

The Book of 1 Corinthians

Chapter 1

1. Who wrote this letter? How does he refer to himself?
2. To whom was it written? Describe them.
3. Paul begins the letter with prayer. Look at verses 4-8, what is the subject of His prayer?
4. According to verses 10-13, what problem was the church facing?
5. Paul calls the message of the cross foolishness. What do you think he means by that?
6. Beginning with vs. 26 Paul lists the qualifications for anyone who wants to serve the Lord. How does that encourage you?

Chapter 2

1. How does Paul describe his coming to the Corinthians?
2. According to verse 5, why did he come that way?
3. Put verse 9 to memory and meditate upon it today!
4. Beginning with verse 10, what do you learn about the Holy Spirit?

Chapter 3

1. Look up the word "carnal" and define it.
2. How is the "carnal person" described by Paul?
3. Paul speaks of planting, watering and increase; what part are you playing today in helping someone come to Christ?
4. What foundation must we build our lives on? How are you doing that practically today?
5. Paul speaks of our works being tested with fire. A day is coming where your Christian life will be judged by God. What are you doing for the kingdom of Heaven?
6. How is God's wisdom contrasted with human wisdom?

Chapter 4

1. Paul says that he is a servant of God and a steward of the (previously hidden) truths of God. A steward is a person who manages things that another possesses. In verse 2 we are told the one primary requirement for a servant/steward of God. What is that?
2. Read Proverbs 29:25. Paul is not the least bit concerned with any kind of judgment that people would make concerning him. Why is this? (Read verses 3-4) Do you find yourself overly concerned with what people think of you?
3. Paul advises us to be careful about making judgments until the Lord's coming. He tells us three things that will happen at that time. What are they? (verse 5)
4. Paul uses an interesting phrase in verse 6, "learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other". What does this verse mean? What are some ways that people think beyond what is written? How does this cause them to look down on others?
5. Paul asks three questions in verse 7, starting with who, what and why. Ask these questions of yourself.
6. In verses 8-14 Paul chastises the Corinthians for their pride. He does this by putting into perspective their "talk" with his "walk". What are some of the things that Paul had gone through that validated his apostleship? (there are at least 10 in these verses)

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7. Paul tells them that although they have a lot of good teachers, they don't have many spiritual fathers. What are some of the differences between a teacher and a father?
8. What does Paul tell them in verse 16? Look up 1Cor 11:1. Can you say this as well?
9. Paul sums up this chapter in verse 20. Walking the walk, not just talking the talk. Examining your own life, do you pay Jesus lip service only, or do you pay Him life service?

Chapter 5

1. Paul confronts the Corinthians over a particularly ugly sin that has been going on in the Corinthian church. What is it?
2. Their response is one that is puffed up; they think that they are being very spiritual and gracious by allowing this to go on. Read Romans 5:19-6:2, for the bible's view on abusing grace. According to Paul, in 1Cor 5:2, what is the appropriate heart response to sin in Jesus' church?
3. In verses 3-5 we see Paul instruct the Corinthians to excommunicate this person from the church; to kick him out. This seems incredibly harsh, "to deliver him to Satan", but according to this verse what is the reason for doing so? Paul uses this phrase in 1Tim 1:20 as well. What is his reason there?
4. In verses 6-8, Paul warns the Corinthians to "purge out the old leaven". Leaven is a substance added to dough to make it rise. This happens because it ferments and produces gas. Leaven 1) spreads through the whole lump. 2) At first appears to make something better 3) but ultimately causes it to rot. Read Matt 16:11-12 and Luke 12:1. What is leaven a picture of?
5. In verse 9-11, Paul tells the Corinthians not to hang out with Christian who are in unrepentant sin. This would make those in sin think it was ok, and they should know better. However, he makes no such restriction on associating with unbelievers; they don't know better, and someone must reach them with the gospel. What does Paul say is the only way to get away from sinners? Read Luke 15:1-2, and 7:34 to see how Jesus associated with sinners. Are your friendships Christ centered, whether with believers or unbelievers?
6. In verses 12-13, Paul makes a plea for good judgment within the family of God. We are not to be judgmental, or pass final judgment on others, but we are to exercise discernment. We are not to judge the world around us, because they do not even know God; we should expect them to act the way they do (Read 1Peter 4:12, John 15:20, 1John 5:19). How can we judge rightly and wisely, yet not be critical and mean spirited?

Chapter 6

1. In this chapter Paul confronts the Corinthians about another problem in their church. What is it? (Note verses 1, 4, 6)
2. It seems that some of the Corinthians were taking advantage of one another (verse 8) and that the ones being taken advantage of decided it was time to bring them to court. Why is this a bad thing? What does he say would be a better response to being cheated? Read Matt 5:38-48, for Jesus' commentary.
3. Paul asks the Corinthians why they can't find a godly man among the church to settle the dispute. How would the judgment of a man of God differ from the judgment of a human court?
4. Paul tells the Corinthians that they should be able to exercise good judgment, and that one day they will judge the world and angels. Look up Jude 14-15, and Rev 19:11-16 for a peak into this time.

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5. Verses 9 and 10 list 10 different sins that unrepentant, habitual practice of will bar entrance to heaven. Which of these sins seem most heinous to you? Which least? Consider that although we view them differently, they are all wicked before God, and demand judgment.
6. Some of the Corinthians lived lives that were dominated by these sins. However look at verse 11. What three things did the Spirit of God do that changed them?
7. Look at verse 12. Although we have freedom in Christ, we must be careful how we exercise that freedom. According to this verse, what must we consider when we use our freedoms?
8. Sexual immorality was a problem in the Corinthian culture, and it is a problem in the American culture. Read verses 13-20 what truths about our sexuality are revealed in this passage?
9. Most view our lives as just that: our lives. What light do verses 19 and 20 shed on that viewpoint? How does the truth of these verses affect how you view your life?

Chapter 7

1. In this chapter Paul deals with a few issues related to marriage. He tackles sexuality and temptation first. He starts by saying that it is good for a man to remain celibate (verse 1, 6-8), but then brings up a good reason to get married (verse 2, 9). What is it? Although this passage does not address them all directly, what other good reasons are there for getting married?
2. Corinth was famous for being home to the temple of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. One thousand temple prostitutes would descend into the city each evening, enticing the population into immorality. Given the culture that the Corinthians lived in, sexual temptation would be a particularly dangerous trap for them. Read verses 2-5. How are husbands and wives to help one another avoid this trap?
3. Behind this "marriage bed" counsel that Paul is giving, what are the larger guiding principles? How can be applied to other areas of our marriage and our lives?
4. Read verses 10-16. Consider a few questions:
5. When is divorce/separation permissible according to these verses? Look up Matthew 19:3-9 for another permissible scenario.
6. According to these verses, is it ok to divorce your spouse because they don't believe in Jesus? Why or why not?
7. Read verses 17-26, and especially note verses 20 and 24. The principle is that we should not make changing our situation in life (the circumstances outside of us) our priority when we get saved. Rather we should make letting Jesus change us so that we can be tool of blessing right where we're at. How might God want to use you right now where you are? Are there people (even enemies) that God wants to use you and perhaps you alone to show them love?
8. Although marriage is a blessing, there are costs as well. Read verses 27-35. What reasons does Paul give for not marrying?
9. Looking at the rest of the chapter, what verse do you think sums up the issue of getting married versus staying celibate unto God?

Chapter 8

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1. In verse 1 Paul states that knowledge puffs up, but that love builds up. How does love approach people? How does an attitude of superior knowledge approach people?
2. Note verse 2. What does this tell us about knowledge? Read Proverbs 1:5. What must a person do to continue to be wise?
3. Our relationship with God is secure through what Christ has done. As Paul begins to deal with some very practical issues about what we should and shouldn't do, he first lays down a truth that is more important than what we do. What principle does verse 3 teach us? Look up 1Samuel 16:7. How does this verse put the same principle?
4. Read verses 4-6. What do these teach us about the God of the Bible, and about all other gods?
5. Corinth was a city that was given over to many false gods. Animals were often sacrificed to these idols, and the leftover meat would be sold for a profit. The Corinthians were saved from this life into a relationship with Jesus Christ. For some of them, eating this meat felt very wrong as it would recall bad memories of pagan worship. Verses 7-8 deal with this guilt. In reality, is there anything spiritually wrong with the meat itself that would corrupt the Christian? Look up Romans 14:14, and 14:17.
6. More important than the meat is the conscience of the believer. If he is being led by God to put it away because it brings back old memories and temptations, then He should listen to God. Look at verse 10. If a struggling Christian sees another Christian doing the very thing they are struggling with, what does that do to the struggling Christian? Is it right for us to decide what is ok for us to do by comparing ourselves to others?
7. As you read verse 9-12, pay attention to what these verses say about how our walk can affect others. In verse 13, Paul states how he will live his life so as to not tear down others. What sacrifices are you making to help other people in their relationship with Jesus?

Chapter 9

1. Read verses 1-2. It seems that some in the Corinthian church were calling into question Paul's apostleship. What does Paul say is one of the proofs that he has been sent by the Lord? Read Luke 7:35 and 1Thessalonians 2:19. Also note 1Corinthians 4:19
2. In verses 3-6, Paul continues to defend his apostleship to the Corinthians. He brings up three freedoms that he has surrendered even though he has the right to use them just as other minister did. What are these three freedoms? Especially note the last of these as Paul will spend more time on that in this chapter. Do you have any freedoms that you willingly lay aside for the sake of the gospel?
3. In verse 7 Paul gives three examples of people who rightly receive the benefits of their vocation. What are these examples?
4. Read verses 8-14. Paul references an OT verse about allowing an ox to eat while it works. He asks a rhetorical question "Is this really about oxen?" What are the answers he gives? What is this really all about? Note verse 11 and 14. Look up Galatians 6:6.
5. Read verse 15-19. Although it is reasonable and right for a minister of the gospel to take a salary does Paul take advantage of this privilege? What is his reasoning? What are his motivations for serving?
6. In verses 20-22 we see Paul's philosophy on reaching others: he will do whatever necessary (without dishonoring or disobeying God) to reach anyone he can. Consider your own heart. Do you have this mentality? Are you willing to change

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for the sake of others? Do you consider the best way to relate to someone else so as to reach them with the love of God in Jesus Christ?

7. In verses 24-27, Paul uses the illustration of athletics. In the Olympics, a person must train for their whole life so that when the opportunity presents itself they are ready. Read 1Timothy 4:7-8 and 2Timothy 4:1-2. Should we be ready? How can we be ready?

Chapter 10

1. Paul finishes chapter 9 talking about how he disciplines himself, so that he is not disqualified from the ministry. He then uses an example of a people who know the power of God and yet were disqualified from the fullness of what God had for them. In verses 1-4, list the ways that they had seen God work in their lives?
2. Verses 6-7 recall an event from Exodus 32 - read it for background; verse 9 speaks of an event from Numbers 21 - read it for background.
3. Verses 1-11 draw attention to the children of Israel's failures. Consider verse 6 and 11. Why is God having us look at Israel's sin? How can this benefit and help you.
4. Having looked at these things Paul lays down a principle in verse 12. Rewrite this verse in your own words, as if you were explaining it to a child.
5. What three things do we learn in verse 13? Spend some time thinking about each of these truths and how they impact your life.
6. Verses 14-22 deal with idolatry. Idolatry is simply worshipping something other than the one true God. In particular, the subject of a divided heart is dealt with; worshipping both Jesus and other gods. How does a divided heart affect our relationship with God? How does a divided heart affect our relationship with others in the body of Christ?
7. Read verses 23-24. Paul says that all things are lawful for him. This does not mean that he can do anything he wants, or that unlawful things are lawful for him. It means that if it the scripture doesn't forbid it then he is free to do it. However, just because he is free doesn't mean he should. What two questions should we ask about the freedoms we take?
8. In verse 31, Paul states a wonderful guiding principle to his life. Look at your own life in light of this statement. Where would God like to change your life to bring Him greater glory?

Chapter 11

1. Paul says to imitate him just as he imitates Christ. There are other places that we are told to imitate Christ directly, but the reality remains that the witness of our lives can be a powerful help to showing others what Jesus is like, and how to live for Him. Whose lives are you influencing? Are you living your life in a way that you can say the same thing Paul said here?
2. In verse 2 and 3 Paul deals with the issue of God's order, and the authority within that order. In the same way that the Father and the Son were equal but the son was under the authority of the Father, so husbands and wives. What are the benefits of having a clear head of house? What happens when the flesh affects how a person leads? Read Matt 20:20-28 to see how Jesus told us leadership should work.
3. In verses 4-10, Paul talks about "head coverings", which were a cultural symbol of being under authority. In essence Paul was saying to live their lives in a way outwardly that showed that inwardly you agreed with and were in line with God's established order and authority. Are you living in a way that shows people within your culture that you agree with God's ways?

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4. Although there are differences between men and women, we are still equal. Consider verse 11 and 12. In what ways do these verses put us on equal footing?
5. Verse 13-16 essentially makes a plea to the believer to consider our culture and our witness to it; and to live honoring God in a way that our culture can understand (acknowledging that in some ways we can never please them). Look at verse 16. Does God have a rule that women must wear a head covering? Is it worth fighting over?
6. In verse 17-19, what is happening when the Corinthians meet together? What bad motivations are driving this? Read Phil 2:1-11 for an antidote to this.
7. What is happening when the Corinthians take communion together (20-22)? According to Jesus how should we take communion? (He repeats this in verse 24 and 25) Why is this so important (verse 26)?
8. Paul tells us that we should never take communion in an unworthy manner. This does not mean that we have to be living perfect lives to take communion (Read 1John 1:8-2:1). The rest of the chapter tells us how to take communion in a worthy manner. What things should we do?

Chapter 12

1. Verses 4-6 state that there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit, different ministries but the same Lord, diversities of activities but the same God who works all in all. Do you find yourself trying to be like or do something in the same way as someone else? Ask God today, to show you what He wants to do in your life.
2. Verse 12 tells us that we are one body with many members. What member of the body has God called you to be?
3. Verse 13 says for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body. Read Acts 10:34-35. How can this truth affect how we treat others?
4. Verses 24-26 give us instruction of how we are to treat others in the body of Christ. The next time you are with the body of believers look and find your place to minister to one another. God made each of us unique and placed us in His body. Remember, God put us there for His purpose. Read Psalm 139:16. God does have a plan and purpose for your life! Are you embracing it? Allow the joy of God's gifting and peace to have its place in your heart today! Verse 31...."and yet I show you a more excellent way!"

Chapter 13

1. At the end of chapter 12 (which was all about the gifts of the Spirit), Paul tells the Corinthians that he is going to show them a better way to live than being focused on the gifts God gives (as awesome as they may be). As you quickly read through this chapter, what is that "more excellent way"?
2. In verses 1-3, Paul shows how limited the gifts are when there is no love behind them. Speaking in tongues is a major concern in some churches (and Paul will address this more in chapter 14), but according to verse 1, what does this good gift resemble when there is no love behind it?
 - a. People, even unbelievers, tend to put a great emphasis on knowledge. Among believers, having great faith is also admired (Matt 21:21). If I have both of these good gifts in my life but I don't have a love for God and others, what am I?
 - b. The most dramatic and impressive acts of selflessness, are giving of our material possessions and even our material body. Yet Paul says that our motives for doing so are not always love. What are some of the other motivations that we can have for doing things like this? What profit do we

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gain from doing these things when love for God and others is not our motive?

3. Take a look at verses 4-7.
 - a. Make a list of all the ways that love acts.
 - b. 1John 4:8 tells us that God is love. Read these verses again, but substitute the word "love" with "God". Aren't you glad that He is this way!
 - c. Now substitute your own name. Where do you feel you are falling short in living a life that demonstrates God's love and character? How would living this way transform your personal relationships? Read Rom 5:5 and ask God to do this for you.
4. In verses 8-10, we see some of the limitations of the gifts. What are they? Why is love superior to the gifts?
5. Read verse 10-13. There is a time coming when we will see God face to face. He will not be impressed by our gifts; after all, He is the one who gave them! He will however respond to a heart that loves Him and loves others. This is all that matters. Spend some time this morning, and ask God to make love the top priority in your life.

Chapter 14

1. After teaching on love in chapter 13, Paul exhorts us to pursue it, "to seek after eagerly". Are you pursuing a love for God and others? Is it a driving priority for you to see love worked out in your life?
2. We are also told to desire spiritual gifts. Do you feel this way about spiritual gifts in your life? Do you have a desire to see God work through your life and to equip you for that work with all the gifting He would give?
3. As Paul exhorts us to desire spiritual gifts, he then goes on to teach that not all gifts are equal. Prophesying (biblically speaking), means to speak for God. This can be predictive (the sense that we often think of prophecy in our culture), or prescriptive, a word from God (instruction, encouragement, exhortation, see verse 3). He clearly puts this at the top of the list of spiritual gifts. Read verses 4-5. Why is prophecy so important?
4. Read verses 2, 4. Speaking in tongues is a prayer language to God, and is personally edifying to the one who is using the gift. Speaking in tongues is one of the more dramatic, sensational, and unusual gifts. Yet its value is extremely limited. Read 6-11. List some of the limitations of this gift.
5. Look at verse 12. What is the guiding principle here concerning the use of spiritual gifts?
6. Read verses 13-20. Paul establishes that understanding is to take priority over ignorance. Did Paul speak in tongues? How often do his letters draw attention to this? When he ministered to others what was his priority?
7. The rest of the chapter is summed up by the idea in verses 39-40. Let all things be done decently and in order. All things are to be done, but not all in a public setting, and none in a way that is disorderly, chaotic, or that draws attention away from Jesus.
 - a. Verses 21-25 speak of how gifts are a "sign" that points to God. Is this your focus when you seek to use your gifts?
 - b. Verses 26-35 establish some guidelines for the church to function in a way that is orderly and not confusing. Have you ever been in a church service and been distracted by something out of order? How did that affect you receiving from God during that bible study?
8. There are some pretty plain guidelines in this chapter concerning spiritual gifts and their use. But if a person will not receive the instruction, what is Paul's position concerning them in verse 38?

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Chapter 15

1. After all the discussion of gifts, Paul comes back to the foundation: the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the message that was declared to the Corinthians, and it is the message that they believed in. Two main parts to the gospel message: 1) Jesus died for our sin. 2) Jesus rose again. Read Isa 53:11. What does Jesus' death on the cross for your sin mean for your life? Read Romans 6:4 and 6:13. What does his resurrection mean for your life?
2. In verse 3 and 4 we are told that the things that happened to Jesus happened according to the Scriptures. That is to say that they were prophesied long before Jesus was born in the Old Testament. How does knowing that Jesus death and resurrection were accurately foretold hundreds of years before he was born help to validate the truth and reliability of the gospel message? The Bible is prophetically accurate.
3. Paul also states in verses 5-8 the many witnesses that confirmed the resurrection of Christ. How does the historical confirmation of many eyewitnesses increase your confidence in the message? The Bible is historically accurate.
4. In verse 8-10 we get a glimpse of Paul's sense of unworthiness of being used by God. However he did not let this stop him from being used. What was Paul's qualification for ministry?
5. Some in the church were saying that there was no resurrection, despite being taught that there was. The resurrection is, not an afterthought or a side issue. It is one of the central points of the Gospel of Jesus. Look at verses 12-19. Especially consider verse 19. What if there is no such thing as resurrection?
6. Read verses 20-28, we are reminded that there is a future after this life, and that it is much bigger than us. Is this future a regular part of your day to day thinking?
7. How do verses 31-34 speak to you?
8. In verses 35-53 we learn some truths about the new or glorified bodies that we will have when we are resurrected and go to heaven. Just as we took on the nature of Adam (sin, corruption and death), so we will take on the nature of Jesus (holiness, incorruptible, immortal). Take time to thank God for this; imagine what it will be like to live that way!
9. In verses 54-58, Paul sums up the reality of the resurrection for us. Look at verse 58. In light of the resurrection, how should we live? Is God speaking to you about any particular way He wants to change how you live?

Chapter 16

1. Verse 13 states....*Watch!* After studying 1 Corinthians, what are you watching for?
2. *Stand fast in the faith!* An old wise man once said: "If you stand for nothing, you will probably fall for anything." Do you know what you are standing for?
3. *Be brave, be strong!* Knowing how much God loves you is the best foundation for your strength and confidence. Read Acts 28:30-31
4. Verse 14, review 1 Corinthians 13. *Let all that you do.....be done with love!*

*Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*