, a plead to unity. In their church, they are **taking one another to court; sexual immorality** endorsed in the church; **divorce problems; misusing agape feasts; chaotic use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit**; messed up on **the doctrine of the resurrection**. The most **dangerous of the problems is division**, with which he begins. He comes not in his own authority but in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (*John 17*). God loves His body and is very concerned over its unity!

v. 11 The cause of the division, contentions, is identified, declared to me by those of Chloe's household, giving a warning that this young church is in danger. Paul is being addressed as he is the one who can do something about it. Chloe used his name in this declaration. Any unsigned reports need to be treated as hearsay. Agape love does what's best, not what is the easiest.

v. 12 *each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."* Here a description of the contentions are given. They were divided over who has taught them and who has baptized them. When they elevate that over the their identity as a Christian. There is a need for diversity in the church because we're different. Some like the teaching of the word by Paul; others want to be under an Apollos; other want a highly liturgical church. That's fine, as long as we say, this is where I'm growing and I can relate to the Lord best and I don't elevate that above the fact that they are Christians and I am a Christian and that is the supreme title over all.

v. 7 Spiritual gifts, a testimony to His faithfulness. Do you think that having many spiritual gifts always gives you power and always makes one a good witness? Are you aware that the spiritual gifts we receive **are a result of God's grace** and not that of our spirituality? Our spirituality is reflected in **being obedient to God's word** and in **living our lives like Christ**. It seems that it is the intent and purpose of God that every church throughout the ages should live in anticipation of the immediacy of the return of Jesus Christ. **Are you so eagerly waiting?**

v. 8 How certain are you that the Lord will guarantee you to be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? What He has begun. He is faithful to complete. **Do you really believe that about yourself?**

v. 9 **How thankful are we** that one day we're going to stand in His presence faultless and blameless based on His faithfulness and not our own? **Do we realize the wonder and blessings of having koinonia with God?**

v. 10 **The plea for unity and the danger of division**. Satan loves decision. We cannibalize one another. Then he doesn't have to do it. Division brings Satan joy. He's free to pursue wrecking others' lives as he doesn't have to bother with the church and its resistance. The problems of division in the church seems to have arisen because the young Corinthian church had failed to protect itself from the decadent culture of the city. The immaturity of the Corinthians had given way to sectarian divisions. **This is an important warning for us!**

v. 11 Interesting how Paul found out about problems. Chloe. It must have taken tremendous **courage, conviction and love for the church** for Chloe to make the report to Paul. Agape love is not to do what's easiest but what's best! **Do you think you would do such a thing when so faced?**

v. 12 Divided over the messengers – They were more interested in how things were said than what things were said. One large problem here is with the division over teachers, is their identification with the messenger and not with the message. **Who do we primarily identify with, the messenger or the message?**

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 1:13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1Co 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

1Co 1:15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.

1Co 1:16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

1Co 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

v. 13 He now asked them rhetorical questions to rebuke them and to get them back on what's important. *Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?* Why would you even elevate me and put me in that place? That's ridiculous! I can't save anyone! And the same thing go with the other guys. What's most important? The teacher or the One we teach about? *Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?* No! Paul is just a man! The gulf between man and Deity is infinite. So this elevation is way above where it's supposed to be.

v. 14 Paul states his thankfulness of baptizing only Crispus and Gaius. That is somewhat shocking, that Paul baptized so few.

vs. 15-16 There is no desire in Paul to be recognized personally or to have a following on those he baptized, as he baptized very few.

v. 17 *For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel.* This is an important verse with respect to negating baptismal regeneration. If baptism is essential for salvation, then the Apostle was sent by Christ in error! Paul was sent *to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.* That is the theme Paul goes into in the next section, that Christ is the power and witness of God.

v. 13 The Corinthians had begun to identify themselves with men who had taught them and/or baptized them instead of with Jesus Christ! **How strong is the tendency in us to identify more with your spiritual mentor, a man/men, rather than with Christ? How long does it usually take, when meeting a stranger for you to let them know that you're a Christian? Do you first identify yourself as a Christian or as a member of church? "I am a Catholic, or I'm a Baptist.....?"**

vs. 14-16 **How important** do you think baptism is? Is your **salvation based on your being baptized?** Was the thief on the cross baptized? Was he saved?

v. 17 Paul's primary ministry was to preach the gospel. Baptism, which naturally follows is secondary in importance. It seems the immature Corinthians were so impressed by clever speaking and debate that many of them ignored the relatively "simple" message of the cross! **Is that our tendency as well?**



1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION



Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Author, Date, and Recipients - The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthian church in the spring of A.D. 53, 54, or 55. This was near the end of his three-year ministry in Ephesus. Altogether Paul wrote four letters to this church: (1) the previous letter mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:9; (2) 1 Corinthians; (3) the tearful, severe letter mentioned in 2 Corinthians 2:3–4; and (4) 2 Corinthians. Only 1 and 2 Corinthians have survived.

Theme - The Corinthian church, divided because of the arrogance of its more powerful members, should work together for the advancement of the gospel. They should repent of their rivalries, build up the faith of those who are weak, and witness effectively to unbelievers.

Purpose - Paul received an oral report and a letter from the Corinthian church. These revealed a church struggling with division, immorality, idolatry, and theological confusion. He wrote them this letter so that they would become a true dwelling place for God’s Spirit (3:12, 16), stay faithful to the gospel, and be “guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:8).

Book Summary

The word Lord occurs more times in this book than any other book. Christ needs to be the center of the church, the church needs to be built on the rock. Paul was addressing problems in the church of Corinth and showing how the reason for problems in the church was that Jesus was not Lord in the church there. Jesus Christ is the only cure for division in Christ – “who is joined together with the Lord is one spirit with Him.” God wants to knit His church together in love, bonded together in peace, united in one faith under one Lord striving in harmony with one accord.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-17 Greeting; Spiritual Gifts at Corinth; Divisions in the Church

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Paul stressed the importance of unity and that the body is one despite having a variety of functions. Each part of the church is important, needed, and essential to work together. He addressed spiritual gifts exhorting that the people of Corinth were chasing after gifts which made them look good, the thing to strive for Paul told them was love, to ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit – seeking the spirit of love to fill them and empower them to love, to show Christ.

The cross is where life begins, where unity starts and peace envelops. That is what Paul preached, Jesus crucified for that is the power of the gospel. Paul addressed important issues in the church concerning spiritual gifts, the rapture, the resurrection, wisdom from God and church problems.

Key Themes

The church is the dwelling place of God’s Spirit. Thus, the people who make up the church should work for unity by building each other up (1:10–4:21, especially 3:10–16; 14:12).

Christians should build up the church in four practical ways:

- a. they should be sensitive to those with fragile faith (8:1–9:18; 10:28, 33).
- b. they should win unbelievers to the faith (9:19–23; 10:27, 32–33).
- c. they should conduct worship services in such a way that unbelievers might come to faith (14:16, 23–25).
- d. their corporate worship should use spiritual gifts not out of personal pride, or for evaluating who has the better gift, but to build up the church (11:2–16; 12:12–30; 14:1–35).

Sexual relations form a union between man and woman as deep as the union of the believer with Christ. Therefore sexual activity should be confined to marriage (5:1–13; 6:12–20; 7:5, 9, 36).

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are important. Yet both are less important than personal trust in the gospel and living in the way God commands (1:14–17; 10:1–5; 11:17–34; 15:29–34).

The bodily resurrection of Jesus (and of his followers) from the dead is a key truth of the Christian faith (6:14; 15:1–58).

Outline

Introduction to the Letter’s Main Themes (1:1–9)

Divisions over Christian Preachers (1:10–4:21)

A Report of Sexual Immorality and Lawsuits (5:1–6:20)

Three Issues from the Corinthians’ Letter (7:1–11:1)

Divisions over Corporate Worship (11:2–14:40)

The Futility of Faith If the Dead Are Not Raised (15:1–58)

The Collection for the Saints and Travel Plans (16:1–12)

Closing Admonitions and Greetings (16:13–24)