

Survey of 1 Corinthians

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Introduction

1. Paul was the writer to the church at Corinth (1:1).
2. Notice the characteristics of a genuine church of God in 1 Cor. 1:1-2.
 - 1) The church is local.
 - 2) The church are people “sanctified in Christ.”
 - 3) The church are saints by divine calling.
 - 4) The church is everyone everywhere who call on Jesus.
 - 5) The are recipients of divine grace and peace.
3. The church at Corinth was established by the apostle Paul during his second missionary journey. Acts 18 provides us the historical background to this work. Corinth was the chief city and capitol of Achaia (Acts 18:24-28; 19:1).
4. As to the time in which 1Corinthians was written, it probably occurred around AD 54 just prior to Paul leaving Ephesus while on his third missionary journey (16:5-8). The reason for writing back to Corinth was for Paul to respond to some disturbing reports he had heard most likely from a delegation of three men (16:17) who told him about quarrels in the church (1:11) and the need for certain judgments to be rendered concerning issues between mixed marriages (7:1).
5. It is interesting to note that the church at Corinth seemed to be fairly large (Acts 18:8,10).

Outline

Divisions in the Church (1-4)

Disorder in the Church (5-6)

Difficulties in the Church (7-16)

Main Points and Application

1. Paul speaks out against divisions and quarrels in the church (1:11-13). Why is this a problem (cf. 12:12-25)?
2. What if any divisions and quarrels are present in the church today? How should they be dealt with (cf.4:14-15, 21)?
3. The disorder in the church had to do with incest (chapter 5) and sexual immorality and unnecessary litigation (chapter 6). When this occurs, division may be the right thing.

4. Consider the beauty of this phrase, “and such were some of you” (1Cor. 6:11). How should we respond to such wonderful grace from God (cf. 6:19-20)?
5. Disorder in the body of Christ is usually present when we fail to understand the restraint of Christian liberty. What would you say this restraint is according to 6:12? Paul deals in greater detail on this whole subject of Christian liberty in chapters eight through ten.
6. Marriage difficulties are addressed in 7:1-40. What is the primary reason why marriage difficulties occur (cf. 7:3)?
7. Other difficulties in chapters 7-16 beyond marriage issues have to do with things offered to idols, whether food should be eaten that had been offered to idols; issues as to who should speak in public worship and which gifts were most important. This called for a great chapter on love (13). If we don't learn anything else from this letter, Paul would have us learn to love one another according to chapter 13.
8. Chapter 12 provides many basic principles concerning spiritual gifts:
 - They come from the same Spirit (12:4)
 - They are to be exercised for the common good (12:7)
 - They are distributed to all Christians alike (12:11)
 - They are to be exercised in love (12:31)
 - They are for the edification of the church (14:2)
9. In chapter 15 the gospel is defined with the resurrection presented as the capstone (15:1-6).
10. If we hang around people who do not embrace the doctrine of Christ's resurrection then our morals will change (see 15:33). Why is this the case?