



The Book of 1 Corinthians
Discussion/Reflection Questions

Chapter 1

Paul appealed to the church at Corinth to be united with no divisions. He wanted them to see the wisdom and greatness of Jesus' work on the cross, over the wisdom and greatness of the preachers and teachers they were following. Paul reminded them that God chose the weak, foolish, low and despised of this world, to preach the power of Christ crucified. So, when we boast, may we only boast in the Lord.

Have you ever been tempted to put the wisdom of someone you follow above the wisdom of God and his word? Have you ever divided with another believer over which preachers or teachers they listen to? While it's important that we guard against false doctrine, it is equally important that we unite around the gospel truth that we have in common. In what area of your life have you become a divider and how can you work to be more united within the family of God?

Chapter 2

The rulers of this world could not understand the wisdom of God in Christ and so they crucified him. But as believers God has revealed to us, through the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of the cross. Yet, our limited minds cannot comprehend all of the blessings in store for us!

Imagine planning a surprise party for someone you love. Perhaps you would choose a place they'd like to visit, a gift they'd like to receive and their favorite foods. Now, you prepare this elaborate blessing to give them and you know they are going to thoroughly enjoy it. This is how God has prepared for us. He knows better than we do what we desire and enjoy, and we cannot even fathom what he has prepared for us. How does this truth encourage you today?

Chapter 3

God tests our works based on what “sort” of work it is. Works that are as wood, hay and straw will burn up in the fire but works that are as gold, silver and precious stones, will be rewarded. In its context, this verse is referring to the building up of the church with truth. Those who mix in human wisdom, may make it through the fire but without rewards.

God knows our motives of the heart. It does not matter how many hours we have spent serving him by building up the church. If it was not with a right heart, right motive or right truth, it will be as though we did nothing at all. On Judgement Day, our works will be tested and only what remains will be rewarded. Evaluate the ways that you are currently serving the Lord. Will they make it through the fire? What changes do you need to make, so you can be sure that your service is honoring to the Lord?

Chapter 4

One of the issues in the Corinthian church was that the leaders were being prideful about their spiritual wisdom. This was causing disunity in the church. Paul straightened out their wrong way of thinking by reminding them that the kingdom of God is not just a bunch of talking heads. It's the power of Christ at work in believers' lives!

While proclaiming the gospel truth is important, living lives that reveal the transforming power of the cross, is equally important. We must be witnesses of Jesus by sharing both the gospel and what God has done in our lives. How have you experienced God's power in your life? Pray and ask God to open the door for you to share the power of the gospel with someone this week.

Chapter 5

Sexual immorality had defiled the church in Corinth. Paul called on the church to purify itself by removing those who were sinning in arrogance, in hopes that they would become repentant. These instructions were specifically for those inside the church and it was meant to be a loving act, seeking restoration. Those outside the church were not to be judged by the church but rather left for God to be the judge.

Have you experienced the church winking at the sin of those inside the church while judging harshly those outside the church? While it may seem loving to overlook the sins of those inside the church, it hurts the holiness of the church and those participating in the sin. But we cannot hold those outside the church to the same standard. In what ways have you been too judgmental of those outside the church and how can you show more love to those who are lost in their sin?

Chapter 6

Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit and a temple is a sacred place of worship. We are meant to keep our bodies pure sexually because we are not our own. We have been bought with the price of Jesus' blood. This means that we have strength that the world does not have, to remain pure.

When you use something that someone else paid for, are you more careful with it? Our bodies are on lend to us from God to be used for his glory. How can you be more careful with your body? If you have any sins that you need to repent of today, quietly pray a prayer of confession. Remember that once you confess, you are fully forgiven. (1 John 1:9)

Chapter 7

Everyone is either single or married. While Paul was single and saw it as good, he considered both marriage and singleness a gift from God. Each one of us is to embrace the life that the Lord has assigned to us. No one is gifted for sexual immorality. We are either to live faithfully or be celibate.

Being married has its challenges and being single has its challenges. Which are you today - single or married? How do you feel about the place God has assigned to you? How is God speaking personally to you through this chapter today?

Chapter 8

Idol worship was a huge part of the culture in Corinth. Most of the new believers would have come out of this idolatry. So, eating meat sold in the market place, that had first been offered to idols, became an issue for the church. Many in the church most likely suffered for their choice to follow God and so their conscience would not allow them to eat the meat offered to idols. It may have felt like a

denial of Christ for them. So, Paul reminded the church that love should trump their freedom to eat meat.

Sacrificial love is needed in our churches today. Freedom in Christ is a delicate balance. While we are free to enjoy many things, we must consider if abstaining from certain things would be the more loving choice. Have you been in a situation where you felt free to enjoy something that a sister or brother in Christ felt convicted about? Is there an area where perhaps you need to abstain out of love for them?

Chapter 9

The Corinthians were familiar with the ancient Olympic Games. So, Paul used the example of both a runner and a boxer to show the way in which we as believers must live our Christian life. Winners are not slackers. Winners work and train hard to obtain the prize.

Paul tells us to put effort into living the Christian life and into sharing the gospel. We should live just like an athlete that competes to win. There is a reward awaiting us in heaven. We are to run hard and fight hard. Are you living your Christian life in this way? What is one thing that you need to change so you can run more effectively?

Chapter 10

Paul warned the Corinthian church against idolatry and also against taking advantage of their Christian liberties. All things may be lawful but are they helpful? We are not to seek our own good but rather the good of our neighbor. This takes great maturity, wisdom, sensitivity and sacrificial love. Whatever we do, we must do to the glory of God.

God has given us great freedom and he wants us to enjoy all the good things he has created for us. But we must never forget how our freedoms affect our neighbors. God does not want us caught up in legalism and man-made rules, yet there are times when we must lay down our rights and liberties, out of love for our neighbor. Sacrificial love is so needed in the church today, but more freedom is also needed in the church today as well. Which way do you tend to swing, towards legalism or towards freedom? Is there an area in your life where it would be more loving for you to do something different?

Chapter 11

The Lord's Supper was causing division in the Corinthian church. Paul explained that they were taking it irreverently and selfishly. That is a dangerous thing to do. He called on them to examine themselves before they took of the cup and bread or they would face discipline from the Lord.

The Lord's Supper is not a fancy meal. It is simple and it is meant to be done as an act of worship and remembrance of Christ's body and blood shed for our sin. First, are you regularly participating in the Lord's Supper? If not, begin this week to find a local church to join. Secondly, if you are taking the Lord's Supper regularly, examine yourself. In what manner have you been taking it? Is there anything you need to change?

Chapter 12

Every single believer has been given a gift from the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts are not given for self-glorification but to glorify God and to build up the body of Christ. Love is the goal of the spiritual gifts.

Church is not a place we attend once a week to fill a seat and then leave. The Church is meant to function as a body. If one part is hurting, we all should hurt. Spiritual gifts are very practical in nature. They are to be used to care for one another just like we care for our little toe when we stub it or our eye when it is hurting. This is why divisions and fighting in the church so displease the Lord. God wants us to have a loving heart towards one another. Do you know what your spiritual gift is? How are you using it to love those in your church? If you don't know, pray and ask the Lord to show you.

Chapter 13

While our spiritual gifts are wonderful, it is faith, hope and love that we all must pursue. All of the New Testament speaks to the pursuit of these but the greatest of these is love. Love trumps faith, hope and our spiritual gifts. Without love, our gifts are useless. One day when we see Jesus and we will no longer need faith or hope. But we will experience love for all of eternity!

In 1 Corinthians 13, love is not defined as a feeling but rather as an action. Love is not fragile, and it is not proud. It is humble and it endures forever. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and evaluate yourself. In what ways do you need to be more loving to those closest to you and to those in your church?

Chapter 14

Paul was reminding the Corinthian church that all worship and use of spiritual gifts should be done in an orderly way and for the edification of all believers. Also, they were not to just passively receive a word of encouragement. He wanted them to participate and give as well. The goal is that we all learn and are all encouraged.

God wants us to yield the use of our spiritual gift to the Spirit's leading. We are not to selfishly use our gift whenever we feel like it. This can lead to confusion and disorder. If you have been in the church long, most likely you have seen someone cause disorder in the church because they were asserting themselves and their desires. How can you avoid being the person who causes this? Write a prayer below asking God to guide you as you use your spiritual gifts.

Chapter 15

Because death has been swallowed up in victory and we have a hope of resurrection with Christ, we can stand firm. We can be immovable. We can work hard serving the Lord knowing that all of our labor is not in vain. There is a sure hope of eternal life with Jesus one day!

Do you have days when you are weary from serving the Lord, that you are tempted to feel like maybe it's not worth it? How does remembering the truth of our future resurrection with Jesus, help you to not give up and to abound in the work of the Lord?

Chapter 16

The Corinthian church needed clarity on many issues inside the church that were causing divisions. As Paul closes out his letter, he reminds them one last time to seek to do everything out of a heart of love for one another.

This is the same message we need in our churches today. There would be so much less division in our churches, if we would simply let all that we do, be done in love. In what ways can you show more love inside of your church? Write a prayer below asking God to help you apply all that you have learned through the book of 1 Corinthians in your life.