

Monday, June Nineteenth

Read through the Bible



1 Corinthians Week Two



**OUR
SAVIOR
LIVING
LOVE**

Have you ever opened up your refrigerator and exclaimed, “What’s that awful smell?!” Right away, you start anxiously digging around the shelves trying to find the pungent culprit. After pushing aside the orange juice and the coffee creamer, you stand face to face with a Tupperware of leftover tuna fish from last week. You quickly take it outside to the dumpster, uneasily holding it with one hand about two feet in front of you. As you head back inside to quickly wash your hands, you now hope the smell hasn’t affected everything else in the refrigerator. In today’s passage, Paul directs the Corinthians to remove a revolting situation from their midst.

Read: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How did the Corinthians react to the sexual immorality occurring in their community? (see verses 1-2) How does Paul think they should have reacted? (see verse 2)

With a man in their community sleeping with his stepmother, you can see how callous the Corinthians had become to sin. What was perhaps most shocking to Paul is that not even the secular Greeks in Corinth would find this incestuous relationship acceptable!

- Using imagery of bread and yeast, what is Paul asking the Corinthians to do? (see verses 6-8)

During Passover, Jews were to rid themselves of any old yeast and instead make bread without yeast. By using this imagery, Paul is urging the Corinthians to rid themselves of this man in their midst lest he spoil their community of “sincerity and truth” (v. 8)

- How does Paul say they should judge fellow Christians versus those outside the church? (see verses 12-13)

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

Take a moment to go to God in prayer and thank Him for removing our sin through the work of Jesus on the cross.

Tuesday, June Twentieth

In the movie *Remember the Titans*, an all-white high school football team is forced to integrate with an all-black high school football team. You can probably guess that, for a small town in Virginia in 1971, the decision to integrate did not go over well with hardly anyone. The head coach of the football team was now tasked with addressing a new challenge for his recently expanded group of talented players – “How can I get these young men to work together and realize they are on the same team?” Paul faced a similar issue with lawsuits among believers in today’s passage.

Read: 1 Corinthians 6:1-11

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does Paul suggest the Corinthians settle disputes among believers? (see verses 1, and 4-6)
- Paul received news that there were currently lawsuits among the Corinthians. What does Paul say this indicates about them? (see verses 7-8)

Not only were there divisions among the Corinthians regarding the leaders they followed (remember chapters 1 and 3?), but they were also divided by personal disputes. The Corinthians serve as a reminder to us today in 2017 that we are also prone to these sorts of divisions within our own lives. We must always be on guard!

- How does Paul remind the Corinthians they are not like their old selves? (see verses 9-11)

You can almost hear Paul scolding them face to face: “Hey guys! Stop acting like your old selves! Why do you continue to tear each other down when you have been united in Christ?”

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

In what ways are you tempted to drive a wedge between yourself and fellow believers? What encouragement do Paul’s words give?

Wednesday, June Twenty-First

It’s your first day of college. Your parents just pulled away from the residence hall, leaving you outside contemplating what to do next. You’ve spent the last 18 years following your parents’ rules, and now...now you can do whatever you want! You look down at the card in your hand from your parents and open it, hoping there’s some money inside you can use to have some fun on your first night of freedom. As you flip through the Publix and gas gift cards your parents placed inside the card, you notice a Bible verse quoted at the bottom – “Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial.” You scratch your head and realize your parents just put your newfound freedom into a much-needed context. How does Paul put the Corinthians’ newfound freedom in Christ into context?

Read: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does Paul distinguish between what is permissible and what is beneficial? (see verses 12-13)

Paul is challenging the Corinthians to consider that their newfound freedom in Christ does not give them a free pass to sin. While Christians are no longer bound by the Law, they are not to bind themselves to things and situations that will harm their witness.

- Why are the Corinthians to flee from sexual immorality? (see verses 15, and 18-20)

Paul gives special caution to sexual immorality because “he who sins sexually sins against his own body” (v. 18). This certainly isn’t a message you hear today in our sex-driven culture! Paul’s words call us to consider how we are using our bodies to honor our God.

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

How would you describe the difference between what is permissible and what is beneficial to someone new to the faith?

Thursday, June Twenty-Second

In *The Newlywed Game* TV show that ran from 1966 to 1974, recently married couples were asked a series of questions about each other to see how well they knew each other. Oftentimes, the contestant's answers provided laughs and folly for those watching at home. In our passage today, Paul addresses a series of questions from the Corinthians regarding sex, singleness, and marriage.

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:1-11

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

Hearing of the sexual immorality that was becoming common throughout the Corinthian church, Paul suggests the practice of marriage as a way for them to properly address their sexuality.

- Why does Paul say it is prudent for some Corinthians to marry? (see verse 2)

Having just spoken of the dangers of sexual immorality, Paul points to a way for the Corinthians to express their desires – get married. While this certainly isn't the only reason to get married, Paul reminds us here how some can honor their bodies as God's temple when they come together in holy union with their spouse.

- Why might a husband and wife refrain from sexual intimacy? Why should they not refrain too long? (see verse 5)
- How does Paul see self-control in relation to whether someone should marry or not? (see verses 8-11)

Paul was comfortable with his singleness, and promoted this lifestyle to those who could handle it (see verses 1 and 8). While our society today seems to pressure those who are single to get into a relationship, Paul provides us with an honorable example of how one can be both single and exhibit self-control.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Ask God for guidance and wisdom as you walk in purity.

Friday, June Twenty-Third

If you've ever been to a child's little league soccer game, you've probably watched the coach carefully remind the children of their roles on the team. "Ok, Terri, you're the goalie. Larry and Barry, you two will be midfielders. And Mary, you're the forward." As the kids march out to the field and begin to play, you start to see how efficiently the team works together when everyone performs in their assigned roles. But if everybody abandons those designated roles, the game becomes complete chaos! In today's reading, Paul speaks to the importance of staying in one's designated role.

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:12-28

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What advice does Paul offer to those who are married to unbelievers? (see verses 12-16)

Paul gives an interesting reason as to why a believer is to stay married to an unbeliever – "God has called us to live in peace" (v. 15). Even in marriage, we can be witnesses of Jesus to others.

- What does Paul say about a believer's circumstances when they come to faith in Jesus? (see verses 17-22)

God calls us away from sin, but he does not always call us away from the place in life He assigns to us (v. 17). Some Corinthians must have assumed that if they were married to an unbeliever, they needed to get a divorce. Others might have thought that if they were uncircumcised, they needed to be circumcised. Paul, sensing these concerns, commends them to continue in the roles to which they were called, not in the sins they were committing.

- Why might married individuals face many troubles in life, according to Paul? (see verses 27-28)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

What "place in life" (v. 17) or "situation" (v. 20) has God called you to? How can you be an authentic witness within that context?

Saturday, June Twenty-Fourth

During the Miss USA pageant, contestants are asked to weigh in on a current or hot topic. Typically, the host will ask a two-part question – “What is your belief or opinion on this topic?” followed by, “What is your reasoning behind your belief or opinion?” In today’s passage, Paul explains the reasoning behind his wisdom and God’s commands regarding singleness and marriage.

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:29-40

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What is Paul’s concern for married men and women? (see verses 32-35)

Earlier in his discussion on marriage, Paul cautioned the Corinthians that “those who marry will face many troubles in this life,” (v. 28) and having one’s interests divided over God and his or her spouse is one of these troubles. It’s like having two jobs or two kids – you can’t fully devote yourself to just one. Paul reminds the Corinthians and us that while marriage has its benefits, it also comes with issues that can challenge our devotion to our God.

- What is Paul’s advice regarding whether or not a widow should re-marry? (see verses 39-40) How does he carefully distinguish between what the Lord commands and what he personally advises? (see verses 39-40, and also see verse 25 as another example)

Paul is careful to note the difference between his wise advice and what God commands. As Christians living in an age of contentious debates regarding church practices and beliefs, we can benefit from following Paul’s example by carefully distinguishing between our own preferences and what God commands.

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

Consider chatting with someone tomorrow at church about something God has been revealing to you in 1 Corinthians.

Sunday, June Twenty-Fifth

Last week, your friend mentioned to you that she’s on a new diet with a strict eating plan. No carbs. No fats. No sugars. And nothing fried or barbequed. This week, you’re planning to meet up with her for your monthly get-together, and it’s your turn to pick the place for lunch. You’re really craving Ron’s Fried Fish Sandwich from O’Maddy’s, but you realize eating there might not be the best option for your dieting friend. In today’s passage, Paul addresses concerns over sacrificed food as a stumbling block for some.

Read: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does Paul illustrate the difference between idols and God? (see verses 4-6)

Because “an idol is nothing at all,” (v. 4) the Corinthians need not worry about meat sacrificed to idols because there is only one true God. But Paul also presents a caution – what should you do with sacrificed meat in front of someone who does not know this? (v. 7)

- Why does Paul caution the Corinthians to consider not eating meat sacrificed to idols in front of “weak” believers? (see verses 9-13)

Imagine you are eating meat sacrificed to false idols, and a “weak” believer sees it and thinks, “Oh! That Christian can serve their God and serve other gods too.” You would hope this would not be your witness to that person. This is why Paul cautions eating sacrificed meat in front of those who don’t understand the freedom we have in Christ because it can become a stumbling block for them.

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

Take a moment to go to God in prayer and thank Him for sacrificing His Son so that we can exhibit considerate freedom in Him.

Questions? Comments? Contact Vicar Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 531-2761.