

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians



**A Study Guide With Introductory Comments,  
Summaries, And Review Questions**

**(Student Edition)**

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The outlines were developed in the course of my ministry as a preacher of the gospel. Feel free to use them as they are, or adapt them to suit your own personal style.

**To God Be The Glory!**

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# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

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This study guide was developed in preparation for teaching adult Bible classes.

- ♦ The objectives for each section are usually things I plan to emphasize during the class.
- ♦ I have found that summarizing and outlining helps me to better understand the Word of God. It is a practice I highly recommend to others.

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Introduction

### AUTHOR

**Paul**, the apostle (**1:1; 16:21**), joined by Sosthenes, who some think may be the same as mentioned in **Ac 18:17**. The authorship of this epistle is attributed to Paul by Clement of Rome in 95 A.D.

### PLACE OF WRITING

The city of **Ephesus** (**16:8**).

### TIME OF WRITING

Probably in **the spring of 57 A.D.**, shortly before the Jewish feast of Pentecost (**16:8**), during his third missionary journey (**Ac 19:1-41**).

### BACKGROUND OF THE CITY OF CORINTH

Corinth was situated on the Isthmus of Greece (called Achaia in the Bible) between the Ionian Sea and the Aegean Sea, above the Mediterranean Sea. About 50 miles to the east was the city of Athens.

The Corinth of Paul's day was relatively new. The old Corinth (which was famous and powerful in the days of the Peloponnesian War) was burned in 146 B.C. by the Roman proconsul, L. Mummius. Because it was a city devoted to the gods, a hundred years were required to pass before the city could be rebuilt. In 46 B.C., Julius Caesar rebuilt the city, populated it with a colony of veterans and freedmen, and named it Julia Corinthus. It soon became a very important commercial center.

With a population of 400,000 and being a prominent center of commerce in the Mediterranean world, it was a place for all sorts of vice. An example of its immorality was found in the temple of Venus (Aphrodite), which hosted 1000 priestesses dedicated to prostitution in the name of religion. The city's close proximity to the city of Athens probably added the problem of intellectualism. As noticed in the epistle, such an environment had its effect upon the church in Corinth. It is amazing that a church existed at all in such a city.

### BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

The establishment of the church occurred during Paul's second missionary journey. It is recorded by Luke in **Ac 18:1-18**, which can be divided into three sections:

- ♦ Abiding with Aquila and Priscilla, fellow tentmakers; reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath (**Ac 18:1-6**).
- ♦ In the house of Justus, abiding there and teaching for a year and six months (**Ac 18:7-11**)

- ♦ An incident before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia (**Ac 18:12-18**)

It appears from reading the epistle that the church was adversely affected by the immoral environment found in the city. Pride caused division in the church and disruption in the services (**1 Co 1-4, 11**). Immorality and immodesty found its way into the church, which gave it a bad reputation (**1 Co 5**). The brethren were taking their personal problems with each other before the heathen courts instead of working them out among themselves (**1 Co 6**). Other issues affecting the church included questions about marriage (**1 Co 7**), meats sacrificed to idols (**1 Co 8-10**), women praying and prophesying with heads uncovered (**1 Co 11**), abusing the Lord's Supper (**1 Co 11**), the use of spiritual gifts (**1 Co 12-14**), the resurrection from the dead (**1 Co 15**), and the collection for the saints in Jerusalem (**1 Co 16**). Thus the church was one beset with problems and questions that needed to be answered.

## PURPOSE OF WRITING

The bad news concerning the problems at Corinth had reached Paul in Ephesus. It seems that this news came from at least two sources: 1) the household of Chloe (**1:11**); and 2) a letter sent to him (**7:1**), possibly by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (**16:17**).

Therefore, in answer to these reports Paul writes:

### TO CORRECT SINFUL PRACTICES AND REFUTE FALSE DOCTRINE

## THEME: 1 Corinthians 1:10

*"Now 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, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."*

## BRIEF OUTLINE (adapted from Dextor Sammons)

### INTRODUCTION (1:1-9)

#### I. PROBLEMS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE OF CHLOE (1:10-6:20)

- FACTIONS IN THE CHURCH (1:1-4:21)
- SEXUAL IMMORALITY (5:1-13)
- LAWSUITS AMONG BRETHERN (6:1-11)
- MORAL DEFILEMENTS (6:12-20)

#### II. PROBLEMS MENTIONED IN THE LETTER FROM CORINTH (7:1-16:9)

- MARRIAGE & CELIBACY (7:1-40)
- EATING MEATS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS (8:1-11:1)
- WOMEN PRAYING AND PROPHECYING WITH HEADS UNCOVERED (11:2-16)
- THE LORD'S SUPPER (11:17-34)
- SPIRITUAL GIFTS (12:1-14:40)
- RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD (15:1-58)
- COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS (16:1-4)

### CONCLUDING REMARKS, INSTRUCTIONS, AND BENEDICTION (16:5-24)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION**

- 1) On which journey did the apostle Paul establish the church in Corinth?**
- 2) Where do we read of the establishment of the Corinthian church?**
- 3) Who did Paul first stay with in Corinth? What did they have in common? (Ac 18:1-3)**
- 4) Which chief ruler of the synagogue was converted? (Ac 18:8)**
- 5) Approximately how long did Paul stay in Corinth? (Ac 18:11)**
- 6) Who did Aquila and Priscilla convert in Ephesus who later went to Corinth? (Ac 18:24-19:1)**
- 7) From where did Paul write this first epistle to Corinth? (16:8)**
- 8) What is the approximate date of writing?**
- 9) What two things existed in Corinth that appeared to have an adverse effect on the church?**
- 10) What is the purpose of this epistle?**
- 11) Where is the theme of the epistle stated?**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter One

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand how division is unacceptable in the Body of Christ
- 2) To see why our boasting should be only in the Lord

### SUMMARY

In his opening remarks Paul expresses gratitude that the Corinthians had been enriched by God, came behind in no gift, and were eagerly waiting for the revelation of the Lord (1-9). He immediately begins dealing with the first problem, that of division which manifested itself in what we might call "preacheritis" (10-17). Discerning that the underlying cause concerns the exaltation of human wisdom, Paul demonstrates the folly of boasting in such (18-31).

### OUTLINE

#### I. INTRODUCTION (1-9)

##### A. GREETINGS FROM PAUL AND SOSTHENES (1-3)

1. To the church at Corinth, and those who in every place call on the name of Jesus (2)
2. Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus (3)

##### B. THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S GRACE TOWARDS THEM (4-9)

1. Enriching them in all knowledge, even as Christ's testimony was confirmed in them (5-6)
2. Coming short in no gift as they eagerly await the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ (7)
3. Who will confirm them so they may be blameless (8)
4. For God is faithful, who called them into the fellowship of His Son (9)

#### II. THE NATURE OF THE DIVISION AT CORINTH (10-17)

##### A. AS REPORTED TO PAUL (10-12)

1. His plea for unity (10)
2. For those of Chloe's household have reported contentions among them (11)
3. Evidently involving "preacheritis" (12)

##### B. PAUL'S INITIAL REACTION (13-17)

1. Rhetorical questions to illustrate the absurdity of what we would call "preacheritis" (13)
2. Gratitude that he personally baptized few of them (14-17)
  - a. Lest any should accuse him of baptizing in his own name (14-15)
  - b. Administering baptism was not his chief calling anyway (16-17)

#### III. THE FOLLY OF BOASTING IN HUMAN WISDOM (18-31)

**A. GOD WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE (18-25)**

1. Granted, the message of the cross is foolish to some, but not to the saved (18)
2. But God will the destroy the wisdom of the world (19-20)
3. God chose to use His foolishness and His weakness to save those who believe (21-25)
  - a. Because the world through its wisdom knew not God (21a)
  - b. So God chose to save mankind through a "foolish" message about Christ crucified (21b-24)
  - c. But even God's "foolishness" and "weakness" is wiser and stronger than men (25)

**B. THE CORINTHIANS' OWN CALLING DEMONSTRATES THIS TRUTH (26-29)**

1. Not many of them were "wise, mighty, or noble" (26)
2. But God has chosen those things that are "foolish, weak, base, despised, and which are not", so that no flesh should glory in His presence (27-29)

**C. INSTEAD, BOAST IN THE LORD (30-31)**

1. He provides true wisdom, plus righteousness and sanctification and redemption (30)
2. We should glory only in Him (31)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
  
- 2) Who joined with Paul in addressing this letter to the Corinthians? (1)
  
- 3) What was one thing the church did not lack in Corinth? (7)
  
- 4) What is the first problem Paul deals with in this epistle? (10)
  
- 5) Who reported this problem to him? (11)
  
- 6) How was their divisiveness expressed? (12)
  
- 7) Who had Paul personally baptized at Corinth? (14,16)
  
- 8) Why was Paul thankful that he had not baptized any other? (15)
  
- 9) In what two ways do men view the preaching of the cross? (18)

**10) How did the preaching of Christ crucified appear to the Jews and the Greeks? (23)**

**11) How has God chosen to confound the wise of this world? (27-28)**

**12) Upon what grounds may we boast? (31)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Two

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To appreciate Paul's method of proclaiming the gospel
- 2) To see the need for inspiration and understand the process by which it took place

### SUMMARY

Continuing to demonstrate the folly of boasting in human wisdom, Paul reminds them of how he came to them. Instead of depending upon excellent speech or persuasive words of wisdom, he proclaimed Jesus Christ and Him crucified, confirming his testimony with a demonstration of the Spirit and power (1-4). This he did that their faith might rest in God's power, not in the wisdom of men (5).

He did proclaim a type of wisdom, however, that wisdom which comes from God (6-9). He describes the process by which God has revealed this wisdom through His Spirit (10-13). Paul then contrasts the difference between the "natural man" (one who depends upon his own human wisdom) who does not receive the things of the Spirit, and the "spiritual man" (one led by the Spirit of God, such as Paul) who has the mind of Christ (14-16).

### OUTLINE

#### I. PAUL'S MANNER OF PREACHING (1-5)

##### A. HE PREACHED "JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED" (1-3)

1. Declaring the testimony of God without excellence of speech or wisdom (1)
2. Determined not to know anything among them but Jesus and Him crucified (2)
3. Done in weakness, fear and much trembling (3)

##### B. WITH DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT AND OF POWER (4-5)

1. Not with persuasive words of human wisdom (4)
2. That their faith would rest in the power of God, not the wisdom of men (5)

#### II. THE TRUE WISDOM OF GOD (6-16)

##### A. THE "HIDDEN" NATURE OF GOD'S WISDOM (6-9)

1. The apostles do speak a sort of wisdom (6)
  - a. Among those who are mature (6a)
  - b. But it is not the wisdom of this age or its rulers, which is coming to nothing (6b)
2. The wisdom of God they speak has been a "mystery" (7-9)
  - a. Ordained before time began, but hidden (7)
  - b. Unknown by the rulers of this age, which is why they crucified the Lord (8)
  - c. Man had not discovered what God has prepared for those who love Him (9)

**B. THE SPIRIT'S REVELATION OF GOD'S WISDOM (10-13)**

1. Revealed through His Spirit (10-11)
  - a. The Spirit searches for the deep things of God (10)
  - b. Only the Spirit of God can know the things of God (11)
2. Made known to the apostles (12)
  - a. Who have received the Spirit from God (12a)
  - b. So they might know the things freely given by God (12b)
3. Spoken now by the apostles (13)
  - a. Not in words according to human wisdom (13a)
  - b. But in words taught by the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual (13b)

**C. THE "NATURAL MAN" VERSUS THE "SPIRITUAL MAN" (14-16)**

1. The "natural man" (e.g., philosopher) does not receive the things of the Spirit of God (14a)
  - a. They are foolish to him (14b)
  - b. Because they are "spiritually" discerned (14c)
2. But with the "spiritual man" (e.g., an apostle), such is not the case (15-16)
  - a. He is able to judge all things properly (15a)
  - b. No one is able to properly judge him (15b)
  - c. For he has "the mind of Christ" (16)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) How does Paul describe his preaching among them? (1-2)
- 3) How does Paul describe his feelings among them? (3)
- 4) What accompanied Paul as he preached the gospel? (4)
- 5) What six phrases in verses 9-13 help to explain the process by which the hidden mystery of God was made known?
- 6) What phrase teaches the concept of "verbal inspiration"? (13)
- 7) What is said about the "natural" man? (14)

**8) What is said about the "spiritual" man? (15-16)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Three

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the proper place of preachers and teachers in relation to their work
- 2) To appreciate God's view of the church as the temple of God

### SUMMARY

Paul continues to deal with the problem of division in this chapter. Its seriousness is seen in its carnality, which prevented Paul from being able to speak as to spiritually mature people (1-4). To help them see the folly of exalting preachers over each other, Paul shows their relation to one other and to their work, which is building the temple of God (5-17). To the warning not to defile the temple of God, Paul adds another not to glory in the wisdom of this world nor in men (18-23).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE CARNAL NATURE OF DIVISION (1-4)

##### A. CARNAL CHRISTIANS AT CORINTH (1-2)

1. Prevented Paul from speaking to them as to spiritual people (1a)
2. Their carnality indicated they were still babes in Christ, unable to receive solid food (1b-2)

##### B. EVIDENCE OF THEIR CARNALITY (3-4)

1. The envy, strife, and divisions among them (3)
2. As expressed in their calling themselves after men (4)

#### II. RELATION OF PREACHERS TO THEIR WORK (5-17)

##### A. PREACHERS ARE SERVANTS, USED BY GOD (5-7)

1. Ministers given the opportunity to serve God in various ways (5-6a)
2. But it is God who gives the increase (6b-7)

##### B. THEIR RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER AND THEIR WORK (8-17)

1. United in their work, though their labor and rewards may differ (8)
2. Fellow workers with God, they work on God's building (9)
  - a. Laying the foundation (as Paul did) of Jesus Christ (10-11)
  - b. Building on the foundation, using various materials to be tested at the Last Day (12-15)
3. A strong warning, since this building is the temple of God and indwelt by the Spirit (16-17)

#### III. AVOID GLORYING IN WORLDLY WISDOM OR MEN (18-23)

##### A. REASONS NOT TO GLORY IN WORLDLY WISDOM (18-20)

1. You will only deceive yourself (18)
2. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (19-20)

**B. REASONS NOT TO GLORY IN MEN (21-23)**

1. All things (including men) are yours (21-22)
2. You are Christ's, and Christ is God's (23)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) What prevented Paul from speaking to the Corinthians as unto spiritual people? (1-3)
- 3) What manifested their carnality? (3-4)
- 4) Who was more important, he that planted, or the one that watered? (6-7)
- 5) Upon what foundation is the church built? (11)
- 6) When will the work of ministers be fully made manifest? (13)
- 7) If those converted by preachers are lost, will the preachers be lost? (14-15)
- 8) What sort of building is the church? (16)
- 9) What is the wisdom of this world to God? (19)
- 10) Why should we not glory in men? (21-22)
- 11) And to whom do we belong? (23)

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Four

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To learn further how we should regard preachers and teachers
- 2) To learn a lesson in humility by observing the examples of the apostles

### SUMMARY

With this chapter Paul brings to a conclusion his treatment of the problem of division as it existed in the church at Corinth. He describes the proper estimate one should have of those who serve God, and why we should leave the ultimate evaluation of such men to God (1-5). Having already used himself and Apollos as examples to help them see the errors of their arrogance (cf. "puffed up"), Paul also uses the example of the apostles in a passage filled with irony (6-13). His purpose is not to shame them, but to warn them, for he is sending Timothy to remind them of what is proper, and he himself is coming to deal with those who are "puffed up", if necessary (14-21).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE PROPER ESTIMATE OF PAUL & OTHERS (1-5)

##### A. SERVANTS & STEWARDS (1-2)

1. Servants of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God (1)
2. Their chief responsibility: faithfulness (2)

##### B. THE PROPER JUDGE OF SUCH THINGS (3-5)

1. Not Christians, or any human court (3a)
2. Not even one's own self, but rather, the Lord (3b-4)
3. Therefore leave it up to Him (5)

#### II. LESSONS IN HUMILITY (6-13)

##### A. PAUL & APOLLOS ALREADY USED AS EXAMPLES (6)

1. To learn in them not to think beyond what is written (6a)
2. That none be "puffed up" on behalf of one against the other (6b)

##### B. REBUKE IN THE FORM OF IRONY (7-8)

1. For they act as though they were the source of what they have (7)
2. With irony, Paul rebukes them (8)

##### C. THE EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES (9-13)

1. Made a "spectacle" to the world (9)
2. Contrasted with the pride of the Corinthians, using more irony (10)

3. The plight of the apostles (11-13)

### **III. PAUL'S PURPOSE IN WRITING THESE THINGS (14-21)**

#### **A. NOT TO SHAME, BUT TO WARN (14-16)**

1. Those whom he considers as beloved children (14)
2. Those whom he has begotten through the gospel (15)
3. Those whom he charges to imitate him (16)

#### **B. TO COMPLEMENT VISITS BY TIMOTHY AND HIMSELF (17-21)**

1. He is sending Timothy to remind them (17)
2. He himself will soon come, Lord willing, to deal with those who are "puffed up" (18-21)

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
- 2) **What two terms properly describe preachers of the gospel? (1)**
- 3) **Who is to be the judge of those who serve the Lord? (3-5)**
- 4) **Why was Paul writing these things? (6)**
- 5) **What technique did Paul use in teaching lessons about humility? (8,10)**
- 6) **Who did Paul use as an example of humility? (9-13)**
- 7) **Why was Paul writing these things to them? (14)**
- 8) **How had Paul become like a "father" to them? (15)**
- 9) **Why was he sending Timothy to them? (17)**
- 10) **What one phrase is used repeatedly in this chapter to describe some at Corinth? (6,18,19)**

**11) What choices did Paul leave them as to how he might come to them? (21)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Five

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand the need for proper church discipline
- 2) To understand the nature of church discipline

### SUMMARY

Having dealt with the problem of division in the first four chapters, Paul now addresses the problem of immorality in the church at Corinth. He describes the particular case at hand, one which even pagan Gentiles would find shameful (1). Rebuking them for being "puffed up" instead of mourning (2), Paul then instructs them to "deliver such a one to Satan", giving them reasons why this action is necessary (3-8). Clarifying what may have been written in an unknown earlier epistle, Paul concludes by limiting towards whom such action is to be taken, and describing how it is to be carried out in practice (9-13).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE PROBLEM OF IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH (1-2)

##### A. THE PARTICULAR CASE AT HAND (1)

1. Something not even the Gentiles would approve! (1a)
2. A man was living with his father's wife (1b)

##### B. HOW THE CORINTHIANS WERE HANDLING IT (2)

1. They were "puffed up" (2a)
2. Rather than mourning that such conduct might result in the removal of the offender (2b)

#### II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM (3-13)

##### A. HOW TO ADMINISTER CHURCH DISCIPLINE (3-5a)

1. Must exercise judgment, as Paul though present has already done (3)
2. When assembled together in the name of Jesus, deliver such a one to Satan (4-5a)

##### B. WHY CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED (5b-8)

1. To save the sinner (5b)
  - a. By destroying the flesh (its pride and works)
  - b. That his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord
2. To save the church (6-8)
  - a. "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (6)
  - b. Our "Passover", should be kept with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (7-8)

##### C. CLARIFICATIONS CONCERNING CHURCH DISCIPLINE (9-13)

1. Not to be exercised toward those who are of the world (9-10)
2. But towards brethren in Christ who remain in sin, with such don't even eat (11)
3. For God judges those outside the church, while we must judge those inside (12-13a)
4. The nature of church discipline: "put away from yourselves that wicked person" (13b)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THIS CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
- 2) **What was the nature of the immorality that existed in the church at Corinth? (1)**
- 3) **What was the attitude of the church in this regard? (2)**
- 4) **Why does a church "deliver such a one to Satan"? (5)**
- 5) **Why should a church be diligent in exercising church discipline? (6)**
- 6) **Who is the "passover" for Christians? (7)**
- 7) **How should we observe our "Passover"? (8)**
- 8) **Towards whom is church discipline to be administered? (9-11)**
- 9) **Who has the responsibility of judging whom? (12-13)**
- 10) **What expressions help explain what it means to "deliver such a one to Satan"? (11,13)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Six

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see how brethren in Christ should settle their differences
- 2) To be impressed with the power of the gospel to transform the lives of people
- 3) To appreciate the proper use of our bodies in service to God

### SUMMARY

Having seen that the brethren at Corinth were often filled with strife, envy and divisions (**3:3**), and that Paul frequently describes them as being "puffed up" (**4:6,18**), it is not surprising that they were also guilty of the fault Paul deals with in this chapter: taking brethren to court before unbelievers. With an expression of shock and disbelief, he instructs them through a series of questions designed to help them see how absurd and wrong such a thing was (**1-11**).

The latter half of the chapter deals with what must have been a major problem in a city like Corinth: immorality. What might have been acceptable behavior with their bodies prior to becoming Christians is no longer acceptable, for even their bodies belong to the Lord, whose Spirit indwells them, and who will one day raise them from the dead by His own power. Therefore they should glorify God with their bodies (**12-20**).

### OUTLINE

#### I. TAKING BRETHERN TO COURT (1-11)

##### A. PAUL'S REBUKE OF THIS PRACTICE (1-6)

1. Dare they take their personal problems to be decided upon by the unrighteous? (**1**)
  - a. When the saints will one day judge the world? (**2**)
  - b. When the saints will one day judge angels? (**3a**)
  - c. How much more should they be able to judge matters of this life! (**3b**)
2. More rebuke in the form of questions (**4-5**)
  - a. Do they seek the advice of those least esteemed by the church to judge? (**4**)
  - b. Don't they have even one wise man among them who could serve as judge? (**5**)
3. The shame of it all: brethren suing each other before unbelievers! (**6**)

##### B. CONCERNING LAWSUITS BETWEEN BRETHERN (7-11)

1. It is bad enough that they had lawsuits to begin with! (**7-8**)
  - a. It would be better to accept wrong and be defrauded (**7**)
  - b. But no, they found themselves doing wrong and defrauding their own brethren! (**8**)
2. A warning and a reminder (**9-11**)
  - a. The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God (**9-10**)

- b. They had been such, but had been washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus and by the Spirit of God (11)

## **II. GLORIFYING GOD WITH YOUR BODY (12-20)**

### **A. THE BODY IS FOR THE LORD (12-14)**

1. What may be lawful may not be helpful, and should not overpower us (12)
2. The stomach may need food, but that need is only temporary (13a)
3. The body, which is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, will be raised up by the power of God (13b-14)

### **B. OUR BODIES ARE TO BE MEMBERS OF CHRIST, NOT A HARLOT! (15-18)**

1. Shall we take the members of Christ and make them one with a harlot? (15-16)
2. No, for we are to be one in spirit with the Lord (17)
3. Therefore flee immorality which is a sin against your own bodies (18)

### **C. THE BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (19-20)**

1. The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is from God, and is in it (19a)
2. You are not your own, you were bought at a price (19b-20a)
3. Therefore glory God in your body (20b)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) What was the nature of the problem being discussed in the first part of this chapter? (6)
- 3) What is Paul's solution to such a problem? (5)
- 4) What would have been better than displaying their differences before the eyes of the world? (7)
- 5) What were some of the Corinthians before they became Christians? (9-11)
- 6) Though something may be lawful, what two other criteria does Paul mention which should govern our use of it? (12)

- 7) **To whom does our bodies belong? (15)**
- 8) **What is the body of one who is a Christian? (19)**
- 9) **What then should we do with our bodies? Why? (20)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Seven

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To be impressed with basic principles governing marriage and the single life
- 2) To see the importance of studying scripture in its proper context

### SUMMARY

At this point in Paul's letter, he begins to address those things about which the Corinthians had written to him (7:1). In this chapter he discusses matters relating to marriage and the single life. The first half deals with issues involving those married (1-24), and the last half covers those who are single (25-40). It is important to notice that some of what Paul says is in light of the "present distress" being experienced by the Corinthians; also that much of what he says is clearly identified as his personal judgment, not necessarily the commandments of the Lord. In such cases, it is not a matter of right versus wrong, but good versus better.

### OUTLINE

#### I. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THOSE MARRIED (1-24)

##### A. IN GENERAL (1-9)

1. It is good to marry to avoid sexual immorality (1-2)
2. Proper attitudes to govern the marriage relationship (3-4)
3. Abstinence appropriate for short times devoted to fasting and prayer (5-6)
4. Living the single life with self-control a gift from God, so unmarried and widows should marry if they cannot exercise self-control (7-9)

##### B. IN REGARDS TO DIVORCE (10-16)

1. As commanded by the Lord (10-11)
  - a. A wife is not to depart from her husband; if she does, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled (10-11a)
  - b. A husband is not to divorce his wife (11b)
2. As instructed by Paul (12-16)
  - a. Christians are not to divorce their unbelieving spouses (12-13)
  - b. Because of the "sanctifying influence" the believer can have on the family (14)
  - c. If the unbeliever departs, the believer is not under bondage, let the unbeliever depart (15)
  - d. These instructions given in view of the possibility of the believer being able to save the unbelieving spouse (16)

##### C. PRINCIPLES GOVERNING PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS (17-24)

1. As the Lord has called each one, so let him walk (17)

2. The example of circumcision versus uncircumcision, where keeping the commandments of God is what is important (18-20)
3. The example of being a slave versus being free, where one might improve their condition if it is possible and profitable (19-24)

## **II. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THOSE SINGLE (25-40)**

### **A. FOR THOSE WHO ARE VIRGINS (25-38)**

1. Paul gives his personal judgment in light of the "present distress": remain as you are (25-26)
2. Of course if you are married, remain so; but those who are single would be spared much trouble in the flesh in light of what is to come (27-31)
3. Remaining unmarried enables them to serve the Lord without distraction, and be totally devoted to Him (32-35)
4. If it is necessary, the single may marry (36)
5. The choice is not between good and bad, but between good and better (37-38)

### **B. FOR THOSE WHO ARE WIDOWS (39-40)**

1. They are free to marry, but only "in the Lord" (39)
2. Though Paul's personal judgment is that such a one will be happier to remain single, which is also the advice (though not demanded) of the Spirit of God (40)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
- 2) **What are Paul's instructions to married Christians? (3-5,10-11)**
- 3) **What does he advise those who are unmarried and widows? (8-9,25-40)**
- 4) **What does he tell Christians married to unbelievers? (12-16)**
- 5) **What underlying principle is governing Paul's instructions in this chapter? (17-24)**
- 6) **What advantage do the single have over the married? (32-35)**
- 7) **What restriction does Paul place on widows who desire to remarry? (39)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Eight

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the relationship between knowledge and love
- 2) To understand how we might misuse the liberty we have in Christ
- 3) To realize the responsibility we have to our brethren who may be weak or lacking in knowledge

### SUMMARY

In this chapter and the two to follow, Paul addresses the matter of Christians eating things that had been sacrificed to idols. Though in the tenth chapter he will conclude with specific warnings concerning this issue (**10:18-33**), he begins by arguing on the basis of the supremacy of love over knowledge (**1-3**). While concurring that some might have correct knowledge about God and idols, he points out that all might not, and it would be very easy by an abuse of "liberty" to cause those with weak consciences to stumble (**4-10**). Such would be a serious offense, even against Christ, prompting Paul to say how far he would go to avoid causing a brother to stumble (**11-13**).

### OUTLINE

#### **I. KNOWLEDGE, LOVE, AND EATING THINGS OFFERED TO IDOLS (1-6)**

##### **A. THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE OVER KNOWLEDGE (1-3)**

1. Knowledge puffs up, while love edifies (**1**)
2. Knowledge can lead one to think he knows more than he really does (**2**)
3. While he who loves God is known by Him (**3**)

##### **B. KNOWLEDGE IN RELATION TO THINGS OFFERED TO IDOLS (4-6)**

1. Knowledge concurs an idol is nothing, and there is only one God and one Lord (**4-6a**)
2. For Christians that means the Father, and Jesus Christ (**6b**)

#### **II. APPLYING LOVE TOWARD THOSE WHOSE CONSCIENCES ARE WEAK (8-13)**

##### **A. NOT ALL HAVE CORRECT KNOWLEDGE, OR STRONG CONSCIENCES (7)**

1. Some eat things that were offered to idols with consciousness of the idol (**7a**)
2. In so doing, they defile their weak consciences (**7b**)

##### **B. DO NOT LET THE INCONSEQUENTIAL BECOME A STUMBLINGBLOCK (8-9)**

1. Food or the lack of it does not effect our relationship with God (**8**)
2. If not careful, our liberty concerning food can become a stumblingblock to others (**9**)

##### **C. ABUSE OF KNOWLEDGE AND LIBERTY CAN LEAD TO SIN AGAINST**

**CHRIST! (10-12)**

1. Through improper exercise of knowledge and liberty, our example might encourage others to violate their weak conscience **(10)**
2. Through improper exercise of knowledge and liberty, we may cause others to perish, which is a sin against Christ! **(11-12)**

**D. PAUL'S OWN APPLICATION (13)**

1. If food makes his brother to stumble, he will never again eat meat **(13a)**
2. Lest he make his brother stumble **(13b)**

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
- 2) **What is the danger of knowledge? (1)**
- 3) **What is the power of love? (1)**
- 4) **What attribute is important in regards to knowledge? (2)**
- 5) **How can one abuse their liberty in Christ? (9-11)**
- 6) **What happens if we sin against our brothers? (12)**
- 7) **How far should we go out of consideration for our brethren who are weak in faith? (13)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Nine

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To be impressed with Paul's own example of restricting his liberty in Christ so as to save others
- 2) To understand the Biblical authority for supporting those who labor in the preaching of the gospel
- 3) To see the importance of self-control, and the danger of apostasy

### SUMMARY

After warning in chapter eight that the improper exercise of one's liberty in Christ might lead to the damnation of those who are weak in faith and conscience, Paul now illustrates how he was willing to exercise restraint even when it came to the liberties he had as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Though he had the right to have a believing wife and be supported in the preaching the gospel (1-14), he freely chose not to exercise these and other rights. One reason was so he might be able to freely offer some sort of service to the Lord (15-18), but it also was because he desired to save others (19-23). There was also the realization that self-restraint was a necessary quality to assure his own salvation as well (24-27)!

### OUTLINE

#### I. PAUL'S LIBERTY AS AN APOSTLE (1-14)

##### A. AN AFFIRMATION OF HIS APOSTLESHIP AND LIBERTY (1-2)

1. By virtue of being an eyewitness of the Lord (1a)
2. By virtue of his work among the Corinthians (1b-2)

##### B. VARIOUS LIBERTIES AVAILABLE TO PAUL (3-14)

1. The right to eat and drink (4)
2. The right to take along a believing wife, as other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas were doing (5)
3. The right to refrain from working and be supported by others (6-14)
  - a. Illustrations of a soldier, farmer, and shepherd (7)
  - b. As illustrated by the Law of Moses (8-10)
  - c. An exchange of spiritual things for material things (11)
  - d. If others could, why not Paul, if he wanted? (12)
  - e. The example of priests in the temple (13)
  - f. The clear decree of the Lord Himself (14)

#### II. PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF RESTRICTING HIS LIBERTY (15-27)

##### A. WHY HE CHOSE NOT TO EXERCISE HIS LIBERTY CONCERNING SUPPORT (15-18)

1. His purpose in writing is not to raise support, for that would make his boasting void (15)
2. Preaching the gospel was a necessity laid upon him by the Lord (16-17)
  - a. He had no choice, he would be lost if he did not (16)
  - b. If he had chosen to preach on his own, he would have a reward (17a)
  - c. But he was like a slave, entrusted with a stewardship regardless of his will (17b)
3. But by choosing to present the gospel without charge, he could have a reward, and also not abuse his authority in the gospel (18)

**B. HIS EXAMPLE OF SERVITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS (19-23)**

1. Though free from all men, he made himself a servant to all to save them (19-22a)
  - a. To the Jews and those under the Law (20)
  - b. To those not under the Law (21)
  - c. To the weak (22a)
2. He became all things to all men, desiring to save them and share the gospel with them (22a-23)

**C. ANOTHER REASON TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT: THE POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY (24-27)**

1. Not who run in a race win a prize, so one needs to run so as to win (24)
2. Those who compete for perishable crowns exercise self-control in all things, how much should we who seek for an imperishable crown! (25)
3. So Paul runs his race, and fights the good fight, with determined discipline and control over his own body (26-27a)
4. For he knows he could be lost (disqualified) after preaching to others! (27b)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) What two things helped to verify Paul's apostleship? (1-2)
- 3) What were two things that the apostles had the right to do? (5-6)
- 4) What arguments does Paul make to justify preachers receiving support? (7-14)
- 5) Why did Paul choose not to accept support? (15-18)
- 6) Why was Paul willing to make himself a servant to all men? (19,22)

**7) What two athletic events did Paul compare with the Christian life? (24-26)**

**8) Why was Paul so concerned about exercising self-control? (27)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Ten

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To realize the possibility of apostasy
- 2) To appreciate the help of God in times of temptation
- 3) To understand the importance of properly applying the principle of expediency

### SUMMARY

In this chapter Paul brings to a conclusion his discussion concerning things offered to idols. Reminding them about the example of Israel's apostasy and the danger of their own, he commands them to "flee idolatry" (1-14). He describes the communal implications of religious feasts and warns against provoking the Lord to jealousy by having fellowship with demons (15-22). This is probably a rebuke to the sort of practice alluded to in 8:10, where some at the church in Corinth thought nothing of eating sacrificial meat even in an idol's temple! He closes by giving specific instructions concerning meat that was later sold in the market place, or offered at the dinner of an unbeliever to which they might be invited; that they not be concerned unless someone specifically associates it with having been offered to an idol, and then to refrain out of consideration for the other's conscience (23-30). An overriding principle? Do all to the glory of God, and provide no occasion for others to stumble (31-32). In other words, imitate Paul, who sought to save others just as Christ did (33-11:1).

### OUTLINE

#### I. EXAMPLES OF ISRAEL'S APOSTASY (1-14)

##### A. APOSTASY IN SPITE OF BLESSINGS (1-5)

1. Blessings received in the crossing of the Red Sea (1-2)
2. Blessings received as they sojourned in the wilderness (3-4)
3. Still, with most of them God was not pleased, and they died in the wilderness (5)

##### B. THE EXAMPLE OF ISRAEL SHOULD SERVE TO WARN CHRISTIANS (6-14)

1. Their example of apostasy to warn us (6)
  - a. Not to become idolaters (7)
  - b. Not to commit sexual immorality (8)
  - c. Not to tempt Christ (9)
  - d. Not to murmur (10)
2. Their history recorded to admonish us (11)
  - a. For we can just as easily fall (12)
  - b. Though God is faithful to provide help in dealing with temptation (13)
3. Therefore, flee from idolatry! (14)

## **II. RELIGIOUS FEASTS AND THEIR COMMUNAL IMPLICATIONS (15-22)**

### **A. EXAMPLE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AND THE SACRIFICES OF ISRAEL (15-18)**

1. Paul speaks as to those capable of making wise judgments (15)
2. Partaking of the Lord's Supper is a communion of the Lord's body and blood (16-17)
3. The priests of Israel who ate the sacrifices shared in the services offered on the altar (18)

### **B. APPLIED TO THINGS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS (19-22)**

1. Not to say that an idol is anything, nor that which is offered to the idol (19)
2. But those who offer the sacrifices do so to demons, not God; and Paul would not want them to have fellowship with demons (20)
3. They cannot eat and drink at the Lord's table, then do the same at tables of demons (21)
4. Such would provoke the Lord to jealousy (22)

## **III. CONCLUSION REGARDING THINGS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS (23-11:1)**

### **A. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS (23-30)**

1. Seek for those things that are helpful, being considerate of the well-being of others (23-24)
2. Concerning things sold in the market, eat without question (25-26)
3. When you are invited to a dinner with an unbeliever (27-30)
  - a. Eat what is set before you, asking no question for conscience's sake (27)
  - b. If someone should point out the food had been offered to an idol, don't eat (28-30)
    - 1) For the sake of the one who pointed it out (28a)
    - 2) For the sake of another's conscience (28b)
      - a) Lest your liberty be judged (condemned?) by the other's conscience (29)
      - b) Lest you be evil spoken of concerning that for which you gave thanks (30)

### **B. GENERAL PRINCIPLES (31-11:1)**

1. Whatever you do, do all to the glory to God (31)
2. Give no offense to Jews, Greeks, or the church of God (32)
3. Just as Paul sought to please others rather than himself, that others may be saved (33)
4. Imitate him, as he imitated Christ (11:1)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) What Old Testament account illustrates the possibility of apostasy? (1-11)
- 3) What attitude is most likely to precede one's fall? (12)
- 4) What promises do we have that should encourage us in times of temptation? (13)

- 5) **What is the Lord's Supper according to verse 16?**
- 6) **What does partaking of the one bread demonstrate? (17)**
- 7) **In considering a matter, what must be considered besides its lawfulness? (23-24)**
- 8) **To whom are we to give no offense (an occasion of stumbling)? (32)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Eleven

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To ascertain if Paul's instructions concerning the veil were meant to be applied today, or if he was simply admonishing them to abide by what was a social custom of their day
- 2) To notice the purpose of the Lord's Supper and the manner in which it is to be observed

### SUMMARY

Having spent three chapters discussing the issue of eating things sacrificed to idols, Paul now quickly covers two separate matters in this one chapter. The first pertains to women praying and prophesying with heads uncovered (2-16). In view of what we are able to glean about the society of Corinth, and from comments made by Paul in this chapter and elsewhere, I believe that the problem Paul addresses is one that was occurring out in public and not in the assembly. Beginning in **verse 17** and continuing through **chapter 14**, Paul covers issues affecting their assemblies as a church, the first being the manner in which they abused the observance of the Lord's Supper (17-34).

### OUTLINE

#### I. WOMEN PRAYING AND PROPHESYING WITH HEADS UNCOVERED (2-16)

##### A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS (2-5a)

1. Commendation for having kept the apostolic traditions delivered to them (2)
2. A reminder concerning the proper line of authority (3)
3. Concerning praying and prophesying (4-5a)
  - a. Every man who does so with head covered dishonors his head (Christ)
  - b. Every woman who does so with head uncovered dishonors her head (man)

##### B. EXPLANATORY COMMENTS (5b-16)

1. A woman praying or prophesying uncovered would make her appear as one shorn or shaved (5a)
  - a. If a woman is not covered, let her be shorn (6a)
  - b. If to be shorn or shaved is shameful, let her be covered (6b)
2. It is proper for a man not to cover his head (7-9)
  - a. Man is the image and glory of God, while woman is the glory of man (7)
  - b. Man did not come from woman, nor was created for woman (8-9)
3. It is appropriate for a woman to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of angels (10)
4. This is not to say that man is independent of woman (11-12)
  - a. Especially in the Lord (11)
  - b. For as the woman is from the man, so the man is through the woman (12a)
  - c. And all things are from God (12b)

5. Judge this matter for yourselves **(13-15)**
  - a. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with uncovered head? **(13)**
  - b. Does not even nature teach you? **(14-15)**
    - 1) That long hair on a man is a dishonor to him? **(14)**
    - 2) That long hair on a woman is a glory to her, and provides a covering? **(15)**
6. But if anyone is contentious about this matter... **(16)**
  - a. We have no such custom (i.e., this is not an "apostolic tradition")
  - b. Nor do the churches of God

## **II. CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER (17-34)**

### **A. THE CONDUCT AT CORINTH IN REGARDS TO THE LORD'S SUPPER (17-22)**

1. He cannot praise them for their conduct in their assemblies **(17-19)**
  - a. Their coming together is not for the better, but for the worse **(17)**
  - b. He has heard of their divisions, of which the only good thing that could be said is that it does show who is really approved among them **(18-19)**
2. Especially in regards to the Lord's Supper **(20-22)**
  - a. Their divisiveness made it impossible to eat properly, and led to severe abuses **(20-21)**
  - b. They despised the church and shamed the poor, for which Paul could not praise them **(22)**

### **B. INSTITUTION AND PROPER OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (23-34)**

1. The institution as received by Paul directly from the Lord **(23-25)**
2. Properly observed, it is a proclamation of the Lord's death **(26)**
3. Properly observed, it is accompanied by self-examination **(27-32)**
  - a. Which enables us to observe it without bringing judgment to ourselves **(27-29)**
  - b. Otherwise, we will be judged and chastened by the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world **(30-32)**
4. Concluding instructions **(33-34)**
  - a. When you come together to eat the Supper, wait for one another **(33)**
  - b. If you are hungry, eat at home **(34a)**
  - c. Paul will have more to say when he comes to Corinth **(34b)**

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
  
- 2) **For what does Paul commend the church in Corinth? (2)**
  
- 3) **What is the proper order of authority? (3)**
  
- 4) **What evidence is there that Paul is discussing praying and prophesying out in public, and**

**not in the assembly?**

- 5) What evidence is there that Paul is encouraging them to act in harmony with the customs of their day?**
  
- 6) How did Paul feel about eating common meals in the assemblies? (22, 34)**
  
- 7) What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper? (24-26)**
  
- 8) How should one observe the Lord's Supper? (27-29)**
  
- 9) How can we avoid the judgement of God? (31)**
  
- 10) What is God's purpose in judging His children? (32)**
  
- 11) What appears to be an important element in observing the Lord's Supper? (33; Acts 20:7)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Twelve

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To be aware of the many different spiritual gifts enjoyed by the early church
- 2) To appreciate the interdependence of the members of the Body of Christ

### SUMMARY

In this chapter Paul begins to address the issue of spiritual gifts. From what we read later in chapter fourteen, it appears the jealousy and envy that characterized their division mentioned earlier also expressed itself in their use (and abuse) of certain spiritual gifts. Expressing his concern that they be not ignorant about these matters, Paul first emphasizes that spiritual gifts, though diverse, come from the same Spirit and are to be used for the benefit of all (1-11). To demonstrate that every person (and spiritual gift) is important, He compares the church to a body with many different yet essential members (12-27). The chapter closes with Paul pointing out that not all serve the same function and have the same gifts, encouraging them to earnestly desire the best gifts, and preparing to show them a more excellent way in the next chapter (28-31).

### OUTLINE

#### I. SPIRITUAL GIFTS: UNITY IN DIVERSITY (1-11)

##### A. PROPER KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS (1-3)

1. Paul does not want them to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts (1)
2. For as Gentiles they had been misled by dumb idols (2)
3. Two general principles to bear in mind:
  - a. No one speaking by the Spirit of God will call Jesus accursed (3a)
  - b. No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit (3b)

##### B. THOUGH DIVERSE, THERE IS UNITY OF ORIGIN AND PURPOSE IN SPIRITUAL GIFTS (4-11)

1. They all come from the same Spirit (4)
  - a. Just as there are different ministries, but the same Lord (5)
  - b. Just as diverse activities proceed from the same God (6)
2. Each "manifestation" (spiritual gift), though given to one, is to benefit all (7)
3. A summary of the different spiritual gifts (8-10)
  - a. The word of wisdom
  - b. The word of knowledge
  - c. Faith
  - d. Gifts of healing
  - e. Working of miracles
  - f. Prophecy

- g. Discerning of spirits
  - h. Different kinds of tongues
  - i. Interpretation of tongues
4. But it is the same Spirit who works all these things, distributing to each one as He wills (11)

## **II. THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY IN ONE BODY (12-31)**

### **A. ILLUSTRATED BY THE FIGURE OF A BODY AND ITS MEMBERS (12-26)**

1. Just like the human body, the body of Christ with its many members are yet one (12)
  - a. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body (13a)
  - b. And we have all been made to drink into one Spirit (13b)
2. No member can say that they are not important (14-19)
  - a. The body is not one member, but many (14)
  - b. As illustrated with parts of the human body (15-19)
3. No member can say that others are not important (20-26)
  - a. Though many members, yet one body (20)
  - b. As illustrated with parts of the human body (21-24a)
  - c. God has composed the body to be one, and its members to have mutual concern for each other (24b-26)

### **B. SUMMARY APPLICATION OF THE ILLUSTRATION (27-31)**

1. You are the body of Christ, and individually are members of it (27)
2. God has appointed various functions in the church (28)
3. Rhetorical questions to illustrate that not everyone has the same function (29-30)
4. Certainly it was proper to desire the best gifts, yet Paul will show them a more excellent way (31)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) Why were the "manifestations" (spiritual gifts) of the Spirit given? (7)
- 3) Who determined who received what gift? (11)
- 4) What part does the Holy Spirit play in our conversion and sanctification? (13)
- 5) Can any member of the body say that they are not important? (15-19)
- 6) Can any member of the body say others are not important? (21-22)

**7) What indication is there in this chapter that at least some of the spiritual gifts or functions were temporary? (29)**

**8) Was there anything wrong with the Corinthians desiring the "best gifts"? (31)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Thirteen

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the value of love in our service to the Lord
- 2) To understand the scriptural definition of "love"
- 3) To determine when spiritual gifts would cease

### SUMMARY

In the middle of his discussion on spiritual gifts, Paul describes the "more excellent way" of love. After first emphasizing the importance of love (1-3), he then defines love by what it is and what it does (4-8a). Ending with love's quality of "permanence", Paul contrasts it with the temporary nature of spiritual gifts. Though such gifts fulfilled an important function, the time would come when they would cease, while qualities like faith, hope, and love would remain (8-13).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE "IMPORTANCE" OF LOVE (1-3)

##### A. IN REGARD TO SPEAKING IN TONGUES (1)

1. Even if one spoke with tongues of men and of angels...
2. Without love, the person would be like sounding brass or a clanging cymbal

##### B. IN REGARD TO THE GIFTS OF PROPHECY AND FAITH (2)

1. Even if one had the gift of prophecy to understand all mysteries and all knowledge...
2. Even if one had the gift of faith sufficient to remove mountains...
3. Without love, such a person is nothing

##### C. IN REGARD TO GREAT PERSONAL SACRIFICE (3)

1. Even if one gave all their goods to the poor...
2. Even if one were willing to be burned at the stake...
3. Without love, it profits the person nothing

#### II. THE "DEFINITION" OF LOVE (4-8a)

##### A. LOVE'S "POSITIVE" QUALITIES (4a)

1. Suffers long
2. Is kind

##### B. LOVE'S "NEGATIVE" QUALITIES (4b-6a)

1. Does not envy; does not parade itself, is not puffed up

2. Does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil
3. Does not rejoice in iniquity

**C. LOVE'S "POSITIVE" QUALITIES, CONTINUED (6b-8a)**

1. Rejoices in the truth
2. Bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things
3. Never fails

**III. THE "PERMANENCY" OF LOVE (8-13)**

**A. IN CONTRAST TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS (8-12)**

1. Love never fails, but spiritual gifts will cease (8)
2. Spiritual gifts to cease when that which is perfect is comes (9-10)
3. Spiritual gifts equated with "childish things", which are put away at maturity (11)
4. Spiritual gifts necessary when knowledge (revelation?) is partial (12)

**B. IN ITS ABIDING NATURE (13)**

1. What will abide (remain) is faith, hope, love
2. The greatest being love

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) What is necessary for any service that we may render to be of value? (1-3)
- 3) What is the main difference between love and spiritual gifts? (8)
- 4) What does "that which is in part" refer to in verse ten? (9)
- 5) What does "that which is perfect" refer to in verse ten? (10)
- 6) What two illustrations does Paul use to show the temporary nature of spiritual gifts (11-12)
- 7) In verse twelve, what word is being modified by the expressions "in part" and "fully"?
- 8) What will remain after spiritual gifts cease? (13)

**9) Why is it unlikely that the expression "that which is perfect is come" in verse ten refers to Christ, or to heaven?**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Fourteen

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand the proper use of tongues, especially their use in the assembly
- 2) To understand the principles which are to govern the assembly of the church

### SUMMARY

In this chapter Paul concludes his discussion of spiritual gifts. In comparing the gift of prophesying with that of speaking in tongues, he points out that prophesying excels when it comes to the edification of the church (1-5). In fact, unless the speaking of tongues provides a new revelation or teaching, and is properly interpreted, it does little good (6-19). Designed to convince unbelievers, improper use of speaking in tongues in the assembly can even bring reproach on the church (20-25). Therefore Paul regulates the proper use of spiritual gifts in the assembly with a series of instructions, including commandments from the Lord about the place of women (26-40).

### OUTLINE

#### I. SPIRITUAL GIFTS: PROPHESYING AND SPEAKING IN TONGUES (1-25)

##### A. PROPHESYING VERSUS SPEAKING IN TONGUES (1-5)

1. A call to love, but also spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy (1)
2. Speaking in tongues (as done at Corinth) is speaking to God and is speaking mysteries (2)
3. Whereas prophesying edifies, exhorts, and comforts others (3)
4. Speaking in tongues (as done at Corinth) was not edifying the church, thus the desire that they had the gift of prophecy more than the gift of tongues (4-5)

##### B. USING TONGUES IN A PROFITABLE WAY (6-19)

1. Without a revelation, knowledge, prophecy, or teaching, speaking in tongues profit nothing (6)
2. Like playing an instrument without giving any distinction in the sounds (7-9)
3. Without interpretation, it is no better than a foreigner speaking to you (10-11)
4. Therefore the admonitions:
  - a. To excel in the area of edifying the church (12)
  - b. For those who speak in tongues to pray that they may be able to interpret (13)
  - c. To be able to pray and sing with both the spirit and the understanding, that all might be edified (14-19)

##### C. ANOTHER COMPARISON BETWEEN TONGUES AND PROPHESYING (20-25)

1. Tongues are a sign for unbelievers, while prophesying is for believers (20-22)
2. Tongues in the assembly (without interpreters) will give people the wrong impression (23)
3. But prophesying in the assembly can bless even the unbeliever and uninformed person

(24-25)

**II. SPIRITUAL GIFTS: REGULATING THEIR USE (26-40)**

**A. LET ALL THINGS BE DONE FOR EDIFICATION (26)**

**B. REGULATING THE USE OF TONGUES (27-28)**

1. Two or three may speak, in turn, and let one interpret (27)
2. If there is no interpreter, keep silent in church (28)

**C. REGULATING THE USE OF PROPHECYING (29-33)**

1. Two or three prophets may speak, and others may discern (29)
2. To be done in turn, that all may learn, for the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (30-32)
3. God is not the author of confusion but of peace, in all the churches (33)

**D. REGULATING THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE ASSEMBLY (34-38)**

1. They are to keep silent in the assemblies (34)
2. Let them ask husbands at home if they have questions (35a)
3. For it is shameful for women to speak in church (35b)
4. These are commandments of the Lord which must be recognized as such (36-38)

**E. FINAL COMMENTS (39-40)**

1. Desire to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues (39)
2. Let all things be done decently and in order (40)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter
- 2) As being practiced at Corinth, what did speaking in tongues accomplish? (2,4)
- 3) What is the value of prophesying? (3)
- 4) What is necessary for speaking in tongues to be of value in the assembly? (6)
- 5) What is the purpose of speaking in tongues? (22)
- 6) What restrictions does Paul place on speaking in tongues in the assembly? (27-28)

**7) What restrictions does Paul place on women in the assemblies? (34-35)**

**8) What two basic principles are to govern the assembly of the church? (26,40)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Fifteen

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see how the resurrection of Jesus is the basis of our faith
- 2) To determine why we believe that Jesus was indeed raised from the dead
- 3) To notice the sequence of events which will occur at the end of time as presented in this chapter
- 4) To understand what is revealed about our own future resurrection from the dead

### SUMMARY

In this chapter Paul deals with problems the Corinthians were having concerning the resurrection of the dead. Evidently there were teachers at Corinth claiming there would be no resurrection. Paul answers this false doctrine by reminding them of the gospel which they received and which proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (1-11). He then proceeds to verify the resurrection with several different lines of argumentation (12-34). The last half of the chapter is devoted to answering anticipated questions concerning how the dead will be raised and with what body will they come (35-58).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE RESURRECTION: PROCLAIMED IN THE GOSPEL (1-11)

##### A. THE GOSPEL IN RELATION TO THE CORINTHIANS (1-2)

1. Paul proclaimed it and they received it (1)
2. By it they are saved, if they hold fast to it (2)

##### B. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GOSPEL (3-8)

1. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (3)
2. He was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (4)
3. He was seen by many eyewitnesses (5-7)
4. He was seen by Paul himself, who by the grace of God was able to preach the gospel (8-10)
5. Such was the gospel preached, and the Corinthians had believed it (11)

#### II. THE RESURRECTION: VERIFIED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL (12-34)

##### A. CONSEQUENCES IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION (12-19)

1. Christ is not risen from the dead (12-13)
2. The apostles' preaching and the Corinthians' faith is vain (14)
3. The apostles are false witnesses (15-16)
4. They are still in their sins (17)

5. Those who have died in Christ have perished (18)
6. Those who hope in Christ are the most pitiable of all men (19)

**B. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND OUR RESURRECTION (20-28)**

1. Christ is the "firstfruits" (20)
2. As in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive (21-22)
3. A brief description as to when this will occur (23-28)
  - a. At the coming of Christ (23)
  - b. This will be the end, when Christ delivers the kingdom to God (24-28)
    - 1) When He has put an end to all rule, authority and power (24)
    - 2) For Christ must reign till God has put all enemies under His feet (25)
    - 3) The last enemy being death itself (26)
    - 4) When all is made subject to Christ, the Son will also be subject to Him Who put all things under Him (27-28)

**C. ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE RESURRECTION, WITH A WARNING (29-34)**

1. Why are some being baptized for the dead if there is no resurrection? (29)
2. Why do the apostles and others suffer harsh persecution if there is no resurrection? (30-32)
3. Beware of evil influence and those who do not have the knowledge of God (33-34)

**III. THE RESURRECTION: DESCRIBED BY PAUL (35-58)**

**A. IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION: "WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?" (35-49)**

1. It will be different from the one sown, just as the plant is different from the seed (35-38)
2. Illustrations of the different types of bodies in the physical world (39-41)
3. Thus the resurrected body will be different from the physical body, though it is the same as the one sown (42-49)
  - a. The weak, dishonorable, corruptible body will be raised in incorruption, glory and power (42-43)
  - b. The natural body, patterned after the first Adam, will be raised a spiritual body patterned after the Last Adam (44-46)
  - c. Those who have borne the image of the man of dust from the earth, will one day bear the image of the Man of heaven (47-49)

**B. IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION: "HOW ARE THE DEAD RAISED UP" (50-58)**

1. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption (50)
2. The mystery of the resurrection as revealed by Paul (51-57)
  - a. All shall be changed, whether dead or alive (51)
  - b. It will occur in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (52)
  - c. The corruptible, mortal man will put on incorruption and immortality, and we will be victorious over death through Jesus Christ our Lord (53-57)
3. A final exhortation to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (58)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) List the main points of this chapter**
  
- 2) What are some of the key elements of the gospel? (1-8)**
  
- 3) What type of proof is offered for the resurrection of Jesus? (5-8)**
  
- 4) If Christ was not raised from the dead, what would it mean? (14-19)**
  
- 5) What will happen when Christ comes again? (23-26, 51-53)**
  
- 6) What does Paul refer to when he speaks of "baptism for the dead"? (29)**

# The First Epistle To The Corinthians

## Chapter Sixteen

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand the basis and purpose underlying the collection taken on the first day of the week
- 2) To note the love accompanying the writing of this epistle which is filled with so much correction of error

### SUMMARY

In this final chapter, Paul discusses one last subject before making his concluding remarks. It concerns the collection for the saints, for which Paul gives instructions as to the manner in which the funds are to be gathered and then sent to Jerusalem (1-4). He then writes briefly of his plans to see them and makes a few comments concerning Timothy and Apollos (5-12). His final exhortations, greetings and solemn warning are marked with a tone of love: the need to love one another, a warning to love the Lord, and a declaration of his love for them (13-24).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS (1-4)

##### A. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING TAKING UP THE COLLECTION (1-2)

1. The same as those given the churches of Galatia (1)
2. To be gathered each first day of the week, people giving as they have been prospered, to avoid last minute collections (2)

##### B. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING SENDING THE COLLECTION (3-4)

1. To be sent along with an approved representative of the church of Corinth (3)
2. If deemed appropriate, Paul will join them in going to Jerusalem (4)

#### II. PERSONAL PLANS AND RELATED COMMENTS (5-12)

##### A. PAUL'S PLANS (5-9)

1. To see them after passing through Macedonia (5-7)
2. To remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a door of opportunity has been opened for him (8-9)

##### B. CONCERNING TIMOTHY (10-11)

1. Allow him to come without fear (10)
2. Do not despise him, but send him to Paul in peace (11)

##### C. CONCERNING APOLLOS (12)

1. Though urged by Paul, he chose not to go to Corinth at the present time (12a)

2. But he will at a more convenient time (12b)

### **III. CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS, GREETINGS, AND SOLEMN FAREWELL (13-24)**

#### **A. FINAL EXHORTATIONS (13-18)**

1. Exhortation to steadfastness and love (13-14)
2. Exhortation to submit to the household of Stephanus and others like them, who refresh the spirits of those who know them (15-18)

#### **B. GREETINGS (19-21)**

1. From the churches of Asia, Aquila and Priscilla, and others (19-20a)
2. Greet one another with a holy kiss (20b)
3. Paul's own personal salutation in his own handwriting (21)

#### **C. A SOLEMN FAREWELL (22-24)**

1. A grave warning about not loving the Lord Jesus , with a plea for His coming (22)
2. A prayer for grace and an expression of love for those in Christ Jesus (23)

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **List the main points of this chapter**
- 2) **What was the purpose of the collection? (1)**
- 3) **When was the collection to be taken? (2)**
- 4) **What was the purpose of doing it this way? (2)**
- 5) **What principle concerning giving is taught in verse two?**
- 6) **When did Paul plan to go to Corinth? (5-8)**
- 7) **Who would likely see them in the meantime? (10-11)**
- 8) **What noble comments are made concerning Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (15-18)**
- 9) **What husband and wife team joined Paul in greeting the church at Corinth? (19)**

- 10) What grave warning does Paul give in this chapter? (22)**
  
- 11) What earnest wish does Paul express in this chapter? (22)**
  
- 12) How does Paul close this epistle which is filled with so much rebuke for the error that existed in the church at Corinth? (24)**