

# I Corinthians—Order in the Church

*This is a self-study course  
designed to help you discover  
for yourself, from the Bible,  
some important basic truths about  
living the Christian life.*

## how to study the lesson

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1. Try to find a quiet spot free from distractions and noise.
  2. Read the entire Scripture lesson; read it several times to help you absorb its content.
  3. Read each question carefully. Then look up the Scripture reference given after each question. Make sure you have found the correct Scripture passage. For example, sometimes you may find yourself looking up John 1:1 instead of I John 1:1.
  4. Answer the question from the appropriate Bible passage. Write, in your own words, a phrase or sentence to answer the question. In questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” always give the reason for your answer . . . “Yes, because. . . .”
  5. If possible, keep a dictionary handy in order to look up words you don’t understand.
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6. Pray for God's help. You *need* God's help in order to understand what you study in the Bible. Psalm 119:18 would be an appropriate verse for you to take to God in prayer.

7. *Class teachers using this course for group study will find some helpful suggestions on page 47.*

## how to take the self-check tests

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Each lesson is concluded with a test designed to help you evaluate what you have learned.

1. Review the lesson carefully in the light of the self-check test questions.

2. If there are any questions in the self-check test you cannot answer, perhaps you have written into your lesson the wrong answer from your Bible. Go over your work carefully to make sure you have filled in the blanks correctly.

3. When you think you are ready to take the self-check test, do so without looking up the answers.

4. Check your answers to the self-check test carefully with the answer key given on page 48.

5. If you have any questions wrong, your answer key will tell you where to find the correct answer in your lesson. Go back and locate the right answers. Learn by your mistakes!

## apply what you have learned to your own life

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In this connection, read carefully JAMES 1:22-25. It is only as you apply your lessons to your own life that you will really grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of God.

# INTRODUCTION TO I CORINTHIANS

## *The writer*

The apostle Paul (cf. 1:1; 3:4; 3:22; 16:21).

## *The date*

This epistle is dated from A.D. 54 to 59, but the spring of 56 is perhaps correct.

## *The place*

Written from Ephesus.

## *The occasion and purpose*

This epistle was written on the apostle's third missionary journey in answer to a letter of inquiry from Corinth concerning marriage and the eating of meats offered to idols. Paul's first visit to Corinth had been the climax of his second missionary journey in which he had planted the gospel in Europe (Acts 18:1-18).

One must note the simplicity of his preaching at Corinth as compared with the type of message he had given at Athens. At Corinth the power of the cross was the whole message and did not have the philosophical arguments or elaborate controversy.

## *The Corinthian church*

The Corinthian church was predominantly Gentile and had elements of rich, poor, educated, and ignorant. This church was troubled with cliques, and there was an element of emotional people whose extremes degenerated into immorality. The loose habits of heathenism clung to many. Yet Paul addresses such a group as "the church of God . . . called to be saints . . . sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1:2). He sought to meet their need by appealing to their high position in Christ and the reality of their union

with Him. He then exhorted them to bring their spiritual state into conformity to their exalted standing in Christ.

## *Outline*

LESSON	TITLE	PASSAGE
1	Divisions—Corrected by the Cross	1:1-31
2	True Wisdom—Imparted by the Spirit	2:1—3:4
3	Service and Servants	3:5—4:21
	Service	3:5-23
	Servants	4:1-21
4	Discipline, Lawsuits, and Impurity	5:1—6:20
	Discipline	5:1-13
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8	Church Conduct	11:1-34
	Woman's Dress	11:1-16
	The Lord's Supper	11:17-34
9	The Christian and Gifts	12:1-31
10	The Christian and Love	13:1-13
11	Prophecy and Tongues	14:1-40
12	Resurrection, Collection, and Conclusion	15:1—16:24
	Resurrection	15:1-58
	Collection	16:1-4
	Conclusion	16:3-24



# Divisions—Corrected by the Cross

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1:1-31

*The believer's position in Christ* 1:1-9

Before dealing with the problems in the Corinthian church, the apostle reminds the believers of their position in Christ.

1. How are these believers addressed?

1:2 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What has happened for the one who is “in Christ Jesus”?

1:30 \_\_\_\_\_

The weakest believer is *sanctified* (set apart unto God), for his heavenly standing is in Christ alone. However, the apostle proceeds to rebuke these believers for their *unsaintliness*. Growth in grace is progressive sanctification—becoming more completely “set apart.”

3. What may God have to do to promote our sanctification?

11:32 \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the purpose of these chastenings?

HEBREWS 12:10 \_\_\_\_\_

5. What important characteristics did Paul commend in the Corinthians before he turned the searchlight on them?

1:5, 6 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Generally speaking, how were the Corinthian Christians regarded as to spiritual gifts?

1:7 \_\_\_\_\_

7. In what belief were they especially strong?

1:7; compare TITUS 2:13 \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is said concerning their position in Christ?

1:8; compare PHILIPPIANS 1:6 \_\_\_\_\_

9. Who is our Guarantee?

EPHESIANS 1:13, 14 \_\_\_\_\_

The word *seal* signifies a finished transaction as well as security and ownership. The word *earnest* means a token or pledge that the full amount will be subsequently paid. Thus, the Holy Spirit Himself is our security that we will receive full salvation.

10. Since the believer's standing depends wholly on the merits of Christ, what must be the end?

1:8; compare COLOSSIANS 1:22 \_\_\_\_\_

11. While the Christian is often found unfaithful, how is God described?

1:9; compare I PETER 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul here follows his usual method of showing that when believers realize what salvation means, they will begin to walk worthy of the gift. Now he turns to the problem of division in the Corinthian church.

### *Division by exalting human leaders 1:10-17*

12. How does Paul describe the problem of this early church?

1:10, 11; compare PSALM 133:1 \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the only basis of true unity in the church, even though minor differences of opinion may necessarily exist?

JOHN 13:34, 35 \_\_\_\_\_

14. What is often the cause of division?

1:12, 13 \_\_\_\_\_

Note Paul's method of curing division by directing every eye to the Saviour. Christ cannot be divided, and He is the one center and source of spiritual unity.

15. What is the only kind of oneness for which Christ prayed?

JOHN 17:21, 23 \_\_\_\_\_

16. For what purpose was Paul sent forth?

1:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul does not minimize baptism, for he uses it to explain spiritual truth (ROMANS 6). However, he does emphasize his mission and thereby makes their division groundless.

### *Division by exalting human wisdom 1:18-31*

In this section, the apostle shows the contrast between the wisdom that has its source in man and that which has its source in God.

17. How does the unsaved man with his pride of intellect regard spiritual truth?

1:18; compare 2:14 \_\_\_\_\_

18. Despite such scoffings, what satisfying answer will one find by accepting Jesus Christ?

1:18; compare ROMANS 1:16 \_\_\_\_\_

19. While men may express their ignorance of God in scientific terms, what do they have in the end?

1:19, 20; compare MATTHEW 11:25 \_\_\_\_\_

20. What is the only rock of true wisdom?

ISAIAH 44:24, 25; 55:8, 9 \_\_\_\_\_

21. Which doctrine lays open the depravity of the human heart and the insufficiency of man to save himself?

1:23; 2:2; compare ISAIAH 53:5, 6; JOHN 1:29 \_\_\_\_\_

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That which the worldly wise calls “foolish”—the preaching of Christ crucified and salvation through His sacrifice—becomes the highest wisdom to the believer (1:24).

22. Why can the born-again Christian praise God for the constant weakness which causes him to depend on Christ?

1:27 \_\_\_\_\_

23. In spite of the criticism of the world, what things does God use for the good of men and His own glory?

1:27, 28 \_\_\_\_\_

In verse 28 the word rendered “base” means “low-born,” and the word for “despised” means “reckoned of no account.” God makes use of those reckoned of no account and hopeless by the wise of this world, for the accomplishment of great purposes.

24. When God is at work through men, what one thing is certain?

1:29 \_\_\_\_\_

The apostle now reminds them of the position which the believer has in Christ.

25. When one has Christ as the source and condition of life, what has he gained as to standing with God?

1:30 \_\_\_\_\_

26. Since Christ was made sin for us, what are we made through acceptance of Him?

II CORINTHIANS 5:20, 21 \_\_\_\_\_

27. What then is the only boasting an enlightened Christian can do?

1:31; compare GALATIANS 6:14 \_\_\_\_\_



## *check-up time No. 1*

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*You have just studied some important truths about divisions in the Corinthian church. Review your study by rereading the questions and your written answers. If you wish, you may use the self-check test as an aid in reviewing your lesson. If you are not sure of an answer, reread the Scripture portion given to see if you can find the answer. Then take this test to see how well you understand important truths you have studied.*

*In the right-hand margin write "True" or "False" after each of the following statements.*

1. All believers are sanctified. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The chastening of God is to make us holy. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Corinthian church denied the return of Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The Holy Spirit is our Guarantee that we will receive full salvation. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Paul's purpose was to baptize believers. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The wisdom of God convicts and confounds the wisdom of men. \_\_\_\_\_
7. God may use the insignificant things of this world for His glory. \_\_\_\_\_
8. It is because of our ability that we will glory in Christ's presence. \_\_\_\_\_
9. It is through Christ alone that we are counted righteous. \_\_\_\_\_
10. A Christian should glory only in the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_

*Turn to page 64 and check your answers.*