

Making or Breaking of a Great Church

1 Corinthians 1:1-17

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Big Idea: Paul warns that division in the church is deadly. It distracts the church from the person of Jesus, distorts and disgraces the image of Jesus and reveals its members to be like the world instead of living out the Gospel.

Read vs. 1 - 9

In the first 9 verses we have a section of greeting and one of thanksgiving. Walk through all the ways that Paul describes his readers in these verses. Which of the descriptions have particular meaning or significance to you?

Read the following quote: *"The Corinthian believers were engaging in some seriously messed up things. From sexual promiscuity to getting drunk in church to quarreling amongst themselves, these guys were far from the ideal loving and thriving church body. The believers were in a downward spiral of carnality. When a few of the church members went to visit Paul, they spilled the beans and told him everything that was going on. The church at this time was about four years old, and engaging in such evil behavior that even the unbelievers around them seemed to have higher morals."*

1. If this was the condition of the church, why would Paul describe them the way he did in verses 1 - 9? Who was Paul actually giving the credit to in these verses?
2. What do you think verse 6 means?

3. Read these verses together. Underline, highlight or circle the name of Jesus each time Paul mentions Him.
4. What do these verses teach us about God's grace, mercy and faithfulness?

Read vs. 10 - 17

5. What was the first problem Paul identifies in the Corinthian church? What was causing this problem? What does Paul ask of the Corinthians as a result?
6. What can you/I do to minimize division and reach for unity?
7. What do you notice about Paul's attitude in vs. 13 - 16? What can we learn from this?
8. What does Paul teach about Christ's purpose for him in vs. 17? Is our calling any different? How does disunity in the church affect our ability to fulfill God's calling for us?