

LIFE GROUP GUIDE // wc 11th February 2024 // Key passage: 1 Corinthians 3:1-23

This Week's BIG IDEA: 1 Corinthians helps us to discover the foundations of grace that God is committed to establishing His Church on. And in chapter 3, we find this grace displayed through 3 key areas: His grace in *the discipling* (v1-9); His grace on *'The Day'* (v10-15); and His grace through *the dwelling* (v16-23).

Focusing on God: Help facilitate a moment of stillness for your Life Group, in the midst of the busyness of a variety of routines. Very simply, pray over the Life Group and invite the Holy Spirit to come – that He might unlock compassion within the Life Group; and continue developing a broad foundation for you to be accountable to one another, speaking the truth in love. Pause for a while - *just be still!*

After a few minutes, you might find this suggested song helpful to worship Jesus with; *Cornerstone* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8JKvlzgUt4>

Opening God's Word.

Please read 1 Corinthians 3:1-23

- What is the Life Groups' immediate reaction to these verses? Paul covers a variety of topics in this chapter; what does the group find: i) most surprising / ii) most confusing / iii) most inspiring? Why? Just capture immediate responses that have been stirred – don't go into lengthy dialogue about each contribution at this stage.

Breaking the chapter down into 3 general sections, as referenced in the BIG IDEA above;

The discipling: v1-9

Paul gives some quite blunt and stern assessment of their spiritual maturity – the Corinthians are unable to move onto spiritual 'solids', as their *quarrelling and jealousy* is portraying in them a spiritual infancy.

- Can the Life Group identify a time when someone has had to call them out on a pattern of behaviour that was immature? How did that make them feel? Did it result in any progression? If yes, how? If not, why?
- If not quarrelling or jealousy, what unhelpful behaviour can the Life Group identify *in themselves* at the moment?

The Day: v10-15

Most of us don't find it easy to speak about the day of judgement that awaits everybody. It can feel like a topic that we'll easily mishandle; or perhaps one that will provoke divisive conversations. Paul's confidence and commitment to the Lord is resolute though; and Paul's love for the Church is steadfast. And so he is willing to bring into focus, a topic that is challenging, so that they might be informed and provoked. But he is writing to *believers* in the Church – and so doesn't address the fact that SIN will be judged on 'the Day' (there is no longer condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, so their sin is already atoned for!). But he *does* teach them that their SERVICE to the Lord will be judged.

But Paul asserts HERE that there IS a *reward* for faithful works that are done for the glory of Jesus.

In what ways might your Life Group *not* be serving people around them with Godly motive? Looking at their time, their treasures or their talents – what aspects might Jesus not be glorified in at present?

- Why? What attitudes might cause this lack of surrender in them personally? What can they do to change that?

We don't often refer to the rewards that Jesus will distribute to those who serve faithfully. Is this a new or confusing subject for anyone in your Life Group? How often does the Life Group consider this and use it as a stimulation to display grace and mercy?

Time to pray / The dwelling: v16-23

Paul speaks once more of the power that is made available to us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Use the contributions and topics highlighted in the previous discussion points to facilitate some time to lay hands on one another in prayer; and pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit.

We need the constant reminder that the Spirit doesn't dwell in buildings or special meetings. He chooses to reside in a people who know that they need to be restored and released on mission. *Don't rush this moment or squeeze it in as an afterthought.*