

Book of 1Corinthians

Synopsis



Introduction

Book No	46
Name	1Corinthians
Written By	Paul
Testament	New
Category	Epistles of Paul
Date Written	Approx. 55 A.D
Place Written	Ephesus
Audience	Church in Corinth
Purpose	To identify problems in the Corinthian church, to offer solutions, and to teach the believers how to live for Christ in a corrupt society
History Covered	NA
Chapters	16
Verses	437
Key Verse	Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1:10)
Key People	❖ Paul ❖ Timothy
Key Places	❖ Ephesus ❖ Corinth

Purpose of the Book

The Christians in Corinth were struggling with their environment. Surrounded by corruption and every conceivable sin, they felt the pressure to adapt. They knew they were free in Christ, but what did this freedom mean? How should they view idols or sexuality? What should they do about marriage, women in the church, and the gifts of the Spirit? These were more than theoretical questions; the church was being undermined by immorality and spiritual immaturity. The believers' faith was being tried in the crucible of immoral Corinth, and some of them were failing the test.

Paul heard of their struggles and wrote this letter to address their problems, heal their divisions, and answer their questions. Paul confronted them with their sin and their need for corrective action and clear commitment to Christ.

After a brief introduction (1:1-9), Paul immediately turns to the question of unity (1:10-4:21). He emphasizes the clear and simple gospel message around which all believers should rally; he explains the role of church leaders; and he urges them to grow up in their faith.

Paul then deals with the immorality of certain church members and the issue of lawsuits among Christians (5:1-6:8). He tells them to exercise church discipline and to settle their internal matters themselves. Because so many of the problems in the Corinthian church involved sex, Paul denounces sexual sin in the strongest possible terms (6:9-20).

Next, Paul answers some questions that the Corinthians had. Because prostitution and immorality were pervasive, marriages in Corinth were in shambles, and Christians weren't sure how to react. Paul gives pointed and practical answers (7:1-40). Concerning the question of meat sacrificed to idols, Paul suggests that they show complete commitment to Christ and sensitivity to other believers, especially weaker brothers and sisters (8:1-11:2).

Paul goes on to talk about worship, and he carefully explains the role of women, the Lord's Supper, and spiritual gifts (11:3-14:40). Sandwiched in the middle of this section is his magnificent description of the greatest gift—love (chapter 13). Then Paul concludes with a discussion of the resurrection (15:1-58), some final thoughts, greetings, and a benediction (16:1-24).

No epistle in the New Testament gives a clearer insight into the life of the first-century church than 1 Corinthians. In it Paul provides straightforward instructions for such moral and theological problems as sectarianism, spiritual immaturity, church discipline, ethical differences, the role of the sexes and the proper use of spiritual gifts.

Where these same problems exist in the modern church, the remedies are the same. This letter challenges churches in all traditions to draw upon the rich resources of the Spirit in building up the life of the community in unity and love.

In this letter Paul confronted the Corinthians about their sins and shortcomings. And 1 Corinthians calls all Christians to be careful not to blend in with the world and accept its values and life-styles. We must live Christ-centered, blameless, loving lives that make a difference for God. As you read 1 Corinthians, examine your values in light of complete commitment to Christ.

Overview

- ❖ 46th book of the BIBLE, 7th in the New Testament, 2nd of 21 epistles and 2nd of the 14 epistles written by Paul
- ❖ Paul established the church in Corinth on his second missionary journey. Acts 18:1-17
- ❖ Two of Paul's letters are written to the church at Corinth.
 - 1 Corinthians
 - 2 Corinthians
- ❖ In 1 Corinthians, Paul deals with a number of problems in the congregation there.
 - Division
 - Immorality
 - Lawsuits among brethren
 - Selfishness
 - Abuses of the Lord's Supper
 - Spiritual gifts
 - Denials of the resurrection
 - Questionable practices
- ❖ Paul worked with the church in Corinth for 18 months in 51 - 52 A.D.
- ❖ In Corinth, Paul worked with Aquila and Priscilla as tentmakers.
- ❖ 1 Corinthians 13 is called the "love chapter of the Bible."
- ❖ Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth.

❖ The city of Corinth:

- After Corinth was destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C., the city was rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.
- The capital of Achaia.
- Its official language was Latin.
- Its common language was Greek.
- In Paul's day the population was about 700,000 people.
- 2/3 of the population were slaves.
- Was filled with shrines and temples.
- Temple of Aphrodite, located on top of the 1,800 foot tall promontory called the Acrocorinthus, had some 1,000 temple prostitutes.

Hebrew Names of GOD used in 1Corinthians

NA

Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

Paul makes reference to the Lord Jesus ten times in the first ten verses of this letter in order to establish the fact that He is the foundation of the church and the only basis for their unity and fellowship together. The letter contains an unmatched revelation of the cross of Christ as a counter to all human boasting (chs. 1–4). Paul cites Christ as our example in all behavior (11:1) and describes the church as His body (ch. 12). Especially important are the powerful consequences of Christ's resurrection for the whole of creation (ch. 15).

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

The manifestations or the gifts of the Spirit make up the best known passages about the Holy Spirit (chs. 12–14). But we should not overlook the role of the Holy Spirit in revealing the things of God to the human spirit in a way that prevents all grounds for pride (2:1–13). Perhaps most illuminating amid current debate in the church at large is the way the apostle leads the Corinthians into a balanced employment of speaking with tongues, affirming this practice and encouraging them to serve each other with the gifts of the Spirit.

Mega Themes of 1Corinthians

LOYALTIES

The Corinthians were rallying around various church leaders and teachers: Peter, Paul, and Apollos. These loyalties led to intellectual pride and created a spirit of division in the church.

Our loyalty to human leaders or human wisdom must never divide Christians into camps. We must care for our fellow believers, not fight with them. Your allegiance must be to Christ. Let him lead you.

IMMORALITY

Paul received a report of uncorrected sexual sin in the church at Corinth. The people had grown indifferent to immorality. Others had misconceptions about marriage. We are to live morally, keeping our bodies for God's service at all times.

Christians must never compromise with sinful ideas and practices. We should not blend in with people around us. You must live up to God's standard of morality and not condone immoral behavior, even if society accepts it.

FREEDOM

Paul taught freedom of choice on practices not expressly forbidden in Scripture. Some believers felt certain actions—like eating the meat of animals used in pagan rituals—were corrupt by association. Others felt free to participate in such actions without feeling that they had sinned.

We are free in Christ, yet we must not abuse our Christian freedom by being inconsiderate and insensitive to others. We must never encourage others to do something they feel is wrong just because we have done it. Let love guide your behavior.

WORSHIP

Paul addressed disorder in worship. People were taking the Lord's Supper without first confessing sin. There was misuse of spiritual gifts and confusion over women's roles in the church.

Worship must be carried out properly and in an orderly manner. Everything we do to worship God should be done in a manner worthy of his high honor. Make sure that worship is harmonious, useful, and edifying to all believers.

RESURRECTION

Some people denied that Christ rose from the dead. Others felt that people would not physically be resurrected. Christ's resurrection assures us that we will have new, living bodies after we die. The hope of the resurrection forms the secret of Christian confidence.

Since we will be raised again to life after we die, our life is not in vain. We must stay faithful to God in our morality and our service. We are to live today knowing we will spend eternity with Christ.

Life Lessons in 1Corinthians

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>Instruction in godly living is as vitally important today as it was to the church in Corinth. Because human nature remains the same, we find ourselves facing the same issues and needing the same instruction as the Corinthians did. Our source of power for godly living remains in the Cross and in the power of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>The motive for our godliness continues to be love, and our goal to glorify God. Diligently study this book and allow the truth to change the way you live.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Preach Christ crucified. Recognize all wisdom and power are found in Jesus. ❖ Glorify God in your body and in your spirit. ❖ Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not give yourself to immorality or sin of any kind. ❖ Honor the marriage relationship. Be diligent to attend to your marriage relationship, keeping it strong and godly, growing in mutual care. ❖ Fully support and honor those who serve for the sake of the gospel. Give financially and in other ways that will support those who lead. ❖ Do all things for the glory of God. ❖ Let God's unconditional love permeate your attitudes, motives, thoughts, words, and actions. Understand that love authenticates spiritual gifts. ❖ Never go to the law against a fellow believer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do not divorce an unbelieving spouse if he/she want to stay with you or restrain him/her if he/she wishes to dissolve marriage bonds
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>Devotion to God becomes truly dynamic when the Holy Spirit is allowed free access in our lives to teach us, to give us gifts, and to manifest the presence of the Lord. There is nothing more exciting and wonderfully fulfilling than deeply knowing, loving, and experiencing a close, intimate relationship with God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Celebrate the Lord’s Supper regularly. Receive His forgiveness, healing, wholeness, and restoration. ❖ Welcome the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in your life. Be sincerely and eagerly available to receive any of the gifts of the Spirit that He would minister through you. ❖ Earnestly desire spiritual gifts, keeping your heart available to the Spirit’s resources of gifts and power for serving and loving others. ❖ Speak and sing in tongues as a regular part of your devotional life. In corporate worship, only exercise spiritual gifts in ways that build up the whole body of Christ. ❖ Recognize that the OT is an example for the church ❖ Submit yourself to the wisdom of the OT ❖ Read, study and apply the OT
<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>As believers, we are made righteous and holy in Jesus alone. Corinthians tells us that, having been sanctified, we are called to live holy lives. Holy living requires that we rely fully on the Lord’s wisdom and not the wisdom of the world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Put your confidence in Jesus, who has sanctified you. Live your calling as a sanctified one, living daily in His holiness. ❖ Find true wisdom, power, and holiness in Jesus. Reject living in your own wisdom and ability.

<p>We are able to understand and discern God’s ways by the Holy Spirit. Likewise, the Spirit empowers us to live as God’s people, holy and set apart to Him.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Only by the Holy Spirit can you understand the deep things and ways of God. ❖ Turn from sinful behavior. Agree with God; acknowledge your sin, and ask Jesus to cleanse you. By the power of the Holy Spirit, walk away from it. ❖ Understand that evil is not a neutral influence. ❖ Acknowledge that there is no spiritual dynamic in mere human abilities ❖ Understand that GOD uses that which without HIS presence is ineffectual ❖ Remember that earthly values are transient and embrace the eternal
<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>Faith enables us to believe and receive all God has for us as Christians. By faith, walk in the fullness of the gifts and power of the Spirit. By faith, proclaim God’s Word without reservation.</p> <p>By faith, dedicate yourself to the work of the Lord.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Boldly preach Christ and Him crucified. This is the simple gospel. Make room for the demonstration of the Spirit and power when you speak or preach. ❖ Recognize that kingdom ministry includes signs, wonders, and miracles that demonstrate the power of God. ❖ Remain steadfast, unwavering in your dedication to the work of the Lord.
<p>Keys to Renewing Church Life</p> <p>While individual relationship with Jesus will always be vital, we must also see ourselves as living members of Christ’s body, the church. We must move from</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Know that the believers are to be unified in their devotion to the gospel of CHRIST ❖ Intentionally pursue unity within the body of Christ. Do not give place to divisiveness or competition. Honor others, seek to be likeminded, and recognize Jesus as the common ground for unity.

<p>individualism and begin again the gathering and function of local congregations and the church as a whole. We have one head, who is Christ, and one body, the church.</p> <p>Renew your commitment to the local body of believers. Seek to build up the church through your words, actions, and participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recognize that division in the church is sin. ❖ Turn from jealousy and arguing, which cause division. Seek unity in Jesus. ❖ Understand that the church is the New Testament temple of God. His Spirit dwells in the corporate body, which is composed of many members in whom the Spirit also dwells. Do nothing that will tear down the body, but build on the foundation of Christ Jesus. ❖ Do not neglect church discipline. ❖ Honor all members of the body, rejoice with them in their successes in the Lord, and care for one another. Utilize your gifts for the good of the whole body. ❖ Seek to use your spiritual gifts to build up the church and glorify Jesus. Let a word in tongues be interpreted, and let mature leaders judge a prophetic word. Do not forbid speaking in tongues; do desire order in their exercise; and do earnestly desire to prophesy.
<p>Guidelines for growth in the SPIRIT</p> <p>Learning how to employ the Spiritual gifts is vital, because they are the means GOD has given you to nurture growth. This occurs in the congregation through edification and beyond it through evangelism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand that GOD works through Spiritual gifts to reproduce the ministry of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in HIS church ❖ Recognize the importance of these gifts for dynamic ministry ❖ Accept the importance of tongues for holy self-edification

Praise Points in 1Corinthians

- ❖ His disregard for class or social standing (1:26-27)
- ❖ The wisdom of the holy spirit that is given to all believers (2:13-14)
- ❖ The spiritual leaders he gives us to care for our well-being (4:15-17)
- ❖ His discipline so that our sinful nature will be destroyed and we may be saved (5:5)
- ❖ The holy spirit who lives in us (6:19-20)
- ❖ The means to stand up against temptation (10:13)
- ❖ The rich meaning of the lord's supper (11:23-26)
- ❖ The spiritual gifts that benefit all believers (12:25)
- ❖ The power and endurance of love (13:8, 13)
- ❖ The hope of a resurrected body that will never die (15:54).

Worship Insights in 1Corinthians

- ❖ Worship should unify believers, not divide them (3:9, 16).
- ❖ Those who gather together should not tolerate blatant sin in the body (5:6-8).
- ❖ We must uphold weaker Christians by setting examples for them (8:12-13).
- ❖ Freedom in worship can be summed up as acting with love and sensitivity toward other Christians (10:24).
- ❖ Our heart should be pure before approaching the Lord's Table (11:29-31).
- ❖ The spiritual gifts that God gives are designed to glorify God and help the entire church (12:7).
- ❖ Love alone gives meaning to our acts of worship (13:1-3).
- ❖ Worship must always be done properly and in order (14:40).
- ❖ Nothing we do for the Lord should ever be considered useless (15:58).

An Outline of 1Corinthians

I. Getting Along with Others: 1Co_1:1-31

- A. Relationships are Important: 1Co_1:1-3
- B. Be Thankful for What God Gives: 1Co_1:4-9
- C. The Things that Divide a Church: 1Co_1:10-17
- D. God's Wisdom Repudiates Division: 1Co_1:18-25
- E. Our Common Calling Draws Us Together: 1Co_1:26-31

II. God's Wisdom in Christ: 1Co_2:1-16

- A. The Preaching of the Cross Draws Us Together: 1Co_2:1-5

B. God's Wisdom Unites Us: 1Co_2:6-16

III. Spiritual Maturity Creates Unity: 1Co_3:1-23

A. Spiritual Immaturity Divides: 1Co_3:1-4

B. Leaders Who are a Team Unify: 1Co_3:5-23

IV. Those Who Share the Gospel: 1Co_4:1-21

A. Faithful Stewards: 1Co_4:1-5

B. Humble Servants: 1Co_4:6-13

C. Spiritual Parents: 1Co_4:14-21

V. Don't Condone Immorality: 1Co_5:1-13

VI. Don't Compromise the Witness: 1Co_6:1-20

A. Settle Your Own Differences: 1Co_6:1-11

B. Don't Let Your Body Lead You Astray: 1Co_6:12-20

VII. Sex, Marriage, and Divorce: 1Co_7:1-40

A. Guidelines for Sexual Intimacy: 1Co_7:1-9

B. The Religiously Mixed Marriage: 1Co_7:10-16

C. Being Content with Present Status: 1Co_7:17-24

D. Creating Stability in Uncertain Times: 1Co_7:25-40

VIII. Let Love Control Knowledge: 1Co_8:1-13

IX. The Model for Leadership: 1Co_9:1-27

A. Laying Aside Rights: 1Co_9:1-14

B. Every Person's Servant: 1Co_9:15-23

C. Developing Self-Discipline: 1Co_9:24-27

X. Learn from the Past: 1Co_10:1-33

A. Don't Feel Secure in Ceremony: 1Co_10:1-13

B. Don't Flirt with Idolatry: 1Co_10:14-22

C. Put Freedom in Proper Context: 1Co_10:23-33

XI. Let Worship Unite You: 1Co_11:1-34

A. Be Sensitive to Traditions and Customs: 1Co_11:1-16

B. Don't Let Differences Undermine Worship: 1Co_11:17-22

C. Remember What the Lord's Supper Really is: 1Co_11:23-34

XII. God's Gifts Unite the Church: 1Co_12:1-31**A. Each Believer is Gifted: 1Co_12:1-11****B. The Unity is in Diversity: 1Co_12:12-31****XIII. The Greatest Gift of All: 1Co_13:1-13****XIV. What Proclamation Does: 1Co_14:1-40****A. The Word that Builds Up: 1Co_14:1-25****B. Worship that Builds Up: 1Co_14:26-40****XV. The Living Christ: 1Co_15:1-58****A. Gospel Based on Historical Event: 1Co_15:1-11****B. The Resurrection, Our Only Hope: 1Co_15:12-34****C. The Resurrection Life: 1Co_15:35-58****XVI. A Final Word: 1Co_16:1-24**