



The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Studies in 1 Corinthians

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Text</u>
12/05	Introduction	
12/12	Why Can't We Get Along	1:1-17
12/19	Remember the Cross	1:18-2:2
12/26	CHRISTMAS LESSON	
01/02	Spiritually Mature	2:14-3:16
01/09	Servant Leadership	4:1-21
01/16	Immoral World	5:1-13 and 6:9-20
01/23	Marriage & Singleness	7:1-35
01/30	Life's Grey Area	8:1-13 and 9:19-26 and 10:14-33
02/06	Worship	11:2-16
02/13	Lord's Supper	11:17-34
02/20	Are You Gifted	12:4-31
02/27	Greatest Way to Live	13:1-13
03/06	Place to Proclaim	14:1-29
03/13	Hope	15:3-57
03/20	Summary and Review	

Food for Thought

Lord, bless our congregation, We humbly ask of Thee, That we may walk together in perfect unity. A united church is a strong church.

*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. 1 Cor 1:10 (NIV)*

(From "Our Daily Bread", Mar 12, 2010)

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF 1st CORINTHIANS

Paul founded the church at Corinth in the Fall of A.D. 51, during his Second Missionary journey, A.D. 50-53 (see Acts 18:1-17; 1 Cor. 3:6,10;4:15). He remained with the church for one and one half years, and then left Corinth in the Spring of A.D. 53. Some few months after Paul departed from Corinth, Apollos came to Corinth, Acts 18:27-19:1, and for some time ministered to the church there, Acts 18:27,28; 1 Cor. 3:6. The church at Corinth was composed mostly of Gentiles, 12:2, but some of its members were Jews, 8:9,12;9:20. The great majority of its members were of the lower ranks of society, 1:27-31, but some few members were from the upper ranks of society, 1:26; 11:22. These highborn, powerful, and affluent members seem to have been much affected by the *pride*, the *intellectualism*, and the *divisiveness* so prevalent in the upper classes of Greek society.

Later, during his third missionary journey, A.D. 54-58, Paul spent three years at Ephesus, A.D. 54-57. During these three years, Paul had several contacts with his young church at Corinth. He made a short visit to this church, 2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1, and during this visit became acquainted with certain problems which had arisen there. Probably, it was during this visit that Paul revealed his plans to gather a great Gentile love offering to be given to the saints of the Jewish mother church at Jerusalem, Rom. 15:25-28. Sometime later, Paul wrote the Corinthians a letter, a letter that is now lost, 1 Cor. 5:9. After he had written the Corinthians this now-lost letter, Paul received information from the family of Chloe of the formation of factions within the Corinthian Church, 1 Cor. 1:11. Paul then dispatched Timothy to Corinth (by way of Macedonia) to deal with this problem, Acts 19:21,22; 1 Cor 4:17. Soon after Timothy's departure for Corinth, a three-man delegation from Corinth arrived in Ephesus bearing a letter to Paul from the Corinthian church, a letter requesting Paul to answer their questions concerning certain problems that had arisen in the Corinthian church, 1 Cor. 16:17,18. In reply to this letter, Paul wrote First Corinthians and sending it by sea, probably by the hands of the Corinthian delegation. Paul expected the letter to arrive in Corinth before the arrival of Timothy, 1 Cor. 4:17;16:10,11. Whether Timothy arrived in Corinth before or after the arrival of the letter, or whether he arrived at all, we do not certainly know.

Paul's purpose in writing 1 Corinthians is twofold: He writes to answer the questions asked him in the Corinthians' letter and he writes to correct the disorders known by him to be existing in the Corinthian church. Since the Corinthians' questions did not cover all the church's problems, Paul broadens his reply so as to deal with other pressing problems in the church. Paul in his letter alternates between answering their questions and dealing with the other pressing church problems.

The Chief Characteristics of the Book

- It is a lengthy book — Except for Romans, it is the New Testament's longest epistle.
- It is a simple book — Its language is the most simple of all the Pauline epistles. In its simplicity, it contrasts sharply with Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians.
- It is a warning book— It is full of warnings against pagan influences. Second Corinthians is full of warnings against Judaic influences.
- It is a doctrinal but yet a practical book — The book contains many passages that are of great doctrinal value, such as the sections on the headship of Christ over the church, the use of Christian liberties, the eating of the Lord's Supper, the unity of the Body of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, etc. Yet the book has great practical value. It gives us valuable insights into the government of a local church and the handling of problems in a local church. First Corinthians, First Timothy, and Titus are the three New Testament books which deal with church government.

(Adapted from "The Book of 1st Corinthians" by Roy E. Gingrich)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul

DATE WRITTEN: A.D. 56, from Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:5-8) on his third missionary journey.

PURPOSE: To purify the church from divisions and immorality. The church at Corinth was founded by Paul on his second missionary journey. It had become infected with the evils surrounding it in a licentious city. The Greeks were proud of their learning and philosophy, but at the same time were addicted to gross immorality. They were especially fond of oratory. It is apparent that Apollos, an eloquent Christian Jew, had come to Corinth and captured the imaginations of the Greek Christians (Acts 18:24-28). This fact led to the drawing of comparisons between him, with his silver tongue, and other religious leaders. Especially to the discredit of Paul, whose bodily presence seems to have been unimpressive (2 Corinthians 10:10). This probably is a clue to the schisms in the church (1 Corinthians 1:11-13). Paul's primary aims were to combat the worldliness which had crept into the church; and the sectarianism which was divisive.

TO WHOM WRITTEN: The church in Corinth,—1 Corinthians 1:2.

MAIN THEME: Unified and pure living, in the midst of an impure world.

KEY WORD: Love,—1 Corinthians 1:3.

KEY VERSES showing the false conceptions of the ministry: 1 Corinthians 1:12-17; 3:4-7, 21-22; 4:6-7.

SYNOPSIS: The epistle may be divided into two parts.

Part 1: The cleansing of the church from false conceptions of the ministry, intellectual pride, social evils, and other disorders, — 1 Corinthians 1-11.

- **The salutation**,—1 Corinthians 1:1-9.
- **The need to cleanse the church** from party divisions, man-worship, and glorying in worldly wisdom,—1 Corinthians 1:10-31.
- **Paul's exemplary ministry.** There was no attempt on his part to display worldly wisdom, but to declare the wisdom of God in a message revealed to him by the Holy Spirit,—1 Corinthians 2:1-16.
- **The strife over leaders** is a mark of immaturity and carnality,—1 Corinthians 3:1-8.
- **The true view of the ministry.** Ministers should be regarded: - 1 Corinthians 3:1-4:21
- **The duty of cleansing the church:** - 1 Corinthians 5:1-6:20
- **The sanctification of marriage** and all sexual relationships and the paramount claims of the spiritual life,—1 Corinthians 7:1-40.
- **Christian ideals** demand the sacrifice of certain rights and privileges for the sake of the ignorant and weak. For instance, the eating meat of that has been offered to idols,—1 Corinthians 8:1-13.
- **Paul's example** of the surrender of certain rights and liberties for the sake of winning souls to Christ,—1 Corinthians 9:1-27.
- **Israel's example** of infidelity, a warning to the church,—1 Corinthians 10:1-15.
- **Fellowship at the sacrament** of the Lord's Supper demands separation from evil associations,—1 Corinthians 10:16-21.
- **Christian influence** to be guarded in the matters of eating and drinking,—1 Corinthians 10:23-33.
- **Social customs** to be observed in matters of dress,—1 Corinthians 11:1-16.
- **Cleansing of the church** from disorders in connection with the Lord's Supper and the proper observance of the same,—1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

Part 2: Doctrinal instructions and advices, — 1 Corinthians 12-16

- Concerning the diversity of spiritual gifts,—1 Corinthians 12:1-31.
- The preeminence of love,—1 Corinthians 13:1-13.
- The preeminence of prophecy over the gift of tongues and the importance of maintaining proper order in the public assemblies,—1 Corinthians 14:1-40.
- The doctrine of the resurrection,—1 Corinthians 15:1-58.
- Closing instructions and salutations,—1 Corinthians 16:1-24.

PROMINENT PEOPLE: Paul, Timothy, Apollos, believers in the church.

(Adapted from "Thompson Chain - Bible Book Outlines")