

Bible Reading Notes
1 Corinthians

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1 Corinthians 1

This letter was written from Ephesus during Paul's two year stay there. It was the second letter Paul had sent to them (5:9).

1:5 – speech = speaking the gospel; **knowledge** = knowing the gospel.

1:10 – divisions – This letter reveals that a multitude of divisions were present in the church.

1:11 – Chloe's people – They have delivered a message to Paul, either verbally or by letter on the situation in Corinth.

1:19 – Paul is quoting from Isaiah 29:14.

1:31 – This is a quote from Jeremiah 9:24.

1 Corinthians 2

2:1 – lofty speech or wisdom – The Corinthians valued both, and some criticized Paul for lacking what the pagan teachers of Corinth specialized in.

2:9 – Paul refers to Isaiah 64:4.

2:14 – This is why the unbeliever cannot accept or believe the gospel until the Holy Spirit works in him to give him understanding and faith.

2:16 – Paul is quoting from Isaiah 40:13.

1 Corinthians 3

3:1 – 1:18-2:16 was a Pauline digression. He now picks up the argument from 1:17.

3:1 – infants in Christ – The Corinthians believed they were spiritually mature, more than Paul. Paul corrects them and gives the evidence in the following verses.

3:14 – reward – This reward is the commendation of God according to 4:5.

3:16 – you – You in this verse refers to the whole congregation.

3:19-20 – Paul is quoting Job 5:13 and Psalm 94:11.

1 Corinthians 4

4:8 – Paul is clearly using sarcasm here to try to reach the Corinthians and move them to humility. This leads to a contrast between the Corinthians and Christ's apostles.

4:16 – father – Paul was the one who God used to give spiritual birth to the Corinthians when he proclaimed the gospel to them.

I Corinthians 5

5:1 – **actually reported** – By Timothy (4:17).

5:2 – **removed** – Excommunicated because he has not repented. Excommunication involves putting someone out of the safety of the church to suffer the consequences of his sin in the hope it will lead to his repentance and salvation (v. 5).

5:6 – A congregation that disregards sin and church discipline is in danger of sin impacting the whole congregation.

5:12 – Church discipline is only for those who are inside the church. The church has no authority over those outside its membership.

1 Corinthians 6

6:1 – **grievance** = A lawsuit over financial matters. This paragraph would not apply to assault, murder, etc.

6:5 – **wise enough** – Especially pointed statement since the Corinthians thought themselves wiser than Paul.

6:7 – It is better to suffer loss and be defrauded than to take a fellow believer to court.

6:11 – We are no longer the people we once were because of the grace of God and the work of Christ.

6:15 – Some of the Corinthians thought they had the liberty to engage with prostitutes.

1 Corinthians 7

- 7:1** – The statement is the belief of the Corinthians, not Paul. Note the quotation marks in most Bibles.
- 7:5 – deprive** – To withhold your body from your mate is to defraud them of what is their right in marriage (v. 3).
- 7:10-11** – If two believers divorce, they must remain unmarried or be reconciled to each other.
- 7:12-16** – This section deals with the believer who is married to an unbeliever.
- 7:14 – holy** – Set apart by God in the covenant.
- 7:15 – not enslaved** – Is free to remarry since the unbeliever broke the covenant of marriage.
- 7:17-24** – The immediate application to the context is if you are married or single when you become a believer, stay in that condition, unless the single person cannot exercise self-control (v. 9).
- 7:26 – present distress** – It is unclear what this distress is, perhaps persecution, but it gives the context to Paul's teaching.
- 7:32-35** – Marriage is a great blessing, but it brings with it divided interests (v. 34).
- 7:36** – Some were putting off marriage but did not have the gift of singleness. They ought to marry.

1 Corinthians 8

- 8:1 – Most of the meat in Corinth had been offered to idols and sent to the marketplace to be sold. For someone who had been an idol worshipper and wanted to avoid any association with idols, this would make eating meat very difficult.
- 8:9 – The “strong” in Corinth believed idols were nothing (v. 4) and ate meat freely, not taking into account the “weak” in the congregation.
- 8:13 – It is better to give up meat than be a source of stumbling for a brother.

1 Corinthians 9

- 9:1-18 - Paul continues the theme of chapter 8 by speaking of the rights he has given up in response to the Corinthians who insist on their right to eat meat.
- 9:9 – This quote is from Deuteronomy 25:4.
- 9:19-27 – Paul’s philosophy of ministry is to give up any preferences or rights he has in order to win some for Christ.

1 Corinthians 10

- 10:6 – examples** - Israel's history of great blessings and rebellion are meant to be examples of warnings to us today (v. 11).
- 10:13** – Our temptations are not unique to us. The Lord always provides a means of escape, but it is up to us to take advantage of those means.
- 10:14-22** – Paul uses the analogy of the Lord's Supper to give a definitive ruling that Christians cannot partake of idol feasts since that is having fellowship with demons (vv. 20-21).
- 10:23-33** – But believers are allowed to eat meat sold in the market, unless someone raises the issue of its origin. Then for the sake of the conscience of the weaker brother, they are to not partake.

1 Corinthians 11

- 11:2-16** - My personal understanding of this passage is that in the first century married women wore head coverings, which served to symbolize the authority of their husbands. To remove their head coverings would then be seen as throwing off their husband's authority. The wearing of head coverings no longer has the same cultural meaning today. But the principle of authority does and must be maintained.
- 11:3** – This is the principle which will be applied in a specific way in vv. 4-16.

11:17-34 – The context is that the Corinthians were incorporating the Lord's Supper into a church meal and in the process were distorting the meaning of the Lord's Supper.

11:18 – divisions – Their practice of the Lord's Supper is just another example of the ongoing problem of divisions within the congregation.

11:32 – disciplined – Part of the purpose of church discipline is to bring repentance to the offender so that he/she does not share in the condemnation of the world.

1 Corinthians 12

Chapters 12-14 deal with another area of division in the church, the use and status of spiritual gifts.

12:7 – Every believer is gifted by the Holy Spirit for service in the church.

12:12-26 – Some Corinthians thought their gifts were needful, but the gifts of others were not. Paul teaches that as a body needs all of its parts to function properly, so the church needs all the gifts of the Spirit in the same way.

12:28 – The gifts of miracles, healing, and various tongues were active in the church until the Scriptures were completed. Around the end of the first century these gifts ceased to function in the church.

1 Corinthians 13

13:1ff – Rather than boasting and trusting in spiritual gifts, we are encouraged to focus on love as we relate to one another.

1 Corinthians 14

Today's reading concludes Paul's teaching on the proper perspective and use of spiritual gifts.

14:1-25 – Paul shows that prophecy (declaring God's Word) is more beneficial than speaking in tongues (a foreign language unknown to the speaker). It seems likely that the Corinthians valued speaking in tongues more than prophecy.

14:21 – Paul is quoting Isaiah 28:11-12. The context of the quote is God bringing judgment on Israel and will use the Babylonians who speak a foreign language.

14:26-40 – This section gives direction on maintaining order in the Corinthian worship service.

14:26 – The main criteria is that whatever is done must be done with the goal of building up the audience.

14:34 – women should keep silent – In the context, this is a prohibition on women passing judgment on a man's prophecy. In I Timothy 2:11-12, women are to be silent in that they are not to teach men in the church.

1 Corinthians 15

15:12 – there is no resurrection – This false teaching was the occasion for Paul to discuss the significance of the resurrection.

12:13-19 - The resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel. If he was not raised from death, there is no salvation.

15:20 – firstfruits – Agricultural term referring to the first gathering of the harvest. Christ's resurrection guarantees the resurrection of all believers.

15:22 – all – The two “all's” do not refer to the same thing. The first “all” refers to the descendants of Adam, all those he represented. The second “all” refers to the elect, those that Christ represented (those who belong to Christ – v. 23).

15:29 – Paul does not say that this is a biblical practice but uses the practice to show that it is based on a belief in the resurrection of the dead.

15:49 – In the resurrection we shall fully bear the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

15:52 – The resurrection will occur on the same day as the return of Christ.

15:58 – This hope is based on the fact of the resurrection. What we do in this life has eternal consequences.

1 Corinthians 16

16:1-4 – This collection was to help the Christians in Jerusalem who were suffering from poverty.

