

1 Corinthians 1

1. What can you learn about the church in Corinth?

How should we address problems in the church?

2. If you were writing a letter to someone or to a group of people whom you have not personally met, how would you introduce yourself?

How does Paul introduce himself? What authority does he have to write this letter to the church in Corinth?

What is an apostle?

What can you learn about the church in Corinth during this time?

Paul's letter to the Corinthians contains Godly advice for us today. What does it mean to you that a letter over 2,000 years old still speaks to us today?

3. In verse 2, how does Paul refer to the church in Corinth?

Why do you think Paul uses the designation "church of God" to identify this church?

Do we have different churches today? If so, how would you identify a church of God?

According to this verse, to whom is Paul addressing this letter?

What does it mean to you to be sanctified?

How are we made holy?

Read Galatians 1:15. What does it mean to you to be set apart?

How has God set you apart? From what has He set you apart?

4. Verse 3 continues Paul's salutation. What is grace?

5.

What differentiates God's peace from the world's peace?

Read Luke 19:42 and Matthew 10:34. These verses seem to contradict each other, but God's word cannot contradict itself. What can we learn about peace from these two verses?

6. Paul is writing this letter to address problems in Corinth church. However, he states that he always gives thanks for the Corinthians. Why is he giving thanks for them?

Paul mentions God's grace that is given to us "in Christ Jesus." What does "in Christ Jesus" mean to you?

Verse 5 mentions some of the benefits we might receive if we are in Christ Jesus. What gifts does Paul mention?

Do you feel comfortable speaking to others about your faith? Please explain.

How is Christ's testimony confirmed in us? In you?

7. How would define "gift"?

Can we ever earn a gift? Please explain.

From where do our spiritual gifts originate?

What does Paul say about spiritual gifts in verse 7?

What significance does this verse hold for us?

Read Romans 5:15. What gift is mentioned here?

What would you say is your spiritual gift? (Look ahead to I Corinthians 12 for Paul's list of gifts.)

Why does God give us spiritual gifts? (See verse 7b and I Corinthians 12:7.)

What does it mean to you to wait eagerly for Jesus to be revealed?

How can these spiritual gifts help us to reveal Jesus Christ to those around us?

8. Paul tells us quite clearly in verse 8 that there will be an end to our waiting. What does the "end" mean to you? Are you waiting eagerly for this end?

We have been waiting for that "end" for over 2,000 years. How do we maintain our "waiting" and not give up?

Looking back at your life, would you say you are blameless?

"Blameless" in this verse does not mean "perfect." It means that no one can bring an accusation against us because we are no longer guilty. How can we become "blameless" or "without reproach"?

9. What does it mean to you to fellowship with others?

How important is fellowship to our spiritual growth? To your spiritual growth?

Paul says that we have been called into fellowship with Jesus Christ Himself. What does this mean to you?

1 In what ways do you fellowship with Jesus?

Peter 4:13 details one aspect of our fellowship with Jesus. What does this verse mean to you?

How do we participate in the sufferings of Jesus Christ?

Do you rejoice in that participation? Please explain.

What does it mean to you that Jesus is faithful?

How does His faithfulness encourage us and give us strength to follow Him?

Read 2 Timothy 2:13. What does this verse mean to you? How does it encourage you?

10. Beginning with verse 10 Paul begins to address the issues facing the church. Paul has been hearing about these issues for some time and now seeks to bring correction. How open are you to receiving correction?

What do you feel are some of the greatest hindrances that keep people from accepting correction?

Read Hebrews 12:5-11. What do these verses say about discipline and/or correction?

How is discipline/correction a sign of love?

11. What is the first issue that Paul addresses?

Why do you think this is the first issue he raises with the church?

When we look at the diverse background of individuals that make up the Body of Christ, we find that everyone's being in agreement is a very elusive characteristic. However, Paul begins by appealing to the Corinthians to agree with one another. What do you believe Paul means?

What is the byproduct of our not being in agreement?

Other versions read that Paul meant that we are to be in agreement with what we profess or believe. What evidence do we see today that the church still is not in agreement on what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ?

How would you explain this lack of agreement?

Paul states that such a lack of agreement leads to division. Why do you think God dislikes division so much?

Read John 17:11. Why does Jesus say that unity is so important?

According to Jesus' prayer, what does disunity mean to Him and what message does it send to unbelievers?

Why do you think we still have divisions in the church?

Does living in unity or in agreement mean we all have to think and act alike? Please explain.

Verse 10 concludes Paul's admonition that he wanted believers to "be perfectly united in mind and thought." Other translations read "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement," or "be completely joined together by having the same kind of thinking and the same purpose." Paul would not make this statement if it were not possible for us to achieve it. How can we reach this type of unity?

What would the church look like if all believers lived "perfectly joined together" in our thinking and our beliefs?

12. Paul learned about these divisions from Chloe's household. How do you feel about her telling Paul this?

Some people feel that revealing problems like this is actually judging others so they remain quiet. What would you say to them?

What was the cause of these quarrels?

Does the church still suffer from such quarrels today? Please explain.

What is Paul's response in verse 13 to this behavior?

How do his rhetorical questions show us the danger of such divisions?

What is the danger in following a person instead of following Jesus?

13. Why does Paul say that he is thankful that he did not baptize any of the people with the exception of Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanas' household?

What is the significance of baptism?

Would it mean more to you to be baptized by Billy Graham than by a visiting pastor whom you did not know? Or to be baptized in the Jordan River than in a local pond?

Is there anything wrong with this thinking? Please explain.

What is Paul thankful that Christ did not send him to baptize?

Paul states that he was sent to preach the gospel, which is a spiritual gift. How would you define "preach"?

Look at Romans 10:15. What does this verse say preaching is?

Why is the gospel of Jesus Christ referred to as "good news"?

How eager are you to share this "good news" with others? Please explain.

14. According to verse 17, how did Paul preach the gospel?

How can human wisdom empty the cross of its power?

Paul continues by stating that the cross has a message. What is that message?

Why is that message foolishness to those who are perishing?

Can you remember a time before you were saved when someone tried to talk to you about Jesus? How did you respond to this "good news"?

However, to those who are saved, what is the message of the cross?

We are living in a time when people are being divided into classes by age, sex, race, ethnicity, beliefs, money, etc. Yet, in verse 18, Paul lists only two classes of people. What are these two classes? Do you agree?

How do you think most people today would react to Paul's classification?

15. How would you define "wisdom"?

Who would you select as being today's wise men or women?

Who is the "I" in verse 19?

Why is He going to destroy the wisdom of the wise and frustrate the intelligence of the intelligent?

How is God going to do this?

What evidence can we see where man's wisdom has been destroyed and his intelligence frustrated?

16. In verse 20, Paul asks a number of questions. How would answer them?

Today's wise men, scholars, scientists, and philosophers are still trying to explain the simplest parts of creation but cannot. Therefore, we are still facing the same situation Paul was facing. Read Isaiah 55:8. How does this verse address this issue?

If God's ways are not our ways and if His thoughts are far above our thoughts, then how do we bridge the gap between Him and us? (See 1 Timothy 2:5.)

17. Because of this separation between God and man, Paul states that the world cannot know God through its own wisdom. What are some modern attempts to explain God using the world's wisdom?

If God had stopped at this point, then we would never be able to get close to Him, but He did not. What pleased God?

Why does Paul refer to the preaching of the good news as "foolishness"?

Have you ever shared the good news with someone who considered your sharing "foolishness"? If so, how did you respond?

What can we learn about God and His nature from the truth that He was pleased to offer us a way to salvation?

In verse 22, Paul states two stumbling blocks to our believing in God. What are they?

What miraculous signs did the Jews demand of Jesus? (See Matthew 27:40 and Luke 22:63.)

We know that Jesus performed many miracles and that He still does. Why would He not respond to these demands?

18. In verse 23, Paul states that he preaches only one thing. What is it?

What does it mean to you to preach Christ crucified?

What other things are preached in the church?

Because of their demands, how did the Jews and Gentiles react to Paul's preaching Christ crucified?

What does this gospel mean to those whom God has called?

Who are those God has called?

What does Paul conclude in verse 25?

How have you experienced the truth of this verse?

19. Paul now moves to an astounding truth of God and His kingdom. Whom does God choose?

Who are the foolish things of this world?

Why is this good news for us?

Why does God choose the foolish things of this world instead of the wise things of this world?

God says that He uses the foolish and weak things (including us) to shame the wise and the strong. How does that make you feel?

How has God used you to shame the wise or the strong?

The Jews looked up to their religious leaders, which included the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. They considered these leaders to be so wise that the Jews accepted all that they said. Paul now tells the Jews that God uses the foolish things to shame these wise leaders. How might you have reacted to this news?

Do you see yourself as being able to stand up to the religious experts of our time? Please explain.

What does Paul state in verse 28?

Who are some of the things our world despises? How does God use them?

To the Jew, one of the lowest and most despised groups was the Gentiles. We are Gentiles. How did God use us to nullify the things that are?

The Jews believed they were saved because of the law. According to Paul, how are we saved? (See Ephesians 2:8-9).

How does grace "nullify" the legalistic belief of the Jews?

20. In verse 29 Paul tells us that none of us can boast. Why?

Because our salvation, righteousness, holiness, and redemption all come from Jesus, by Jesus, and through Jesus, Paul says we should only boast of one thing. What is it?

What does it mean to you to boast in the Lord?

Have you ever boasted in the Lord? Please explain.