

Read through the Bible



1 Corinthians Week Three



**OUR
SAVIOR
LIVING
LOVE**

Monday, June Twenty-Sixth

Happy Monday! We are now at the half way point of Paul's letter to the Corinthians. So far, we've seen a variety of issues occurring in this Grecian church – divisions, lawsuits, sexual immorality, and eating sacrificed foods. We've also seen Paul's directives for each – unity, compromise, marriage or celibacy, and refrainment. As we now move into the second half of the letter, we're going to see even more issues plaguing the Corinthian church. May your time spent in God's Word be fruitful as you continue to reflect on how we live in Christian community with one another. – Vicar Chris

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:1-14

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Who is Paul to the Corinthians? (see verses 1-2)

Paul didn't designate himself as an apostle. Jesus did. While Paul was on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians, Jesus appeared to Paul and personally commissioned him: "I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you" (Acts 26:16). Paul is thus reminding the Corinthians that he was sent to them as a servant and as a witness of Jesus and His Gospel.

- What point does Paul make regarding material support from the Corinthians? (see verses 11-12) Why did he not use this 'right'? (see verse 12)
- How are preachers of the Gospel to be supported according to Paul? (see verses 13-14)

Paul makes it clear that, like other preachers of the Gospel, he had a right to ask the Corinthians to support him in his mission work. But Paul denied himself this right. Would it be too hard, then, for the Corinthians to deny their own right to eat sacrificed meat?

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

How do you support those who preach and teach God's Word to you? In what ways can you be consistently praying for them?

Tuesday, June Twenty - Seventh

As Simone Biles prepared for the 2016 Summer Olympics, she did so with the goal of becoming the best gymnast in the world. During her training and preparation, there were many things that could have distracted the 19-year-old from her goal. Should she spend extra time practicing in the gym or go out with friends to catch a movie? Should she stick with her trainer's diet plan or splurge on a greasy meal on her way home? With so many things to distract her, Simone knew that she had to stay focused and disciplined if she was going to be the world's greatest gymnast at the Olympics. In today's passage, Paul describes his own focus and discipline required for attaining his goal of tirelessly sharing the Gospel.

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:15-27

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does Paul interact with the people he witnesses to? (see verses 20-22) Why does he do it in this way? (see verses 19 and 23)

We might read this section and think, "Was Paul a shape-shifter? Was he not being genuine with people when he decided to 'be like them'?" Paul assures the Corinthians and us reading along that he was not deceiving people, but rather identifying with them and being thoughtful of their needs. In this way, he chose to meet people "where they were" to win them for Christ. Do we, as God's church, expect people to come to us, or are we to follow Paul's example and go to them?

- What makes a Christian different from an athlete who is training for a contest? (see verse 25)

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

Take a moment to go to God in prayer and thank Him for sending Jesus to meet you where you're at. Consider how you can be like Him in your interactions with others "for the sake of the gospel."

Wednesday, June Twenty - Eighth

Movies and TV shows frequently provide us with vivid depictions of the problems that arise from someone's bad decision. A teenager steals a car. A husband has an affair. A mother screams at her kids. A student beats up a classmate. A parent gossips about another parent. In all these situations and more, we as passive viewers come to understand the potential consequences for behaving in such a way. In today's passage, Paul uses Israel's past to warn the Corinthians of the problems that can arise from giving into various avenues of temptation.

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Why was God not pleased with many of the Israelites? (see verses 5-10)
- Why were the Israelites punished in the ways Paul describes in verses 7-10? (see verse 11)

History has a way of repeating itself. Paul, understanding that the Corinthians were falling for many of the same things the Israelites did while in the wilderness, cautions them to stand firm against their inclination to "test the Lord" and go it their own way (v. 9).

- What does God do for us when we are tempted? (see verses 13-14)

A common phrase you hear Christians "quote" from the Bible is that "God won't give you more than you can handle." The reality, however, is that this quote isn't actually in the Bible. When people say it, they're often referring to verse 13. But notice it has nothing to do with what God 'gives us.' Instead, when we are tempted, God provides a way out for us so we do not fall prey to that temptation.

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

In what ways have you been tempted this past week? How has God "provided a way out" for you?

Thursday, June Twenty-Ninth

Oftentimes when a team is working hard on a task or project and it fails, the team members will start pointing fingers as to who is to blame for its failure. The reality, though, is that the entire team takes part in the project's failure because all of them worked on it together. Paul illustrates this concern in today's passage as he helps the Corinthians understand issues with sacrificed meat.

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:14-33

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What is Paul's point in commenting that people of the same faith share in the same meal? (see verses 16-22)

When we partake in the Lord's Supper, we participate in the body and blood of Jesus (v. 16). The Corinthians understood this well. But what they did not seem to understand was that when they partook in the pagan sacrifices and offerings, they were participating with demons (v. 20). Paul relays to the Corinthians that their freedom in Christ is not to be used "to arouse the Lord's jealousy" by partaking in these pagan rituals (v. 22).

- When should a Corinthian eat meat without question? (see verses 25-27) When should a Corinthian refrain from eating the meat served to them? (see verses 28-29)
- What should be our concern for others in "whatever we do"? (see verses 31-32)

How are we to use our newfound freedom in Christ? Paul provides us with two parameters – 1) Whatever we do, do it for the glory of God, and 2) Don't do something that would cause someone else to stumble lest we harm our witness to them. Thus, in his concluding verses on eating sacrificed meat, Paul makes sure to drive home that we understand *why* we do or do not do the things we do.

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

Take a moment to thank God for creating us to glorify Him.

Friday, June Thirtieth

If you've been to a sporting event like a baseball game, chances are the game was preceded by the singing of the Star Spangled Banner. When this happens, everybody quickly stands up to face the flag, and those wearing a hat will take it off their head. Why? Because to do so shows a level of respect to the flag and our country. In today's passage, Paul has some thoughts regarding head coverings and what they mean for the Corinthian church.

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:1-16

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Why should the Corinthians follow Paul's example? (see verse 1; also, notice his sarcasm in verse 2)
- Why does Paul instruct the Corinthian women to wear a head covering? (see verses 5-10)

In many ancient cultures, including the people of Corinth, wearing a covering on one's head was a symbol of being under the authority of another. Thus, when Paul instructs the Corinthian women to wear a head covering, he is commending them to submit to the leadership of the men in the church. But in our own culture today, submission often carries a negative connotation that to be under the authority of another is to be inferior. We must remember, though, that submission is not inferiority. Even though Jesus submitted Himself to the Father, He was still equally God!

- How does Paul speak to man and woman's interdependence? (see verses 11-12)

Even though God has designated men to be the head of women as God the Father is head of God the Son, they must not misuse that authority, but instead, faithfully consider one another.

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

Take a moment to go to God in prayer and thank Him for sending His Son who submitted to His Father's will so that you can be forgiven and assured of your salvation in Him.

Saturday, July First

Over the years, labels have been placed on things to remind people of their proper use. For example, you might pick up a power drill at a Home Depot and read, “Not Intended for Use as a Toy” on the bottom of the box. In today’s passage, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to consider the proper use of the Lord’s Supper.

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What problems was Paul hearing about regarding the Corinthian church’s practice of the Lord’s Supper? (see verses 18-22)

Clearly, the Corinthians were not partaking in the Lord’s Supper as one unified body. Paul foreshadowed this concern earlier in his letter when he said, “Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (10:17). On top of that, they were improperly partaking in the meal, sometimes even getting drunk off the wine! This might seem like an outrageous thing to do when we compare their practice to our ordered and structured practice of the Lord’s Supper, but remember that the Corinthians didn’t have any liturgy to follow. In fact, some of our own liturgy comes from this section of Paul’s letter (vv. 23-26)!

- How did Paul receive the words of institution? (see verse 23)

If there was any doubt the Lord’s Supper is an important means of grace for Christians, Paul reminds the Corinthians that he received the words of institution from Jesus Himself!

- What happens when one does not partake in the Lord’s Supper properly? (see verses 27-30)

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, July Second

When MOSI hosted the human bodies exhibit a few years back, museum goers could inspect the various organs, muscles, and veins of the human body up close and personal. By examining all the connectors to various parts of the body, you could begin to determine how one body part directly affects another. In today’s passage, Paul describes followers of Christ as a ‘body’ with many ‘parts’ who directly affect one another.

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What is the common denominator of the various types of gifts, service, and working? (see verses 4-6)
- What are some of the spiritual gifts Paul mentions, and where do we get them from? (see verses 7-11)

When we consider our spiritual gifts, we must remember they are not something we acquire on our own. They come from the Holy Spirit who “gives them to each one, just as he determines” (v. 11).

- What is the benefit of having diversity within the ‘body’ of believers? (see verses 17-20 and 24-26)

Can you imagine what our church would be like if we all had the same spiritual gift? Or if we all had the same temperament and same outlook on life? As Paul notes, if we are “all one part”, “where would the body be?” (v. 19). Just as our eyes look out for our feet and our hands look out for our face, so we as followers of Jesus are to look out for one another. Now that’s living love!

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

In what ways do you look out for other ‘parts’ of the ‘body’? What is one practical way you can start doing so for somebody?

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