

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 06 Jun..... 1Cor 1-3 Promoting Church Unity
 2) 13 Jun..... 1Cor 4 Encouraging Church Leaders
 3) 20 Jun..... 1Cor 5-6 Practicing Christian Morality
 4) 27 Jun..... 1Cor 7 What Should I Do?
 5) 04 Jul..... 1Cor 8-11 What Can I Do?
 6) 11 Jul..... 1Cor 12 & 14 Spiritual Gifts Today
 7) 18 Jul..... 1Cor 13 Expressing True Love
 8) 25 Jul..... 1Cor 15-16 Believing in the Resurrection
 9) 01 Aug 2Cor 1-2 The Integrity Factor
 10) 08 Aug 2Cor 3-5 The Faithfulness Factor
 11) 15 Aug 2Cor 5-7 The Reconciliation Factor
 12) 22 Aug 2Cor 7-9 The Long Distance Factor
 13) 29 Aug 2Cor 10-13 The Improvement Factor

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Corinthians deals with several controversial topics and doctrines such as:
 1. Church Unity
 2. Spiritual gifts (which ones exist today?)
 3. Tolerating sin within the church
 4. How much liberty we have in Christ (in other words, how far can we push things without sinning?)
 5. Charitable giving
 6. Divorce and Remarriage
 7. Defining women’s roles vs cultural wars

The Church at Corinth.....What Happened?

- The Corinthian church had all the spiritual gifts and had 18 months of first hand teaching from a prominent Apostle – yet they were the most carnal and immature group of believers imaginable – rift with disunity, prejudice, selfishness, and tolerance for the most despicable sins
- **SO**, being able to work miracles or exhibiting spiritual gifts does not equate to spiritual maturity or doctrinal purity

Biases and Perspectives

- We have to acknowledge our biases and perspectives when we try to tackle these tough issues. For example:
 - ♦ Do we believe Apostles such as Peter & Paul exist today?
 - ♦ Do we believe the “signs of an Apostle” exist today?
 - ♦ Do we believe spiritual gifts exist today (some, all or none)?

Consider the Following:

- Any true God-enabled miracles that break natural laws are extremely rare
- Today’s so-called “faith healers” and “miracle workers” cannot claim 100% success as Christ did or as the Apostles did earlier in their ministry. All the so-called successes of modern day “healers” can be attributed to “psychosomatic” healings or providential occurrences
 - ♦ You don’t see war vets having their limbs restored after losing them in an explosion
 - ♦ You don’t see hospital wards being miraculously emptied even of one burn victim or a child with terminal cancer
 - ♦ You don’t even see one Down’s Syndrome individual being given normal DNA
- The miracle workers & faith healers of yesteryear are gone – and Scripture gives us evidence of this
 - ♦ Jesus and His Apostles/Disciples were able to heal all (100%)e.g., Mat 4:24; 8:16; 12:15; Acts 5:16
 - ♦ **HOWEVER**, the Apostles lost this ability to heal all and to work “signs of an Apostle” even before they had died off
 - Paul couldn’t heal his own thorn in the flesh 2Cor 12:7-10

- Paul could not heal Epaphroditus..... Php 2:25-30
- Paul had to leave Trophimus sick in Miletum.... 2Tim 4:20
- Paul tells Timothy to take some wine for his illness (why not send him to a miracle worker) 1Tim 5:23
- ♦ **Also**, if the Apostles had to be present each time the Holy Spirit was given out, as evident by the speaking in tongues, then the Apostles need to still be here (using the Charismatic argument that “God is the same today, yesterday and forever”) Acts 2:3-6; 10:46; 19:6
- ♦ **Also**, if Apostles (1Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11) and the signs of an Apostle (2Cor 12:12) are still in existence today then the New Testament should still be growing beyond our current 27 books

- **THEREFORE**, we have to acknowledge God is working differently today compared to yesteryear, and this is in line with the Holy Spirit distributing as He wills and God works in different ways at different times 1Cor 12:11; Heb 1:1

Passage	Comments
1Cor 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corinthians ‘came behind no gift’ v8 • God will ensure we finish blameless v9 • Disunity was rampant vv10-16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Can we disagree on how to do things and still have unity?..... YES • Foolish things confound the wise – How?.... v27 • No flesh shall glory in His presence v29 – What does this mean?
1Cor 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul’s preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power v4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Can we do the same today?..... NO ♦ Remember that the Lord worked with His Apostles by “confirming the word with signs following” Mark 16:20; Heb 2:4 • How should we compare or discern spiritual things with spiritual things v13-15
1Cor 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul calls these spiritually-gifted Corinthians carnal babies for their envying, strife and divisions, and they are unable to be given “meat” or higher teachings of God vv1-3 • They are also treading on dangerous ground because Paul tells them God will destroy those who “defile” their bodies which is “the temple of God” vv16-17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ How would God do this? 11:28-30

NEXT WEEK: 1Cor 4 – Paul conveys to the Corinthians he is just a servant of God, but worthy of their respect – not their unwarranted condemnation and judgment

