

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 1

STUDY INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BOOK OF 1ST CORINTHIANS **Please Read Carefully**

- Remember that all Home Bible School studies are **FREE** and pre-denominational. You will never be asked for money.
- This is Part One of the “**Studies in the Book of Corinthians**” series. When you finish this lesson, you should begin Part number two. Upon completion of 1st Corinthians, please continue with the study of 2nd Corinthians. Afterwards, other courses you may want to consider are:
Survey of the Old Testament, Making Sense of the Bible, the book of Revelation, the Church of the Bible, Hebrews & Galatians or a Home Bible Study Curriculum.
- **YOUR INSTRUCTIONS FOR “STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF 1ST CORINTHIANS” PART ONE:**
 4. The King James Bible is the text for these Bible study courses, but you may use your own Bible.
 - * Please read the lesson very carefully and make notes in your notebook. then complete all the test questions at the end of this lesson. **All answers to the test questions are found in the lesson.**
 5. **Send the** test questions back to the address below.. **Please do not send back the entire lesson.** It is yours to keep.
 6. **Please make sure your name and address are on the test questions before you mail them back.**
 7. Your lesson will be graded and the results sent back to you and when you finish each of these lessons and the rest of the courses, you will be sent a **Certificate of Completion.**

God blesses those who sincerely study the Bible and we pray his blessings on you as you study.

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1ST CORINTHIANS - PART 1

LESSON ONE: Introduction

As with all studies in the Bible, the best thing students can do is read the Bible! We suggest that before you read the comments in this study booklet on each chapter that you read the chapter at least **once** and, even better, **three** times.

CORINTH: A CHURCH WITH PROBLEMS

Paul called the Corinthian church the “*church of God which is at Corinth*” (1:1) because they had done those things which made them Christians: they had been called by the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14), they had been sanctified by the truth of the gospel (John 17:17), they had received the grace of God (v 4) and had the riches of God in their hearts (v 5). Like other churches in the New Testament, they had been given special spiritual gifts to help them in preaching the gospel (vv 5-7) and like churches, even today, they were waiting for the second coming of Christ (vv 7,8).

But, they had problems, just like most churches do today and the reason 1 Corinthians is in the Bible is to teach us how to identify our own church problems and solve them..

- ❖ They were **divided** because they had “**preacheritis**” – they loved preachers more than Jesus
- ❖ A man had his **own father’s wife**, of all things!
- ❖ Brethren were **suing** other brethren in court
- ❖ They didn’t understand about **marriage, divorce** and **remarriage** (and neither do people today)
- ❖ They wanted **their own way** in many things and didn’t care about others’ feelings
- ❖ They were making the **Lord’s Supper** into a common everyday meal
- ❖ They were **fellowshipping** people who worshipped idols
- ❖ They were **jealous** of each other
- ❖ They didn’t know the Bible’s teaching about the place of **women** in the church
- ❖ They **denied the resurrection** of Jesus Christ

Before we go any further in discussing Corinth’s problems, we need to be reminded of some very important Bible teachings.

The Bible comes from God and is his perfect revelation to man. *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”* (2 Peter 1:21)

1. **Therefore, the church, as revealed in the Bible, is perfect because it came from God.** But, sometimes even when people really try to put into practice what the Bible teaches, we often fall short of really being what we ought to be. It isn’t God’s fault, but, when problems come into the church, it’s our fault! That’s why it’s good to study 1 Corinthians.
2. **When humans divide the church it’s the same as hurting Jesus** as we’re taught in Hebrews 10:29, *“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”*
3. Problems in the church must to be corrected and the **only way to correct problems is by teaching the gospel truth.**

4. **We are in a war with Satan** and when the church is divided, Satan thinks he's won.
5. Christians teach others the truth, but **we must obey the truth too**. When we teach others, but don't obey the Lord ourselves, we are hypocrites.
6. **One of the worst things in the world is a Christian or a church which goes bad**. It's like Peter said in 2 Peter 2:20,21, *"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."*

In our study, we will learn what God thinks about problems in the church and we will learn the solution to all problems Christians may have. You'll enjoy this study. Stick it out and you'll be a better Christian!.

Where is Corinth Anyway?

Check the map and you'll see that Corinth is a city in the region of Achaia, which today is part of Greece. Find Jerusalem at the lower right hand corner of the map and do a quick trace to Corinth and you'll find that it's a distance of about **600 miles** by water.



What kind of a Place was Corinth?

Julius Caesar built the city of Corinth and made it a Roman colony. It was the capital city of Achaia (modern day Greece) and was a seaport which had all the evils that go along with such a place even today.

The only religion people had was idolatry and their religion was so corrupt that, at the temple of Aphrodite (Venus), there were one thousand priestesses who were also prostitutes in the name of their goddess. The rich Corinthians were so worldly and had such a bad reputation that there was a word in the ancient world, "Korinthiazestai," which meant "to live like a Corinthian." On Roman drama stages, Corinthian actors were always shown drunk. You wouldn't think that Christianity would have much of a chance in such a fleshpot, would you?

The Corinthians also loved wisdom, public speaking, philosophy and all things which come from the mind of man. They were materialistic, loved to live in luxury and were rich.

The Gospel Comes to Corinth

Into this world-renowned "hell hole", the apostle Paul went in Acts 18 with the power of the gospel of Christ. Read Acts 18, especially verses 7-10, and you'll find out about how the church came to be established in Corinth.

*"And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named **Justus**, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And **Crispus**, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and **many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized**. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for **I have much people in this city.**"*

"**Joined hard to the synagogue**" means that Justus lived next door to the Corinthian Jews' house of worship. The "**chief ruler of the synagogue**" is a title belonging to the person in charge of things in the synagogue. "**With all his house**" means that all adults and older children in Crispus' house became Christians. The way all the Corinthians (as well as people today) became Christians was they heard the gospel, believed on it and were baptized into Christ.

Corinth had doctrinal problems, they had moral problems, they had fellowship problems and they couldn't get along with one another.

What a place! We probably would just mark them off and let them go their own way. But not Paul. He wanted them to go to heaven when they died and he taught them the truth so that they could go to heaven.

The only way to solve church problems is with the gospel truth!

LESSON TWO: Chapters one through three

CHAPTER ONE Division in Christianity is sinful

The problem in chapter one: Division

Unity in the name of Christ is near to the heart of God as Jesus taught in John 17:21, 22, *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be **one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be **one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”***

Division in the name of Jesus is sinful. There is only one body (Ephesians 4:4) and that one body is the church (Colossians 1:18). When Christians are divided and claim division in the name of Jesus, it is never with God’s approval, even though he still loves us.

Division in the church is evil and is spawned in the bowels of a very devil’s hell. No one should ever say, “Let’s just have our own opinion about the Bible and still be called Christians.” That’s the worst evil that’s in the religious world today! Join the church of your choice? No. Become a Christian and you’ll be part of the church of Christ’s choice!

① One cause of the problem of division: Loyalty to preachers instead of to Jesus

“Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (1 Corinthians 1:12,13). Preachers cause a lot of trouble in the church if they try to run things, if they want glory for themselves and if they refuse to preach the Bible. At Corinth, it looks like the Christians there were bragging about who baptized them rather than being loyal to Christ.

Paul only baptized Crispus, Gaius (Acts 18) and the household of Stephanas (vv 14, 16). When the gospel is preached like it was by Phillip to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, people want to be baptized as part of their obedience to the Lord, but a preacher’s main job is not to put people under the water, but to preach the gospel (v 17a) and being scripturally baptized will follow..

② Another cause of division is preaching the wisdom of man rather than the truth of God.

Paul makes these points for us.

1. The preaching of the cross (the gospel) is canceled if Christians teach their own opinions (v 17)
2. The power of God is the gospel as Romans 1:16 teaches, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
3. Man’s opinions (wisdom) caused people to leave God, but preaching the gospel causes people to come to God (v 21).
4. The Jews wanted a sign, the Greeks wanted human philosophy, but the gospel is all man needs (vv 22-25)
5. Worldly wise people usually do not become Christians (v 26), but God has chosen the simple gospel to save people (vv 27-29)
6. Christ and the gospel are all we need (vv 30, 31)

CHAPTER TWO

What Paul Taught and How He Taught It

In this chapter, Paul continues teaching the Corinthian church of these things: **One**, what he taught, **Two**, the how of what he taught

What Paul Taught

Paul preached the cross (v 2). *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified”* (v 2). The preaching of the cross was foolishness to “wise” men, but it is the heart of New Testament Christianity.

Paul preached with power (v 4). Paul performed miracles (demonstration of the spirit) when he preached the gospel, which is God’s power to save. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Paul preached the “mystery of God” (v 7). The word “mystery” means “something that needs to be revealed” and Paul uses this word, mystery, to refer to the Gospel of Christ. Read Colossians 1:27, *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”* And 1 Timothy 3:16 says, *“And **without controversy** great is the mystery of godliness: God was **manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.**”* Just like a nicely set table for company has a beautiful centerpiece, so it is with the gospel of Christ -- there is no controversy (argument) that Jesus is the centerpiece of the gospel.

Paul preached what the Holy Spirit revealed (v 10, 13). 2 Peter 1:21 says, *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”* Throughout the Bible, the Holy Spirit’s main function was in the passing on of God’s truth to human beings. **The Holy Spirit will not say anything that is not in the Bible** as learned in John 16:13, *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will **guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.**”*

Paul preached the mind of God and of Christ (v 16). This is another way of describing the gospel truth of the New Testament. If we want to know what God thinks, we look to the Bible for the answers! The mind of Christ is mentioned in Philippians 2:3-5, *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”* The gospel truth is the record of Christ’s sacrifice for the sins of man and this is the heart and core of New Testament Christianity.

The How of Paul’s Teachings

He did not teach them with his own opinion (v 1), nor the opinions of other people (v 6) but with the power of the Holy Spirit through the gospel (v 4). There is no need to add to the gospel or subtract from it. Romans 1:16 says it is the power of God to save those that believe on Jesus. The gospel is inspired of God (2 Timothy 3:16,17) and the Holy Spirit does his work today through the truth of God. **The gospel Paul preached was revealed by the Holy Spirit (v 10) and anything else is of the devil.**

His point: **The gospel came from heaven and not from men.**

The power of the gospel makes sinful people spiritual (vv 12, 13) because a sinner (the natural man v 14) cannot know the mind of God without the gospel.

The **results** of Paul's teaching caused their faith to be based on the gospel and not on man's opinions (v 5).

CHAPTER THREE **"Remember Who You Are"**

When my children would go out on a date or with friends, I would snap my fingers and say, "Remember who you are!" They got so used to it that all I would have to do is snap my fingers and they would say "Sermon!"

In chapter three Paul is snapping his fingers and reminding the Corinthian Christians "who you are!"

They had been fed simple truth (v 1) which Paul calls "milk." The apostle Peter spoke about this in 1 Peter 1:25-2:2, "*But the **word of the Lord** endureth for ever. And **this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.** Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, **desire the sincere milk of the word**, that ye may grow thereby."*

The word of God is the gospel and Christians are nourished by the truth.

They had dropped back into things of the world (vv 1, 3) which Paul calls "carnal." He knew they had dropped back into the world because they had envy, division and strife. He gets back to the cause of their division (vv 4,5) which was putting their faith in men rather than in Jesus. People today do the same thing and it has caused the same thing in our religious world: Division... and division in the name of Jesus is sinful.

They had forgotten that no matter who it was that taught them the gospel, God was the one who gave the increase (vv 6,7). Just as God and Christ are one, so are those who teach the gospel (v 8) because we human teachers work together to build God's church (v 9). Paul laid the foundation for Christ at Corinth and others built upon it (v 10). Paul's instruction about teaching the gospel is based upon verse 11, "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*"

When work is done for Jesus, it's **always a building work**. If a teacher builds a good foundation, others may mess it up, but if the foundation is solidly built on **gospel truth**, it's good (vv 12-16). All Christians should remember that **God's spirit dwells in us** (v 16) and if people teach error, it hurts the temple of God which is the **church** (Revelation 21:3).

Human opinions hurt the Lord's church more than anything else (v 18). We hear many good and sincere people say, "I know the Bible says that, but my church says differently." This attitude is surely not pleasing to God. "**The Bible says it; that settles it and I believe it**" should be our attitude toward the scriptures!

Remember who you are!

LESSON THREE: Chapters four and five

CHAPTER FOUR The Wisest Thing We Can Be Is A Fool

Preachers must be faithful to the word when they open their mouths (v 2) because preachers are the stewards (the keepers) of the word of God (v 1). Paul taught people because he knew he would be judged by Jesus as to how he taught (v 4) and we should not harshly judge people either because all things will be settled in the judgment day (v 5).

NOTE: Jesus taught in John 7:24, *“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”* This means that everything that we say on behalf of the Lord must be righteous, or according to the gospel truth. We will be looking at some other kinds of judgment when we get to chapter 6, but remember this: **whatever judgments Christians make are never mean ones.**

Sometimes even Christians are conceited and have a real ego problem. That problem is called pride and Paul tells these Corinthian Christians not to put others on a pedestal (v 6) and not to put themselves up on a pedestal either (vv 7,8).

Paul says in verse 10, “We are fools for Christ’s sake” and he’s making that statement because the Corinthians had stopped being humble (“ye are wise in Christ). Remember their problem: **They were looking to men for answers rather than to God.** The same thing is true today! Read verses 11-13 to listen to Paul’s listing of the things that he had suffered.

Verse 14 is important, *“I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.”* Paul had brought the gospel to Corinth and called himself their “father” because they learned the truth from him (v 15) and they should continue to listen to God’s word when it spoken by faithful and godly men (v 16,17). Paul didn’t teach one thing at one place and another thing at another place, but he taught the same thing “every where in every church” (v 17b). When he re-visited them, he would meekly preach the simple word of God over and over again (v 19-21).

CHAPTER FIVE Immorality in the Church?

Now, Paul gets down to some brass tacks. He’s already told them how upset he was over their division and in this chapter, he singles out a brother who was committing a sin even above those that the Gentiles committed: He had his own father’s wife as his wife (v 1)! Paul was horrified at this violation of God’s law, but he tells the Corinthian Christians the real problem in verse 2, *“And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.”* **Their real problem was that they had ignored the immorality of this man (and his wife) and, for some reason, were proud of it!**

Paul teaches that immorality in the church is **serious** business and he gives us these instructions:

- ❖ The church cannot fellowship someone who is deliberately serving Satan (v 5)
- ❖ The church cannot be proud of immorality (v 6)
- ❖ The church must put away the immoral person (vv 6b-7)
- ❖ The church cannot eat the Lord’s supper together as long as there is immorality in their midst (v 8)
- ❖ The church cannot keep company with a brother who is sexually immoral (9-12) and the church must put away the wicked person (v 13), yet with love and humility

NOTE: Paul taught in Galatians 6:1, 2, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the **spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.** Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” The church takes its fellowship away from a sexually immoral person, but is not mean or hateful about it.

Here are some ways that sexual immorality is in the church today:

- ❖ When the elders and preacher do not teach about wearing clothes that are immodest and the church does not listen to such teaching
- ❖ When the elders, the preacher and the church fellowship those who are living in an adulterous marriage
- ❖ When the elders, the preacher and the church do not try to save the souls of young women who become pregnant and have a child out of wedlock
- ❖ When the elders, the preacher and the church do not try to save the souls of young men who make a young girl pregnant
- ❖ When the elders and the preacher do not teach about sexual immorality

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8)

LESSON FOUR: Chapter six and seven

CHAPTER SIX Taking Another Christian to Court

Say what? Were those Corinthian Christians taking other Christians to court to settle differences? They sure were and Paul uses eight verses to shoot down that kind of thinking.

- ❖ He could not believe they were taking each to court (v 1)
- ❖ Christians “judge” the world and angels, and can’t even settle their own disputes? (vv 2-6)
- ❖ Don’t take another Christian to court.

NOTE: What about judging? Can a Christian judge someone else? We’ve already seen how a Christian can judge “righteous judgment” in John 7:24, but what about the other kinds of judgment that Christians are to leave alone?

Judging Christians Cannot Do

- ✘ **Christians are not to be harshly critical of other people.** Matthew 7:1,2, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”
- ✘ **Christians cannot judge like Christ because we are not him.** John 5:30, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”
- ✘ **Everyone will be judged by the Bible in the judgment day.** John 12:48, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
- ✘ **Christians are not the final judge in the judgment day.** Acts 10:42, “And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.”

Judging Christians Can Do

- ✓ **Christians can judge righteous judgment based upon the word of God** (John 9:24). When something wrong is taught or someone is wrong in their lives and Christians compare what they're doing with what the Bible teaches, that is not harshly judging: **it is righteous judgment**
- ✓ **Christians judge the world** by the high standards we practice. In this sense, the word "judge" is not used as "passing sentence", but refers to our standards.
- ✓ **Christians judge angels** by the place we occupy in God's plan for men. Hebrews 1:5 says, "*For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?*" This scripture refers to Christ and no angel can ever be as high as Jesus. **No angel can ever be a born-again child of God either** like we can be if we obey the Lord's teachings. We "judge" angels by the position that we have: children of God through the blood of God's only begotten son, Jesus the Christ.

A Reminder of What They Were

We discussed earlier about Paul's reminding the Christians at Corinth who they are. In verses 9-11, he "snaps his fingers" again and says, "**Remember what you were!**" in verses 9 and 10.

- ✓ They had been **fornicators** (sexually immoral), **idolaters** (worshippers of images), they had been **adulterers**, they had been **homosexuals** (effeminate/abusers of themselves with mankind) They had been **thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers** (speaking evil of others) and **extortioners** (taking advantage of other people).
- ✓ **Before they became Christians, they were a sorry lot!**

But...

- ✓ They had been **washed in the blood of the lamb** (see Romans 6:3,4), they had been **sanctified** (set apart) by the word of God (see John 17:17), they had been made right (**justified**) in God's sight by the **authority** of Jesus Christ through the **teachings** of the Holy Spirit (v 11)
- ✓ **Whoever says a rank sinner can't change his ways is wrong! Only the gospel is powerful enough to change a sinner's life.**

Why?

Why did Paul make such a point of reminding them who they were? If someone were to do that to us, we'd be embarrassed. Was he trying to shame them? Was he trying to take advantage of them? No. He wanted them to act like spiritual people (vv 13-14) He wanted them to remember that they were part of Jesus (v 15) and that if they went back into the world, it's like a man going finding a harlot (a loose woman) and becoming one with her (v 16), whereas they were supposed to be spiritual people (v 17).

NOTE: "Flee fornication" (v 18). There are many sins which people do, but the only sin in the entire Bible that specifically is said to be a sin against our own bodies is the sin of sexual immorality (fornication). People who are sexually immoral run the risk of AIDS, venereal diseases, the breakup of homes and loss of their good reputation. "**Flee fornication!**"

"*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are **bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's***" (v 20).

People who have never been baptized have not been washed in the blood of Jesus and still have their sins on their souls as Romans 6:3,4 teaches, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

Christians who will not repent and confess their sins will still live in them. *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us”* (1 John 1:9, 10).

A NOTE BETWEEN CHAPTER SIX AND CHAPTER SEVEN

Notice in chapter 7:1, Paul said, *“Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me...”*. Evidently, some of the Corinthian Christians had written to Paul about questions they wanted answered and now Paul is ready to discuss those things. You may wonder why Paul waited six whole chapters before he got to what they had asked him about. The answer is simple: **There were things that needed to be corrected before the questions could be answered.** Like the old preacher said, *“You teach ‘em what they want to hear and you teach ‘em what they don’t want to hear!”* Now Paul turns his attention to the things that were on the Corinthian Christians’ minds.

CHAPTER SEVEN Marriage Questions

There were fathers who wanted to know if they could give their daughters in marriage. There were Christians who were married to non-Christians. Christians wanted to know how to have a family life in view of the terrible persecution they were enduring. Christians wanted to know if they should live a celibate life and never marry. Paul uses chapter seven to answer these questions.

All things Paul discusses in chapter seven need to be considered in view of verse 26, *“I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.”* This “present distress” was the horrible persecution Christians were going through at this time. Paul wanted to spare these Christians from losing their lives and Paul advised that being married maybe would not help them survive. However, he still tells them the truth of their situation as well as giving his advice.

The truth about marriage

He reminds them about fornication (v 1), and also that marriage is God’s way of avoiding sexual immorality (v 2). For any marriage to succeed, even today, it must do so on two levels: **1) spiritually** and **2) physically**. **Physically**, husbands and wives give themselves to each other and hold nothing back (vv 3-5). We are reminded of Hebrews 13:4, *“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”* **Spiritually**, they can give themselves to fasting and prayer, but when this spiritual activity is over, they should come back together physically (v 5).

Paul’s advice

The “present distress/persecution” made Paul advise that Christians remain single (v 7,8), but if their passions run high, it’s okay to marry (v 9).

The problem about Christians married to non-Christians

It happened then and it happens now: a Christian marries someone who is not a Christian. What does the Christian do when the unbeliever acts like an unbeliever? Jesus taught in Matthew chapters 5 and 19 that, from the Garden of Eden, God's law has been "one man, one wife, for life, except for death and fornication." So what does happen when a Christian is married to an unbeliever? Does the Christian leave the unbeliever and marry someone else? It was a problem then and it's a problem now!

The teaching

Divorce is wrong, but if divorce happens where there is no sexual immorality, the Christian is to remain unmarried (v 10, 11). Paul then goes from the clear teaching of Jesus to giving his own apostolic opinions about the situation (v 12a). Let a marriage still be united (v 12b, 13), but what does he mean in verse 14 that the Christian "sanctifies" the marriage? The word "sanctify" means to "set apart" and it is also translated "holy" in other places in the New Testament. Paul's point? **When a Christian is in a marriage, it becomes a better union and the children are raised right.**

Some teach that if an unbeliever divorces a Christian, and there is no sexual immorality, that the Christian can marry again. How can this be when Paul has just told them to remain unmarried? Besides, if a Christian marries again, how can the Christian "save" the unbeliever (v 16)? If an unbeliever deserted a Christian because of the persecution being thrown on Christians, the Christian just lets him/her leave, but still remains unmarried. God expects his people to serve him in whatever state they find themselves in (vv 17-24).

These teachings of Jesus about marriage, divorce and remarriage may seem a hard line to many, but God knows best what's for us. **Marriage is to be between a man and a woman and never between two people of the same sex.**

The truth about a man giving his virgin daughter in marriage

So, what's the big deal? Any father is happy when his daughter wants to be married to a good man! But remember, the church was being persecuted in those days, so the Corinthian Christian fathers had a real problem: Marry her off and let her family be murdered? As a grandfather myself, I would be heartbroken to see my grandchildren murdered because their parents were Christians. We think we have problems today, but those Christians in the New Testament day had more problems than we could ever imagine.

Paul gives his advice about the man with a virgin daughter about to be married (v 25) and he repeats that people who are married should not divorce (v 27), but if people marry, there is no sin committed in spite of the fact that they would have trouble with persecution (v 28). Life is short (v 29) and Paul still thinks people should spare themselves from persecution by remaining unmarried (vv 30-33). The difference between a wife and a virgin is that married women care for their husbands while virgins may only care for the Lord (v 34) and Christians should serve the Lord without being distracted (v 35). Fathers who give their daughters away in marriage have not sinned (v 36-38).

"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (v 39).

LESSON FIVE: Chapters eight and nine

CHAPTER EIGHT

Eating meats which have been sacrificed to idols

Eating meats sacrificed to idols? What in the world does that have to do with us today? Well, there's more to this problem than just sitting down to dinner in Corinth -- it goes into another area of making a weak Christian stumble and that's what Paul is really wanting to teach them.

As a rule, we don't have idols today in our nation, except perhaps some who worship according to the Hindu religion of India. But, in those days, everybody except Christians and Jews sacrificed to idols and after the meat was sacrificed, it was put out for public sale in something called "the shambles" (1 Corinthians 10:25). Some Christians in Corinth, probably mostly the Jewish Christians, had a problem with eating this kind of meat. Paul tells them:

- ☐ Love is the basis of Christ's religion (v 1)
- ☐ Knowledge is necessary, but Christians don't glory in their knowledge (v 2)
- ☐ Idols are nothing (v 4,5), but God is everything (v 6)
- ☐ Some people have a weak conscience in this meat question (v 7) and even though meat is nothing (v 8), Christians still do not deliberately use their knowledge to cause another Christian to stumble (v 9,10)
- ☐ When strong Christians deliberately sin against weak Christians, they also sin against Christ (v 12)
- ☐ Paul wanted to give no offense to anyone, even to the point that, if he had to, he would never eat any meat ever again (v 13).

CHAPTER NINE

Getting Down to the Real Issue of Eating Meats Sacrificed to Idols

The issue is freedom in Christ! When a person becomes a Christian, he is not chained up, but he is released and has a lot of freedom: freedom from **sin**, freedom from the **devil**, freedom from his **past** life, etc. And when it comes to practicing his Christianity, he still has a lot of freedom, as long as he does not disobey the scriptures. Paul turns his attention to the freedom thing.

- He was free as an apostle (v 1) and had seen Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Many think he was saved on the road, but he was not because he was told to go into the city and when Ananias visited him, he told him to "*Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16) and then is when he was saved.
- There is no doubt that Christians can eat and drink and marry (v 4,5), but Christians also have the right to decide not to marry (v 6).

NOTE: Roman Catholic priests are not permitted to marry and this practice is called "celibacy." They also claim that Peter was the first pope, but in verse 5, Paul specifically said that Peter had a wife and Matthew 8:14 teaches that Jesus healed Peter's wife's mother. Peter was married (who can have a mother in law and not be married?) And therefore was never a Roman Catholic priest.

- Paul did not take any money from the Corinthian church, but evidently they had thought that somehow diminished him as an apostle. He tells them that even the law of Moses taught that workers, either man or beast, could receive pay (vv 7-10; Deuteronomy 20:6). Preachers today can be paid, but they had better work as hard as Paul did and preach the same gospel Paul preached!

- Even though Paul had taught them the gospel, he did not lord it over them (vv 11-15)
- Paul knew that it was necessary for him to preach the gospel (v 16) and he did it willingly because all faithful preachers of the gospel look forward to a reward in heaven (v 17)
- Paul did not want to do his own thing, but he fit in to the lives of those he was teaching. He talked like a Jew (v 20), he talked like a Gentile (v 21), he was weak (v 22) and he said he was *“made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some”* and this for the sake of preaching the pure gospel of Christ (v 23)
- Athletes strive to master their sport and win (vv 23-26), but Paul ran a bigger race, even to the point of making sure his physical person was under subjection to the gospel (v 27)

THIS COMPLETES PART ONE
ON FIRST CORINTHIANS

PLEASE ANSWER THE TEST QUESTIONS
ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES

AFTER YOU ANSWER THEM,
PLEASE SEND THEM BACK TO US
FOR GRADING

PLEASE SEND ONLY THE TEST QUESTIONS
THE LESSON IS YOURS TO KEEP FOR
FURTHER STUDY

**TEST QUESTIONS
1 CORINTHIANS
Part One**

YOUR NAME:

YOUR ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

WHERE DO YOU GO TO CHURCH?

LESSON ONE: Introduction

Multiple choice (Circle the correct answer)

1. The church as revealed in the Bible is **A** Made by man **B** Perfect **C** Not necessary
2. When the church is divided, **A** Satan thinks he's won **B** It's okay in God's sight **C** It's the way we ought to be
3. "With all his house" means **A** All babies were baptized **B** Adults and older children were baptized **C** Only women were baptized
4. The only way to solve church problems is **A** Ignore them **B** Shoot them **C** Solve them with the gospel truth
5. In Acts 18:8, the Corinthians **A** Hearing, believed and were baptized **B** Accepted Jesus when they were babies **C** Did miracles

Fill in the blanks

1. The _____, as revealed in the _____, is _____ because it came from _____.
2. When humans _____ the church, it's the same as hurting _____.
3. The Corinthians also loved _____, public speaking, _____ and all things which come from the mind of _____.
4. The Christians at Corinth were Christians because they had been _____ by the gospel, sanctified by the _____ of the gospel, received the _____ of God and had the _____ of God in their hearts.
5. 2 Peter 2:20: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the _____ through the _____ of the Lord and savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and _____, the latter end is _____ - with them than the _____."

Fill in the blanks/Listing: List the problems the Corinthian had

1. "Preacheritis" – they loved _____ more than they loved _____
2. The kind of adultery present in the church was that a man had his _____ wife
3. Christians were _____ other Christians in court
4. They didn't understand about _____, divorce and remarriage
5. They wanted their own _____ and didn't _____ about others' feelings
6. They were making the Lord's _____ into a common everyday meal
7. They were _____ people who worshipped _____
8. They were _____ of each other
9. They didn't know the Bible's teaching about _____ in the church
10. They denied the _____ of Jesus Christ

LESSON TWO: Chapters one through three

True false (Check the correct answer)

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Preachers must preach the Bible and the Bible only | T _____ F _____ |
| 2. Preachers must preach their own opinions and call it Bible preaching | T _____ F _____ |
| 3. Christ, the gospel and the Bible are all we need in religion | T _____ F _____ |
| 4. The Bible tells us what God thinks about our salvation | T _____ F _____ |
| 5. The Corinthian Christians never dropped back into the world | T _____ F _____ |
| 6. Human opinions hurt the church more than anything else | T _____ F _____ |
| 7. Division in the name of Jesus is scripturally okay | T _____ F _____ |
| 8. Division in the name of Jesus is sinful | T _____ F _____ |
| 9. Paul preached what the Holy Spirit revealed | T _____ F _____ |
| 10. God and Christ are one and so should preachers be | T _____ F _____ |

Multiple choice (Circle the correct answer)

1. In Corinth, Paul baptized **A** All of the Corinthians **B** All the Jews **C** Crispus, Gaius and the family of Stephanas
2. The "mystery of God" is **A** The wisdom of men **B** The gospel **C** The Catechism
3. The gospel Paul preached was **A** Of God **B** Of Christ **C** Of the Holy Spirit **D** All of these
4. When work for Jesus is done **A** It's always a building work **B** It must be done according to the teachings of the Bible **C** Both of these
5. Division in the name of Jesus is **A** Sinful **B** Of the devil **C** Never the right thing to do **D** All of these

Fill in the blanks

1. Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the _____ of Christ, for it is the _____ of God unto _____."
2. John 17:21,22: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall _____ on me through their _____, that they all may be _____, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be _____ in us, that the _____ may believe that thou hast sent me."

3. 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I _____ not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him _____."
4. John 16:13, "Howbeit, when he the _____ of _____ is come, he will _____ you into all truth; for he shall _____ speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall _____, that shall he _____, and he will show you things to come."
5. "The _____ - says it; that _____ it; and I _____ it."

LESSON THREE: Chapters four and five

True false (Check the correct answer

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. The Corinthian Christians were looking to men for answers | T _____ F _____ |
| 2. Peter had brought the gospel to the city of Corinth | T _____ F _____ |
| 3. Through the Bible, Jesus judges what all preachers teach | T _____ F _____ |
| 4. The church can overlook immorality | T _____ F _____ |
| 5. The church can not overlook immorality | T _____ F _____ |
| 6. The church cannot keep company with a Christian who is sexually immoral | T _____ F _____ |
| 7. The wisest thing we can is a fool for Christ's sake | T _____ F _____ |
| 8. Paul preached different things in different places | T _____ F _____ |
| 9. Paul preached the same truth in every place | T _____ F _____ |
| 10. Immorality in the church is serious business | T _____ F _____ |

Fill in the blanks

1. John 7:24, " _____ not according to the _____, but judge _____ judgment."
2. Galatians 6:1,2, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a _____, ye which are _____, restore such a one in the spirit of _____, considering _____, lest thou also be _____. Bear ye one another's _____ and so fulfill the _____ of Christ."

Fill in the blanks on immorality in the church

1. Immorality is in the church when there is no teaching about wearing clothes that are _____.
2. Immorality is in the church when the church fellowships those who are in an _____ marriage.
3. Immorality is in the church when the leaders do not try to save the _____ of young women who become _____.
4. Immorality is in the church when the leaders do not try to save the souls of young _____ who make a young girl pregnant.
5. Immorality is in the church when the leaders do not _____ what the Bible says about sexual immorality.

LESSON FOUR: Chapters six and seven

Multiple choice (Circle the correct answer)

1. The only sin the Bible mentions as sinning against our bodies is **A** Lying **B** Stealing **C** Sexual immorality
2. Before they became Christians, the Corinthians were **A** Sexually immoral **B** Idolaters **C** Homosexuals **D** Drunkards **E** All of these and more
3. Paul advised the Corinthian Christians that **A** They must not marry during that time of persecution **B** They could not marry during that time of persecution **C** They could marry but it would be unwise
4. About Christians going to court with other Christians, Paul taught **A** Christians can take other Christians **B** Christians cannot take other Christians to court
5. If a Christian was married to an unbeliever, Paul teaches **A** If the unbeliever divorces the Christian, the Christian must remain unmarried **B** If the Christian divorces the unbeliever, the Christian must remain unmarried **C** Both of these

True false (Check the correct answer)

- | | | | | |
|---|---|-------|---|-------|
| 1. A Christian cannot marry an unbeliever | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 2. A Christian can marry an unbeliever, but still must be a Christian | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 3. Christians can take other Christians to court | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 4. Christians cannot take other Christians to court | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 5. A Christian can judge righteous judgment | T | _____ | F | _____ |

Fill in the blanks on judging

1. Christians cannot be harshly _____ of other people.
2. Christians are not the final _____ of other people in the judgment day.
3. Everyone will be judged by the _____ in the judgment day.
4. Christians cannot judge like _____ because we are not him.
5. Christians judge _____ because of the place we have in God's plan for men
6. Christians can judge _____ judgment.
7. Christians judge the _____ because of the high standards we practice, the way we live.

LESSON FIVE: Chapters eight and nine

Fill in the blanks

1. _____ is the basis of Christ's religion
2. In the first century _____ sacrificed to idols, except for _____ and Jews.
3. When strong Christians deliberately _____ against weak Christians, they also sin against _____.
4. The apostle Peter was married because he had a _____ in law.

5. Paul wanted to offend no one, even to the point that, if he had to, he would _____ eat any _____ ever again.

True false (Check the correct answer)

- | | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| 1. Even today, an idol is nothing | T _____ | F _____ |
| 2. Christians can worship images of saints | T _____ | F _____ |
| 3. Paul was the boss of the Corinthian church | T _____ | F _____ |
| 4. Today, Christians have no freedom in Christ | T _____ | F _____ |
| 5. Today, Christians have a lot of freedom in Christ | T _____ | F _____ |
| 6. Paul did not take any money from the Corinthian church | T _____ | F _____ |
| 7. Today, it's okay if we pay preachers | T _____ | F _____ |
| 8. Christians boast about our knowledge of the Bible | T _____ | F _____ |
| 9. Christians don't boast about our knowledge of the Bible | T _____ | F _____ |
| 10. Idols are nothing, but God is everything | T _____ | F _____ |

THIS CONCLUDES PART ONE

PLEASE REMEMBER
TO RETURN ONLY THE TEST QUESTIONS TO US FOR GRADING
THE NEXT STUDY COURSE IS 1 CORINTHIANS STUDY PART TWO