

From Sinners to Saints

1 Corinthians 1:1-12

- The city of Corinth was one of if not the most important city in Greece during Paul's day, it was a hub of worldwide commerce because of its unique location between the Corinthian Gulf to the West and the Saronic Gulf to East, and these two bodies of water were separated by the Isthmus of Corinth, a narrow land bridge that connected the Peloponnese Peninsula with Mainland Greece.
- This made it a perfect place to conduct trade with Rome and those who came from the Western Mediterranean on the Corinthian Gulf, and Egypt and the Phoenicians from the Eastern Mediterranean, along with Turkey from the Aegean Sea. To handle all this commerce Corinth had two separate ports > The Lechaion on the Corinthian Gulf, it served Italy, Sicily, and the Western Mediterranean, The Kenchreai on the Saronic Gulf, that handled the Aegean, Cyprus, and the Eastern Mediterranean.
- This meant Corinth was filled with every kind of vice and worldly pleasure known to man, it was a morally filthy polluted city, that promoted not only fleshly vices but also philosophical Greek and Roman beliefs, superstitions, and mythology, handed down from generations of idolatry that still permeated throughout the city.
- Yet this is where God decided to establish a Church, right here in all this filth and temptation. If you want to know what Corinth was really like let's read **Rom 1:18-32**, as Paul wrote the book of Romans while in Corinth, he just looked right out his window and saw the very sins that he lists in this section of Romans.

V1-12

- **V1-2** in modern times we write a letter by saying who the letter is to first, and we conclude with writing who the letter is from, in ancient culture a letter began with writing who the letter is from, and then states who the letter is to. The letter is from Paul and a man named Sosthenes, we'll get into that a little later in the message.
- Through the book of Acts we know that Paul spent a year and a half ministering in Corinth, and that he wrote this letter from Ephesus in Acts 19, and mentioned in **1Cor 16:8**. At the outset of the letter he lets his readers know of his Apostolic credentials, and that they didn't come from self-acclamation but from God.

- It's very important that his readers understand who Paul is, because everyone knew that Paul was not like the other Apostles, as he didn't walk with Jesus during his earthly ministry, but he is still on par with them because he is chosen by God just like they were. **V2** is where we get our title from, as Paul's letter is to the church at Corinth, those sanctified by Jesus, and called to be His saints, but it doesn't stop there, the letter is for all who call on the name of Jesus Christ as their Lord.
- **V3-5** Paul sends both Grace and Peace to them from both God The Father and The Lord Jesus Christ, and he thanks God always concerning them for the grace of God that was given to them. Anyone that is saved is a walking, talking miracle, that we are to be so thankful to God for them being in our lives, look around it is not a lot of us that is for sure, many claim to believe but very few actually have surrendered.
- **V5** Paul mentions why he is so thankful for them because they have been enriched in everything by Jesus, that means both materially and spiritually they had everything that they needed to flourish, in both speech and knowledge of Jesus. That means not only could they follow Jesus correctly but they also could lead others to follow Him as well, so much is expected of them because of the gifts given to them.
- **Lk 12:48** Jesus says “**for everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required, and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more**”. This verse emphasizes **responsibility** and **accountability** for the blessings, gifts, and resources, a person has been entrusted with, as people are expected to use what they have been given, to benefit others and serve God.
- **V6-8** salvation is a gracious gift from God, but after you are saved, we are also given spiritual gifts to use for the glory of the Kingdom, as explained in chapters 12-14. The Greek word translated “**Enriched**” or wealth, is where we get our English word “**plutocrat**” a very wealthy person. In **2 Cor 8:7** Paul says the Corinthian church was very rich in spiritual gifts, but were not using them in a spiritual manner.
- Were told that this church was spiritually well off, but they are warned in V7 to not come short of using them in the right way as they wait eagerly for the return of Jesus Christ, Who will confirm you in the end. So when Christ returns will He find them occupying or doing business for Jesus, or are they doing business for themselves?

- **V8** Paul wants to see them blameless or holy, set apart for the use of God, but as we'll see they weren't blameless, The Church at Corinth had become defiled, as some of its members were practicing sexual immorality, others were getting drunk and coming to the fellowships like that, and some were using the teaching of the grace of God to excuse indulging in a worldly lifestyle, that sounds a lot like today.
- **V9-12** also it had become a divided Church, split into a least four different factions, some following the teachings of Paul, Apollos, Peter, and Jesus, as if they were different beliefs, that is man made just like we see in denominations. Satan know that a divided Church is a defeated Church, as it will quickly become a disgraced Church, for instead of glorifying God it will elevate man, or whomever their following
- You might ask how did this happen? The members of the church permitted the sins of the city of Corinth to get inside the local assembly, and when the church starts to follow and imitate the world around it, then we inevitably will become just like it. The key is **V9**, remember its God Who is Faithful, He is The One Who called us, He is The One we should be following and imitating, this will lead to sweet fellowship with one another, and protect us from divisive attitudes and behavior amen!