

Bible Snapshots



First Corinthians – Spiritual Gifts

Author – Paul, A.D. 54-57

Facts

- The book is named for the audience to which he wrote, the church at Corinth founded by Paul on his first visit to the city, which lasted about 18 months (Acts 18:1-7).
- It was a large church (Acts 18:4, 8, 10) made up mostly of Gentile believers, with some Jewish Christians (18:8). Most would have been considered poor though there were exceptions (Crispus, Acts 1:14, 18:8).
- Under the Romans, however, Corinth was a very wealthy seaport city, given to much luxury and immorality and heathen practices. It was most noted for such industry as pottery and brass, and was, as most Roman cities, sports –minded. To “live like a Corinthian” was to live a reckless and debased life of excess.
- Paul wrote the epistle because he had heard, while visiting in Ephesus, that the church was suffering from moral laxity and division. Paul’s letter to them is very sharp, corrective and to the point, addressing the need to withdraw from brothers who are walking in disorder.
- Additionally, some from the household of Chloe delivered news to Paul that the congregation was divided, carnal, immoral, litigious, abusing marriage, the Lord’s Supper and denying the resurrection of Christ.
- Character of the book – letter / doctrinal

Themes

- The vital relationship of every member to Christ, the head of the church, and the sad result when that connection does not extend to the other parts of the body (cf. Ephesians 4:16)

Key chapters/verse - 13 (Love) and 15 (Resurrection) / 2:7, 8

Key phrase / word / thought

- Let all things be done decently and orderly (14:40) / wisdom and love / church order

Christ In 1 Corinthians - The firstfruits of the dead 15:20

Outline

- I. Salutation and introduction (1:1-9)
- II. Division in the church (1:10-4:21)
- III. Moral disorder in the church (5-8)
- IV. Doctrinal abuses in the church (11-14)
- V. Clarifying the resurrection (15)
- VI. Final exhortations to the church (16)

Miracles referred to - healing (12:9, 28); various miracles (12:10, 28); tongues (12:10, 28); Paul speaks in tongues (14:18); appearances of Christ after His resurrection (15:4-8).

Proving Corinthians

Our body the temple of god (3:16-17) – Paul gives us this teaching with the backdrop of pagan practice where prostitutes, in the name of religion, gave their bodies freely for immoral purposes. Such was common in the Acropolis of Corinth. (cf. 6:15, 16)

Sports-minded Corinth. Paul uses both the runner and the boxer in the book to illustrate the Christian life. These ancient games of Corinth are well documented in history and in ancient reliefs. The Christian, however, competes not for some perishable crown, but for a crown that is not corruptible. (9:26b, 27).

Key lessons

The call of every believer (1:2-9); the message of the cross (1:18-31); God’s tool chest – foolish things, weak things, base things, despised things and things that are not (1:27-29); The body of Christ (12); the resurrection (15); love (13); unity (1-3).