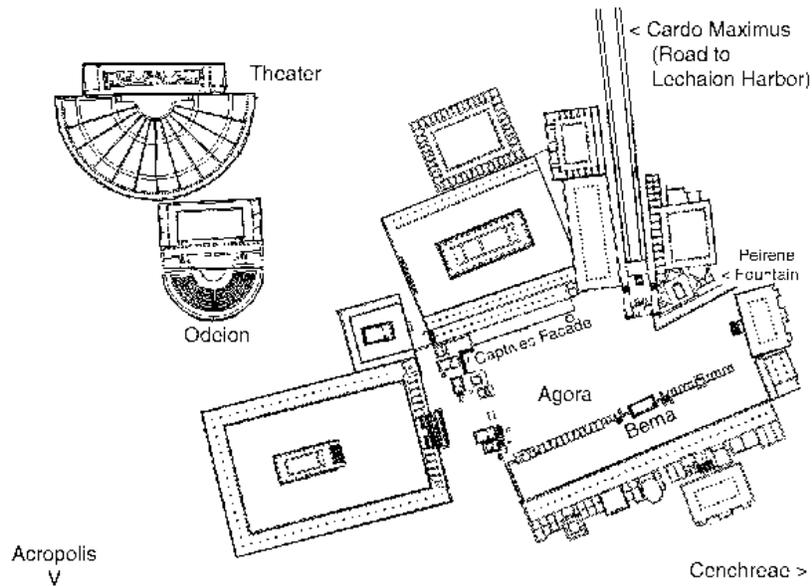


1 CORINTHIANS OVERVIEW

A Study of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians to correct the basis for their carnality and various expressions of it.





Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers because they were not responding well to his ministry. In this book he teaches them about the foundations of the church (Chapters 1-2), carnality in church life (Chapters 3-11), Edification in church life (Chapters 12-14), and resurrection, victory for the church (Chapters 15-16). This booklet will walk you through Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and will provide many principles applicable to us today.

1 Corinthians Overview

Introduction

Theme: The Corinthians were an established church, taught by Paul, yet they had not responded well to his ministry (authority and Bible doctrine). They were carnal. Their carnality showed up in many forms. Paul wrote to correct the basis for the carnality and the various expressions of it.

1. Author: Paul the apostle (1 Corinthians 1:1-2).
2. Date: About AD 56, from Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:5-9; Acts 19:1-20:3).
3. Historical background of Corinth:
 - a. General background:
 - i. Corinth was an ancient city. It occupied a strategic location at the western end of the isthmus between Greece and the Peloponnese. It was on the southwestern part of the isthmus. The isthmus was 4 miles long. It saved a dangerous 200 mile sea voyage. The west harbor was Cenchrea, and the east harbor was Lechaenum.
 - ii. Corinth was a center of commerce and trade. It "...was a wide-open boomtown. San Francisco in the days of the gold rush is perhaps the most illuminating parallel." (Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "The Corinth that Saint Paul Saw." *Biblical Archaeologist* 47.3 (September 1984): 147).
 - iii. Corinth was destroyed in 146 BC by the Roman general L. Mummius in revenge for an anti-Roman revolt. Julius Caesar had the city rebuilt in 46 BC. It became the capital of the Roman province of Achaia in 27 BC. The city rapidly regained her previous commercial prosperity.

iv. Corinth also had a reputation for sexual liberty. "In classical Greek korinthiazw (literally "act the Corinthian") means to practice fornication; korinthia `etairai or korinthaia korai ("Corinthian companions" or "Corinthian girls") are harlots. The temple of Aphrodite on the Corinthian acropolis gave religious sanction to license of this kind." (Bruce, F.F. *The Book of the Acts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980: 367n4). Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (BA 152) questions the sexual exploits and says "From the point of view of sex, Corinth was no better or worse than any other Mediterranean port-city."

b. Political background:

i. The first century church was under Roman rule. God used Roman rule to protect, to consolidate, to extend, and to test His young church. Nero was the emperor at the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians. He ruled from A.D. 54-68. He became the emperor at age 17 and committed suicide at age 31. The first part of his reign was adequate. The severe excesses for which he is remembered did not come until later.

ii. While Paul was at Corinth during his first visit (about AD March 51 to September 52) Gallio was the proconsul there (Acts 18.12). A proconsul was a governor of a province which the Roman Senate administered. This type of province did not need a standing army. "Gallio was a son of the elder Seneca, the rhetorician (c. 50 B.C. c. A.D. 40), and brother of the younger Seneca, the philosopher (c. 3. B.C.-A.D. 65). He was born in Cordova shortly before the beginning of the Christian era, and his name originally was Marcus Annaeus Novatus, but after he came to Rome with his father in the reign of Tiberius, he was adopted by the rhetorician Lucius Junius Gallio, and thereafter bore the same name as his adoptive father." (Bruce, *Acts* 373). He possessed wit and charm. He became proconsul in

AD 51. He later left because of poor health. Gallio, Seneca, and other family members became a victim of Nero's suspicions in AD 65. Gallio is important for at least two reasons. First, the mention of him in Acts 18 gives a specific date for Paul's visit. Second, Gallio dismissed a case brought against Paul by Jewish antagonist to the gospel. The ruling had a far reaching effect because it set a precedent for other magistrates and assured imperial neutrality toward Paul's ministry for several years (Bruce, F.F. *New Testament History*. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1972. 316-317).

- c. Corinth at the time of Paul:
- i. The length of the city wall was about 10 kilometers. The area inside was about 4 square kilometers (Murphy-O'Connor 149).
 - ii. By the time of Paul it had a population of over 500,000.
 - iii. Corinth had a stadium where athletic games were held every other year (Isthmian Games). The temple was dedicated to Poseidon. They were held in the spring of A.D. 50. Paul may have attended (Murphy-O'Connor 149).
 - iv. The Acrocorinth on the southern edge of the city was the most imposing landmark. It was a 513 meter climb from the agora (market place). The temple of Aphrodite was on the summit.
 - v. The bema of Acts 18.12-17 was "a large platform in the middle of the shops that bisected the agora. Dominating the lower agora from a height of 2 meters, it was the rostrum from which magistrates addressed the city and had public proclamations read." (Murphy-O'Connor 154).
 - vi. "As Paul glanced down the Lechaem Road he would have seen the shops on either side and might have caught a whiff of the meat and fish markets further along. These are mentioned in a Latin inscription [Kent 1966: 127] containing the term *macellum*, "meat market," which in Greek dress is the word used by Paul

when he advises those who had scruples about eating meat offered to idols, "Eat whatever is sold in the meat market (en makelloi..." (Murphy-O'Connor 153).

4. The events leading up to this letter:
 - a. Paul made his first stop at Corinth about AD March 51. He stayed until about September 52. This was during his second missionary trip. He witnessed and taught for 18 months (Acts 18.1-18).
 - b. Paul made an important stop during his third missionary trip at Ephesus about AD September 53. He remained until about AD May 56, a stay of almost 3 years (Acts 19.1-20.1, 31). Before Paul arrived in Ephesus Apollos had already been there and had gone on to Corinth (Acts 18.24-19.1).
 - c. Apollos returned to Ephesus discouraged over the Corinthian church while Paul was still in Ephesus (Acts 18.23-19.1; 1 Corinthians 3.4-9; 4.6; 16.12).
 - d. While Paul was in Ephesus he learned from people associated with a person named Chloe and from Apollos about the turmoil in Corinth (Acts 19; 1 Corinthians 1.11; 16.12).
 - e. Paul planned to visit Macedonia and Greece, including Corinth, before he returned to Jerusalem (Acts 19.21; 20.1-2; 1 Corinthians 16.5-9). (He decided to return to Jerusalem by way of Macedonia, Troas, Assos, Miletus, and on to Tyre, Ptolemais, Caesarea, and finally to Jerusalem [Acts 20.3-6, 13-14, 17; 21.3-19]).
 - f. Paul sent Timothy and others on ahead from Ephesus to Corinth. Paul would follow. Timothy probably carried the letter of 1 Corinthians to the Corinthian believers (Acts 19.22; 1 Corinthians 4.17; 16.10).
5. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians many were negative to God and Bible doctrine. He had to address such issues as mental attitude sins, factions, carnality, arrogance, authority orientation, the ministry of the communicator, God's power in the believer, lawsuits, sex, marriage, divorce, status quo, doubtful things, spiritual freedom, law of love, law of liberty, law of profit, head/ship and authority, the Lord's table, body

of Christ, spiritual gifts, divine love, spiritual growth and the church assembly, and physical resurrection.

1 Corinthians Outline

Section 1, Chapters 1-2 Foundation for Church Life

- Chapter 1: Positional unity is by faith in Christ; experiential unity is by faith application of Bible Doctrine
- Chapter 2: God revealed and now teaches His wisdom through the Holy Spirit

Section 2, Chapters 3-11 Carnality in Church Life

- Chapter 3: Carnality, spiritual production, and God's temple
- Chapter 4: Antagonism and criticism toward the communicator of Bible doctrine is sin
- Chapter 5: Separation from one characterized by consistent and well know sin
- Chapter 6: Lawsuits, sin patterns, and the temple of the Holy Spirit
- Chapter 7: Sex, marriage, and the status quo
- Chapter 8: Knowledge and love, sacrificial food and the weak believer, the law of liberty and the law of love
- Chapter 9: God's communicator should be well paid, but the ministry, not money, must motivate him.
- Chapter 10: Israel an example, idols and demons, the law of liberty and the law of profit
- Chapter 11: Headship and authority, orderliness, and the Lord's Table in the church assembly

Section 3, Chapters 12-14 Edification in Church Life

- Chapter 12: God gives every believer a spiritual gift for necessary service in the church
- Chapter 13: Love that God produces

Chapter 14: The purpose of the communication gifts is edification (spiritual growth) of the church

Section 4, Chapter 15
Resurrection, Victory for the Church

Chapter 15: Christ's physical resurrection ensured the believer's resurrection

Section 5, Chapter 16
Personal Instructions to the Church

Chapter 16: Orderly giving, ministry instructions, and greetings

1 Corinthians Expository Outline

Chapter 1

Positional unity is by faith in Christ; experiential unity is by faith application of Bible doctrine.

1. Every believer in Christ, no matter what his present spiritual condition, is a sanctified saint and the object of God's grace (1.1-3).
2. God provides the necessary spiritual gifts to churches so that each will have the means for spiritual growth and effectiveness in time while awaiting Christ's return. During this time Christ maintains believers in God's eternal plan so that each will be accepted before God as blameless (1.4- 9).
3. Agree with and apply the Bible doctrine that God's appointed communicator teaches you. This practice will produce genuine harmony and also settle present problems due to arrogance, quarrels, and factions (1.10-17).
4. God's salvation message and Christ the savior are powerful and wise, though unbelievers consider both to be weak and foolish (1.18-25).
5. God treats mankind in grace. Man can do nothing to earn a place in God's grace plan. Man's wisdom, power, and nobility stimulate human pride with the result that man depends on these relative merits and rejects God's grace (1.26-31).

Chapter 2

God revealed and now teaches His wisdom through the Holy Spirit.

1. Paul did not witness and teach the Corinthians a human message by human ability or persuasiveness, but he witnessed and taught God's message with humility, with God's power, and by the Holy Spirit's direction (2.1-5).
2. God's message, hidden wisdom from God is more wonderful than man can imagine. God revealed it only to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. Man by himself can never get it or understand it (2.6-10).

3. God's message, Bible doctrine, comes from God's thinking. Just like a man's thinking is his own secret, so Bible doctrine is God's secret and the Holy Spirit must reveal it, then teach it. The Father sent the Holy Spirit to do these things (2.10-13).
4. The natural man (soulish, unbeliever) will not and cannot understand spiritual truth by himself. Only the spiritual believer (walking by the Holy Spirit) is able to understand Bible doctrine (2.14-16).

Chapter 3

Carnality, production, and God's temple.

1. The Corinthian's carnality or control by the flesh (which is a word used for the old sin nature), limited their ability to receive more than baby doctrine. Therefore their spiritual growth and spiritual options were limited. Their carnality expressed itself through jealousy, conflicts, criticism of Paul, and other problems noted in this epistle (3.1- 4).
2. Paul and Apollos were servants of the Lord. God used each man to accomplish His purpose with the Corinthians and others through his spiritual gift, authority, preparation in Bible doctrine, and the Holy Spirit (3.5-10).
3. Jesus Christ (salvation gospel) is the foundation that Paul and every believer must first put down. Each must then build upon Jesus Christ by the agency of the Holy Spirit using Bible doctrine. The result is divine good production, lasting quality service that God the Holy Spirit produces in the believer as a result of the application of Bible doctrine. The foundation that each builds will be tested by God at the judgment seat of Christ. God will reward quality production and destroy worthless production, human good (what man produces through his old sin nature and often based upon human viewpoint). Yet each believer will still enter into eternal life (3.10- 15).
4. The church is the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, the place where the Holy Spirit lives during the church age. The Holy Spirit lives and functions there so that spirituality and divine good service and production are possible. Believers are forbidden to

- destroy (phtheirw corrupt, spoil, ruin) this temple through carnality, wrong foundations, and human good (3.16- 17).
5. Human wisdom (viewpoint) is foolishness to God, so believers should not follow it and consequently brag about men and their human wisdom. Instead, believers should apply the doctrine of spiritual blessings, which says that all of the plan of God (Bible communicators, the physical world, and other details) belong to God and are grace gifts to believers (3.18-23).

Chapter 4

Antagonism and criticism toward the communicator of Bible doctrine is wrong.

1. Authoritative communicators of the Word are servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. They are to be faithful to the Lord. God has prohibited others from examining, criticizing, or judging. Furthermore, God forbids introspection by these communicators. The Lord Himself will examine, judge, and reward at the judgment seat of Christ (4.1-5).
2. Do not place your own Bible understanding above God's gifted men (apostles and pastor/teachers) so that you criticize and judge them and other believers. This comes from arrogance and breeds more arrogance. The gifted communicators are among God's many grace blessings. All believers have graciously been given God's blessings. Arrogance, judging others, rejecting the ministry (authority and doctrine) of God's gifted men, and boasting contradicts God's grace blessings (4.6-8).
3. Apostles and all communicators are far removed from the world system's wisdom, power, honor, wealth, and practice. It is as if God has paraded them before the world like condemned men (4.9-13).
4. Paul has accepted this lot. It is all right. What he does want is the Corinthians to imitate his knowledge, certainty, and faith application of the plan of God. To assist this he sent Timothy to refresh their memories (4.14-17).

5. God has supplied His power in order to live the Christian way of life. Paul depends upon this power. Some of the Corinthians are arrogant, negative to Paul's ministry (authority and doctrine), and spiritually powerless. They talk behind his back, but are powerless face to face. If necessary he will visit them and powerfully correct the trouble makers. (4.18- 21).

Chapter 5

Separation from one characterized by consistent and well known sin.

1. There is a continuing case of immorality by a church member, which the church and the public know about. The Corinthians have become arrogant about it and flaunted it. The case and the reaction to it has been damaging to the church. Because the Corinthians have had a wrong attitude toward the issue and the one involved, Paul must intervene through his apostolic authority. He authorized Satan to carry out the sin unto death judgment against the one involved (5.1-5).
2. The Corinthians are in Christ, therefore by position unleavened. Paul tells them to not let leaven (a figure for sin and evil) affect them (5.6- 8).
3. Paul had written in the past about separation from those characterized by consistent and well-known sin. He was referring to believers, not nonbelievers. This separation requires Biblical thinking, authority, and decision (5.9-13).

Chapter 6

Lawsuits, sin patterns, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.

1. Since believers, by the very fact that they believe in Christ, will one day condemn the world (nonbelievers) and angels (fallen), they should not go to the world's legal system for judgments on matters between themselves (6.1-3).
2. Believers should not engage unbeliever law courts to settle disputes between themselves. If there must be an authoritative decision, then believers should ask a qualified

wise (mature) believer. The best solution is to leave these matters with the Lord. When believers take each other to court, it damages their Christian witness and each other (6.4-8).

3. Believers should not act like nonbelievers, people that are not members of God's kingdom. Nonbelievers are characterized by different sin patterns. The Corinthians are different. They were washed, sanctified, and justified through faith in Christ (6.9-11).
4. Believers (like Paul) have the liberty to do or have anything that is not prohibited by God. But beware: Not everything is profitable and believers should not allow details of life (things allowed) to master them (6.12-14).
5. The body (which consumes details and is often controlled by them) is really for the Lord's use as the temple for the indwelling Holy Spirit. Immorality with a harlot is sin against the body because it brings a person's body under the harlot's control and therefore the body is not mastered by the Lord (6.15-20).

Chapter 7

Sex, marriage, and the status quo.

1. Paul now answers question put to him about sex and marriage. He understands God's design for right man and right woman in marriage and the Corinthian religious scene. Paul says that sex has its proper place in marriage, while lasciviousness in or outside of marriage is wrong. On the other hand, celibacy is also good if God has given one the ability for it. Asceticism in marriage is a wrong reaction to the Corinthian religious scene or to the added time and responsibilities that marriage brings. If two people know they are right for each other, then they ought to marry. Within the marriage setting the man and the woman have physical responsibility to and authority over each other (7.1-7).
2. Widows and those who have never married may marry, but Paul believes that it would be more profitable for spiritual service for to remain unmarried as he has (7.8-9).

3. The dissatisfied wife should not leave (separate from or divorce) her husband. If she does, she is to remain unmarried or reconcile with him. The dissatisfied husband is not to send away (divorce) his wife (7.10-11).
4. The believer who is married to an unbeliever that agrees to stay in the marriage should not divorce the unbeliever. This status quo sets the unbeliever and the children aside so they may be influenced by the gospel. However, if the unbeliever wants to leave (divorce) the believer, the believer may let him/her go and begin anew (7.12-16).
5. Believers are not to make sudden changes in their status (for example: circumcision or uncircumcision, slave or free, married or unmarried) simply because another choice appears better at the moment. Believers are to follow the will of God based upon Bible doctrine. This is the status quo principle (7.17-24).
6. Marriage or non-marriage is an illustration of the status quo principle. Because of the responsibilities that go with marriage, marriage will divide a believer's interests and time (7.25- 35).
7. Because of the time and responsibility that goes with marriage, it is better for a daughter to remain single, but her father has not sinned by giving his daughter in marriage (7.36-38).
8. If a woman chooses marriage, she must realize that she is bound to her husband until he dies, and that marriage will restrict her service to the Lord (7.39-40).

Chapter 8

Knowledge and love, sacrificial food and the weak believer, the law of liberty and the law of love.

1. Knowledge that is not believed and used makes people arrogant, while Christian love sets up an environment that allows edification (through knowledge of Bible doctrine combined with the practice of that Bible doctrine) to take place. The law of love states that the believer will refrain from any activity that an untaught/weak believer does not understand that he can do, so that this activity will not

confuse and hinder the untaught/weak believer's spiritual growth (8.1-3).

2. There is only one God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), so we know idols and so-called gods are nothing. God the Father established His plan and is the source of all blessing. The believer's mission is to live for Him and His will. God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the creator, savior, head of the church, and mediatorial ruler. He is the agent of all blessing and the believer lives (eternal life and CWL) through Him (8.4-6).
3. Some believers did not understand the doctrines about God, idols, doubtful things, and liberty. They ate food that had been sacrificed to idols while not convinced in their own minds that it is all right to do this, and so they violated the false norms in their consciences (8.7-9).
4. Believers must be careful in the application of the law of liberty when with an untaught/weak believer that honestly does not have a Biblical understanding of the issue at hand and is confused. In this case the law of love will supersede the law of liberty. This caution is given so that the untaught/weak believer will be able to experience spiritual growth instead of spiritual regression (8.10-13).

Chapter 9

God's communicator should be well paid, but the ministry, not money, must motivate him.

1. Paul and other Bible communicators have the authority and right to participate in normal activities of life such as eating, drinking, marrying, and expecting monetary support from those they minister to (9.1-6).
2. The soldier, farmer, and shepherd are paid for their work. Even the ox eats what he threshes. The plowman, thresher, and Hebrew priest get pay. The Bible communicator has a greater job and should be well paid for his ministry (9.7-14).
3. The Bible communicator does not proclaim the message in order to be paid; he does so because of divine compulsion. His reward is to offer the free gospel without charge. Giving

money must never be confused with the gospel in the mind of the nonbeliever (9.15-18).

4. Paul found a point of contact or common ground with those to whom he witnessed. He did this so that they would listen and be able to better understand the message (9.19-23).
5. Paul compared the believer living the CWL to an athlete training for the games. There is a purpose (to accomplish the mission in the plan of God), training and competition (preparation and practice what God has said), and a reward (the imperishable future rewards that God gives to His faithful servants) (9.24-27).

Chapter 10

Israel an example, idols and demons, the law of liberty and the law of profitability.

1. God greatly blessed Israel, the covenant priest nation, but Israel failed to believe and apply God's word. God recorded Israel's failures and blessings in the Bible so that the church would have a warning, and examples of unbelief by His people, of divine discipline, of the sow-reap principle, and of God's blessing. However, God has promised that He will never permit believers to be tempted beyond their spiritual ability to resist; He will provide the spiritual resources to the believer that are necessary to bear up under whatever he faces (10.1-13).
2. Demonism and idolatry use and support each other. Idols are nothing, but demons get to people through idols. It is not possible to participate in any form of idolatrous activity without participating in demonism. Therefore believers are warned to flee from idolatry (10.14-22).
3. The law of liberty states that the believer has the liberty, right, or freedom to do many things without hurting his spiritual life. The law of profitability states that the believer should set aside a correct action if it confuses the issue of Christ to the unbeliever. A believer has freedom to eat anything, even food offered to idols, yet if this will confuse the unbeliever about

Christ and free salvation, the law of profitability supersedes the law of liberty (10.23-33).

Chapter 11

Headship/authority, order, the Lord's Table in church assembly.

1. The doctrine of headship/authority teaches that men are to serve with uncovered heads and women are to serve with covered heads. Improper conduct in this matter brings disgrace upon the head/authority (11.1-6).
2. To demonstrate headship/authority, the man's head is to be uncovered and the woman's covered in church. This is because the man is the image and glory of God, while the woman is the glory of man; because angels observe the assembled church; and because of the natural order of creation (11.7-16).
3. When the Corinthians gathered as a church they had divisions (schismata). This was sin. These splits showed up when they met together for the Lord's Supper. They were selfish, and some became drunk (11.17-22).
4. The Lord's Supper consists of the bread which represents Christ's body or perfect humanity and the cup, which represents Christ's blood or death as a substitute for sinners. The Lord's Supper is a memorial to Christ and a proclamation of His death, resurrection, and return (11.23-27).
5. Participation in the Lord's Supper requires worthiness (fellowship with Lord, the One this ritual honors). To participate while not worthy or in fellowship with the Lord (sin left in the life) scorns the death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore a brief examination and self-judgment by confession of the sin is necessary, or God will administer divine discipline (11.28-34).

Chapter 12

God gives every believer a spiritual gift for necessary service in the church.

1. Paul wants believers to be knowledgeable about spiritual gifts. When they were unbelievers they were directed to speechless idols and the demonic mysticism behind the idolatrous cults. Now that they are believers, the Holy Spirit works through them with spiritual gifts to declare clearly the deity of Jesus Christ (12.1-3).
2. The Holy Spirit dispenses different spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church; the Lord Jesus Christ rules over the ministries; God the Father has established the plan for the accomplishment of all the activities that result from the gift and its ministries (12.4-7).
3. The spectacular temporary spiritual gifts that the Corinthians abused are 1) word of wisdom (logos sophias), 2) word of knowledge (logos gnwsiws), 3) faith (pistis), 4) gifts of healing (charismata iamatwn), 5) effecting of miracles (energ8mata dunamiwn), 6) prophecy (proph8teia), 7) distinguishing of spirits (diakriseis pneumatwn), 8) kings of tongues (gen8 glwsswn), and 9) interpretation of tongues (erm8neia glwsswn). Because of the mystical nature of these gifts, they would tend to be compared to the pagan mystical religious activities (12.8-11).
4. The church is also called the body of Christ. All believers are baptized (identified with) into this body by the Holy Spirit at the time of faith in Christ. Christ is the head; believers make up the body (12.12-13).
5. This baptism produces a oneness, yet there is also diversity, because believers in the body possess different spiritual gifts. Each believer has a part to play and each is necessary. There is teamwork and interdependence (12.14-27).
6. God has selected certain gifted men, the communicators of Bible doctrine, to have priority and authority in the church: 1) apostles (apostolous), 2) prophets (proph8tas), 3) teachers (didaskalous). These men spiritually equip, lead, and protect the church. All believers are to be eager to benefit from their

priority ministry (greater gifts). The other spiritual gifts function better when these three correctly fulfill their ministry. (Of these three, only the teacher [pastor/teacher and teacher] remains today in the period after the Bible has been completed.) The others include 4) miracles (dunameis), 5) gifts of healings (charismata iamatwn), 6) helps (antil8mpseis), 7) administrations (kubern8seis), and 8) kinds of tongues (gen8 glwsswn). Apostles, prophets, miracles, healings, and tongues were temporary spiritual gifts (12.28-31).

Chapter 13

Love that God produces.

1. Divine love is necessary even though a believer possesses spiritual gifts and makes personal sacrifice. Paul points out that Divine love is the extraordinary quality that must combine with spiritual gifts and God's plan in order to yield effective service (divine good production). Without divine love all service is incomplete, the believer does not participate with the Lord in that service, and the one serving does not profit (13.1-3).
2. There are 15 characteristics of divine love: 1) is patient [makrothumew, soul steadiness under pressure to react] 2) is kind [chr8steuomai, gracious and beneficial] 3) is not jealous [z8low, upset that someone has something you want] 4) does not brag [perpereuomai, talk about yourself and your accomplishments] 5) is not arrogant [phusiow, swelled head, big ego] 6) does not act unbecomingly [asch8monew, act with bad manners, embarrass someone] 7) does not seek its own [zetew, occupied with self] 8) is not provoked [paroxunw, easily irritated] 9) does not take into account a wrong [logizomai + to kakon, not accept as true or think about another's evil] 10) does not rejoice in unrighteousness [chairw + adikia, happy when evil or human viewpoint triumphs] 11) rejoices with the truth [sugchairw + t8 al8theia, happy when truth, divine viewpoint, triumphs] 12) bears all things [stegw + panta, cover over silently, keep bad things about self and

others confidential] 13) believes all things [pisteuw + panta, believe the best not the worst] 14) hopes all things [elpizw + panta, Biblically optimistic], 15) endures all things [upomenw + panta, persevere under pressure to quit].

3. Divine love will never fall from its position of extraordinary importance during human history. But, the temporary spiritual gifts (prophecy, word of knowledge, tongues, and other temporary spiritual gifts not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13) will not continue on in history. The spiritual gifts of prophecy and word of knowledge will be abolished. The gift of tongues will cease. This reduction of the spiritual gifts that God gives out will occur when the purpose for the temporary gifts has been accomplished. The main purpose was to authoritatively witness to the new church age and to carry it through its infancy. Prophecy and knowledge provided partial divine elevation until the complete revelation was written down (the perfect [13.10] is the New Testament). The gift of tongues signified that a change in divine administration had occurred. The child-man illustration demonstrated that the complete will replace the partial, while the mirror illustration established that partial knowledge based upon temporary spiritual gifts gave an unclear understanding of the whole (13.8-13).

Chapter 14

The purpose of the communication gifts is edification (spiritual growth) of the church.

1. The spiritual gift of prophecy was a more valuable and important spiritual gift for the early church assembly than the gift of tongues, because prophecy served to bring about the spiritual edification of the church, while the gift of tongues did not (14.1-5).
2. In order for a person to communicate for the benefit of others, or for a musical instrument to convey its message, each must produce distinctive sound and meaning. Each of the different languages in the world has its own meaning. If the language is heard by someone who does not know its meaning, there is

no understanding and benefit. The same is true with the gift of tongues: unless the listener understands the language, he cannot benefit from the message (14.6-12).

3. If the gift is used where there are people who do not understand the language, there must be an interpreter present to translate. If no one translates the language, the listeners do not understand the message, and so are not edified. And unless someone translates, the one speaking knows in his spirit that a spiritual gift has functioned, but he cannot engage in productive meditation about what he has said. Paul had the gift of tongues, and knew that five words of instruction in a known language were better than thousands of words in an unknown language (14.13-19).
4. Around 720 B.C., God signaled Israel through the Assyrian people and language that He was judging them because of their unbelief. Very early in the church age, God again used that same kind of sign (God's message given in a Gentile language through the gift of tongues) to signal the non-believing Jew that the nation Israel was under His judgment because of unbelief, and had been temporarily replaced by the church as the administrator of His plan (14.20-22a).
5. In contrast to the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy was given for the benefit of the assembled church. This temporary spiritual gift was the ability to communicate God's Word to assembled believers for the spiritual growth or edification of the individual believers and the church as a body. When the prophet taught Bible doctrine, he spoke in the language of the audience. Everyone present could understand what he said. If a stranger or an unbeliever came and listened, he would also be able to understand the words. The prophet (the gifted man) functioned until the Bible was completed and the foundation of the church was laid. (14.22b-25).
6. The Corinthian church was arrogant. The people emphasized the temporary and sensational gifts, especially the gift of tongues. In the assemblies, each person wanted to speak, and confusion and disorder prevailed. Paul declared that if they insisted on using the gift of tongues in the church meeting, only two or three people were to be allowed to speak in tongues, and then only if there was a translator. It was

preferable to have the prophets teach. Two or three of them could instruct the congregation. Paul set out three points of policy: 1) the purpose of communication in the church was for edification, 2) women were not to teach doctrine in the church assembly, and 3) there must be order, not confusion (14.26-40).

Chapter 15

Christ's physical resurrection ensured the believer's resurrection.

1. The gospel consists of this: Christ died for our sins, He was buried, and He was raised and seen by many people. This is the eternal life message Paul proclaimed and the Corinthians received by faith and in which they now stand (Positional sanctification, 15.1); then as believers, if they are holding fast to Paul's doctrine, they are experiencing present time salvation (Christian life sanctification, 15.2).
2. Paul was the last to see the resurrected Christ. Before Paul saw Him, many others saw Him. Peter and the other disciples, and then more than five hundred people at once saw the resurrected Christ. Most were still alive and could verify that Jesus Christ arose. James and the apostles also saw him before Paul did (15.3-8).
3. God graciously made Paul the most tireless and effective apostle to the church. He did this even though Paul had persecuted the church in the name of religion while an unbeliever (15.9-11).
4. If there is no resurrection as some claim, then Christ was never raised and we shall never be raised; we have lived a lie. The Christian message is then false, and all believers have a worthless faith and have no hope for eternal life (15.12-19).
5. Christ really did arise from physical death, and thus He defeated both physical and spiritual death. Christ's resurrection guarantees that God will raise every believer from physical death. After God the Father subjects all creation to the resurrected Christ's rule, and after all of the resurrections, and after death is abolished, then Christ will return God's

kingdom back to the Father. Christ will continue to rule as the King for God the Father (15.20-28).

6. Resurrection affects present living for the believer: new believers take the place of believers who have died; believers endure danger and possible death because they remain faithful to the resurrected Christ; and they desire to live holy lives in the world. Why? Because resurrection is a fact; it stimulates believers to put God's plan into practice (15.29-34).
7. God resurrects believers from physical death. The new body which He will give will be from the old body and like the old body, yet will be different. The new body will be like Christ's: a heavenly body (eternal, sinless, fit for God's glory) and a spiritual body (without the physical limitations we now have) (15.35-50).
8. When God announces with the trumpet the resurrection of the church, every believer--those physically dead and those still physically alive--will be instantaneously changed. Each will have a resurrection body. God will do this because of the death and resurrection of Christ. At that time death will have been completely vanquished. This truth ought to encourage believers to remain faithful to the Lord because the Christian way of life does have purpose (15.51-58).

Chapter 16

Orderly giving, ministry instructions, and greetings.

1. Grace giving should be planned, regular, orderly, and according to the prosperity that God has given. Sunday was the day Paul suggested for giving, probably because it was one of the days that believers assembled for church. One of the purposes for grace giving was to help out believers under spiritual persecution (16:1-4).
2. Paul hoped to be able to visit Corinth again after his ministry in Ephesus and Macedonia during the third missionary trip. At the present time God has opened the door for ministry in Ephesus, so Paul will complete that assignment (16:5-9).
3. Paul instructed the Corinthians about several things: to respect Timothy's ministry, about Apollos' decision to stay

away from Corinth for the present, to stand firm in the Christian faith and act like believers should, and to submit to men in the ministry like Stephanas and others. Paul also told of his joy because Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus visited him (16:10-19).

4. Paul closes his letter to the Corinthians with greetings from himself and believers in Asia. He includes a warning, a statement of grace from Christ and of love from himself (16:19-24).

SPOKANE BIBLE CHURCH

9419 North Five Mile Road
Spokane, Washington 99208

Phone: (467) 9206

Web Site: www.spokanebiblechurch.com