

16-Day Devotional Journey Through 1 Corinthians

One Chapter Each Day - Addressing Church Issues with Gospel Truth

Day 1: 1 Corinthians 1 - The Message of the Cross

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Paul greets the Corinthian church, thanking God for the grace given to them in Christ Jesus. However, he's heard about divisions among them—some claiming to follow Paul, others Apollos, others Cephas, others Christ. Paul asks, "Is Christ divided?" He's thankful he didn't baptize many, so no one can say they were baptized in his name. Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross be emptied of its power. The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us being saved it is the power of God. God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak to shame the strong, the lowly and despised things, so that no one may boast before Him. Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

KEY VERSE

"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." - 1 Corinthians 1:18

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The cross is the great divider. To some, it's foolishness—an embarrassing scandal, a stumbling block, complete nonsense. How could a crucified criminal be God? How could execution be salvation? It makes no sense to human wisdom. But to those being saved, the cross is the power of God—the very means by which God saves, reconciles, and transforms.

Paul addresses a real problem: division in the church. Believers were forming cliques around favorite teachers—Paul, Apollos, Peter. But Paul cuts through this nonsense: "Is Christ divided?" You can't fragment Christ. You can't claim Him for your group while excluding others. Christ is not divided, and neither should His church be.

The root of their division was pride in human wisdom. They elevated teachers who were eloquent, impressive, philosophical. But Paul says God chose the foolish, weak, and lowly things to shame human pride. Why? "So that no one may boast before him." Salvation isn't about your intellect, your achievements, or your status. It's about Christ.

Notice the progression: Christ has become for us wisdom (we're not wise; He is), righteousness (we're not righteous; He is), sanctification (we're not holy; He is making us holy), and redemption (we're not free; He freed us). Everything we need, we have in Christ. Therefore, "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."

PRAYER

Lord, I confess that the message of the cross is the power of God. Forgive me when I've been ashamed of it or tried to make it more acceptable to human wisdom. Thank You for choosing the foolish, weak, and lowly things—including me—to shame the proud. In Christ, I have everything I need: wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Guard me from divisions and pride. Let me boast only in You. Amen.

Day 2: 1 Corinthians 2 - Spiritual Wisdom

CHAPTER SUMMARY

When Paul came to Corinth, he resolved to know nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He came in weakness, fear, and trembling. His message was not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so their faith might not rest on human

wisdom but on God's power. Yet Paul speaks wisdom among the mature—not the wisdom of this age, but God's secret wisdom that has been hidden and destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, or they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory. As Scripture says, "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived—the things God has prepared for those who love him"—these are the things God has revealed to us by His Spirit. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them. But we have the mind of Christ.

KEY VERSE

"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit." - 1 Corinthians 2:14

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

There are two kinds of wisdom: human and divine. Human wisdom is impressive to people but foolish to God. Divine wisdom seems foolish to people but is actually God's power. The natural person—someone without the Holy Spirit—cannot understand spiritual truths. They seem like nonsense. It's not an intelligence issue; it's a spiritual issue.

But believers have the Holy Spirit, who reveals God's truth to us. "These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." You have access to divine wisdom that the world cannot comprehend. The Spirit teaches you spiritual truths, helping you understand God's Word and apply it to your life.

Paul says, "We have the mind of Christ." This is astounding. Through the Holy Spirit, you have access to Christ's perspective, Christ's understanding, Christ's wisdom. You can think God's thoughts after Him. This doesn't mean you're omniscient, but it does mean the Spirit illuminates truth for you.

Notice Paul's intentional weakness: "I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling." Why? So that people's faith would rest on God's power, not on Paul's eloquence or charisma. If Paul had impressed them with brilliant speeches, they might have believed because of his persuasiveness. But Paul wanted their faith anchored in God's power demonstrated through the Spirit.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for revealing Your wisdom to me through Your Spirit. I don't have to depend on human wisdom or philosophy. I have access to divine truth through the Holy Spirit. Thank You that I have the mind of Christ. Help me to discern spiritual things spiritually. When I read Your Word, open my eyes to see truth. Let my faith rest on Your power, not on human wisdom. Amen.

Day 3: 1 Corinthians 3 - Building on the Foundation

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Paul couldn't speak to the Corinthians as spiritual people, but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. He gave them milk, not solid food, because they weren't ready. They're still not ready because there is jealousy and quarreling among them. When one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," aren't they acting like mere humans? What is Apollos? What is Paul? Only servants through whom you came to believe. Paul planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. Neither the one who plants nor waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow. We are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God gave me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each should build with care. No one can lay any foundation other than Jesus Christ. Each builder will use gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw. Their work will be shown for what it is. The

Day will bring it to light and fire will test its quality. Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple?

KEY VERSE

"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." - 1 Corinthians 3:11

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Jesus Christ is the only foundation for life, ministry, and the church. You can't build on philosophy, tradition, personality, or programs. You must build on Christ. Any other foundation will collapse.

But once the foundation is laid, the quality of what you build matters. Paul uses six materials: gold, silver, costly stones (valuable, enduring materials) and wood, hay, straw (cheap, temporary materials). Both will burn when tested by fire, but gold, silver, and costly stones will survive; wood, hay, and straw will be consumed.

This isn't about salvation—that's secure in Christ. It's about the quality of your work, your service, your life. Are you building with eternal materials or temporary ones? Are you investing in what lasts or what perishes? Ministry that glorifies God, serves others, and builds Christ's kingdom will endure. Ministry done for personal glory, with selfish motives, or built on human wisdom will burn up.

Paul addresses their immaturity directly: "I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready." They should have grown up by now, but jealousy and quarreling prove they're still infants. Spiritual maturity isn't about how long you've been a Christian; it's about your character.

PRAYER

Lord, I build my life on the only foundation—Jesus Christ. Help me to build with gold, silver, and costly stones—materials that will endure. Keep me from wasting time and energy on things that won't last. Forgive me for

times when I've been spiritually immature, quarreling and dividing over personalities or preferences. Grow me up. I'm Your temple; Your Spirit lives in me. Amen.

Day 4: 1 Corinthians 4 - Servants and Stewards

CHAPTER SUMMARY

People should regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. Paul cares very little if he is judged by them or by any human court; he doesn't even judge himself. It is the Lord who judges him. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and expose the motives of hearts. Then each will receive their praise from God. Paul has applied these things to himself and Apollos so they may learn not to go beyond what is written, so none will be puffed up in favor of one against another. For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you didn't receive? We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored. Paul's not writing to shame them but to warn them as his dear children. He's sending Timothy to remind them of his way of life in Christ.

KEY VERSE

"What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?" - 1 Corinthians 4:7

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Everything you have is a gift. Your talents, your opportunities, your possessions, your salvation—all received, not achieved. This should eliminate all boasting. If everything is grace, what's there to brag about?

Paul emphasizes that he's a servant and steward. A servant takes orders; a steward manages what belongs to someone else. Paul doesn't own his ministry; he manages it for God. The requirement for stewards is faithfulness—not success, not impressive results, but faithfulness to the trust given.

The Corinthians were judging Paul and Apollos, forming favorites and criticizing others. But Paul says, "I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court." He's not indifferent to people, but he's not controlled by their opinions. Only the Lord's judgment matters. This frees Paul to serve faithfully without seeking approval or fearing criticism.

Paul uses irony: "Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have begun to reign!" They thought they had arrived spiritually, sitting comfortably while Paul suffered. But Paul lists his hardships: hunger, thirst, beatings, homelessness, cursing, persecution, slander. Yet through it all, he blesses, endures, and answers kindly. This is the way of the cross—suffering service, not triumphant pride.

PRAYER

Father, help me to remember that everything I have is a gift from You. I have nothing to boast about. Make me a faithful steward of what You've entrusted to me. Free me from seeking human approval or fearing human criticism. Let me care only about Your judgment. When I suffer for Christ, help me to bless when cursed, endure when persecuted, and answer kindly when slandered. Make me faithful. Amen.

Day 5: 1 Corinthians 5 - Dealing with Sin in the Church

CHAPTER SUMMARY

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and

have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. Hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not the people of this world, but anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral, greedy, an idolater, slanderer, drunkard, or swindler. With such persons do not even eat.

KEY VERSE

"Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed." - 1 Corinthians 5:6-7

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The Corinthian church had a serious problem: a member was living in blatant, unrepentant sexual sin, and the church did nothing. Worse, they were proud—probably of their "tolerance" and "non-judgmental" attitude. But Paul says this is wrong. Love doesn't ignore sin; it confronts it for the person's good and the church's purity.

Paul uses the metaphor of yeast: a little goes a long way. One person's unaddressed sin affects the entire church. It spreads. It influences. It corrupts. This is why church discipline matters—not to be harsh or judgmental, but to protect the body and restore the sinner.

Notice the purpose of discipline: "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved." This isn't vindictive; it's redemptive. The goal is the person's restoration, not their

destruction. Sometimes the most loving thing the church can do is remove someone from fellowship, letting them experience the consequences of their sin, hoping it will bring them to repentance.

Paul clarifies: he's not telling them to avoid sinners in the world—that would be impossible. He's telling them not to associate with professing believers who persist in unrepentant sin. There's a difference between an unbeliever living in sin (they need the gospel) and a professing Christian living in sin (they need discipline and restoration).

Christ is our Passover lamb. In the Exodus, the Israelites removed all yeast from their homes during Passover. Similarly, believers should remove sin from their lives because Christ has been sacrificed. Live in purity, reflecting the sacrifice made for you.

PRAYER

Lord, give me and my church wisdom to address sin with both truth and love. Help us not to be proud or tolerant of sin, but also not to be harsh or unforgiving. Let us practice church discipline redemptively, always seeking restoration. Convict me of any yeast in my own life—sin I'm tolerating or hiding. Christ, my Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Help me to live in purity, honoring His sacrifice. Amen.

Day 6: 1 Corinthians 6 - Lawsuits and Sexual Immorality

CHAPTER SUMMARY

If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? If you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor

men who have sex with men, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit God's kingdom. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial or constructive. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

KEY VERSE

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Your body matters to God. It's not just a shell housing your soul; it's a temple of the Holy Spirit. God lives in you. This should radically change how you view and treat your body.

Paul addresses two issues: lawsuits among believers and sexual immorality. First, believers were suing each other in secular courts. Paul says this is shameful—can't you settle disputes within the church? If believers will one day judge the world and even angels, surely you can handle minor disputes now.

Then Paul lists people who won't inherit God's kingdom: the sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, homosexual offenders, thieves, greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers. But notice what he says next: "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified." Past tense. You're not those things anymore. Christ transformed you.

The Corinthians had a slogan: "I have the right to do anything." They thought Christian freedom meant no boundaries. Paul responds: not everything is beneficial or constructive. Just because you can doesn't mean you should. Freedom isn't license to sin; it's power to obey.

Sexual immorality is particularly serious because it's a sin against your own body. All sin is wrong, but sexual sin uniquely violates the body that houses God's Spirit. Paul's command is clear: "Flee from sexual immorality." Don't fight it, don't flirt with it, don't rationalize it—flee from it.

You are not your own. You were bought at a price—Christ's blood. You belong to Him. Therefore, honor God with your body—in what you do with it, what you put in it, how you present it, who you share it with.

PRAYER

Lord, my body is Your temple. The Holy Spirit lives in me. Help me to treat my body with the respect it deserves as Your dwelling place. I am not my own; I was bought at a price. Teach me to flee from sexual immorality, not to flirt with it or rationalize it. Give me boundaries that honor You. Help me to remember that not everything that's permissible is beneficial. I want to honor You with my body. Amen.

Day 7: 1 Corinthians 7 - Marriage and Singleness

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again. I wish that all were as I am (single). But each has their own gift from God. To the unmarried and

widows: It is good to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. To the married: A wife must not separate from her husband, and a husband must not divorce his wife. Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them. Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned. Because of the present crisis, I think it is good to remain as you are. An unmarried person is concerned about the Lord's affairs, but a married person is concerned about pleasing their spouse.

KEY VERSE

"Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them." - 1 Corinthians 7:20

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Paul addresses marriage, singleness, and divorce with practical wisdom. His main principle: remain in your current state (married or single) unless there's a compelling reason to change. Both states have advantages and challenges.

Marriage is good. Sexual intimacy within marriage is good and expected. Husbands and wives should not deprive each other except briefly for prayer. Marriage is God's provision for sexual needs and companionship.

But singleness is also good—perhaps even better in some circumstances. Single people can devote themselves to the Lord without the responsibilities and distractions of marriage. Paul wishes more were single like him, not because marriage is bad, but because singleness offers unique opportunities for undistracted devotion to God.

However, if someone can't control their sexual desires, they should marry. "It is better to marry than to burn with passion." Marriage isn't just for procreation or companionship; it's also God's provision for sexual expression within appropriate boundaries.

Regarding divorce, Paul is clear: believers shouldn't divorce. But if an unbelieving spouse leaves, the believer isn't bound. God has called us to peace. Don't stay in an abusive or dangerous situation, but also don't initiate divorce if your unbelieving spouse is willing to stay.

The key is contentment in your current state. If you're single, don't despise it or constantly seek marriage. If you're married, don't long for singleness. Both states are gifts from God with unique opportunities to serve Him. Be faithful where you are.

PRAYER

Father, help me to be content in my current state—whether single or married. If I'm single, help me to see it as a gift with unique opportunities to serve You. If I'm married, help me to honor my spouse and fulfill my marital duties faithfully. Keep me from sexual immorality. Give me wisdom regarding marriage, singleness, and relationships. Help me to seek Your kingdom first in whatever state I'm in. Amen.

Day 8: 1 Corinthians 8 - Food Sacrificed to Idols

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that "We all possess knowledge." But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. But whoever loves God is known by God. So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that "An idol is nothing at all in the world" and that "There is no God but one." For even if there are so-called gods, for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ. But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near

to God. Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone with a weak conscience sees you eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother or sister is destroyed by your knowledge. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again.

KEY VERSE

"Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedoms does not become a stumbling block to the weak." - 1 Corinthians 8:9

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

This chapter addresses a specific issue in Corinth: meat sacrificed to idols. In that culture, animals were often sacrificed in pagan temples, then the meat was sold in the market or served at social gatherings. Could Christians eat this meat?

Paul's answer: technically yes, because idols are nothing. There's only one true God. The meat itself isn't defiled. You can eat it with a clear conscience. However—and this is crucial—your freedom stops where your brother's conscience begins.

Some believers came out of paganism with a weak conscience. When they saw Christians eating meat sacrificed to idols, they thought it was okay to participate in idol worship. They didn't have the knowledge that idols are nothing; they still associated the meat with false gods. If you eat freely and they follow your example against their conscience, you've caused them to sin.

The principle: "Knowledge puffs up while love builds up." You might know you have freedom, but love limits freedom for others' sake. You might have the right to eat, drink, or participate in certain activities, but if it causes a weaker believer to stumble, love says, "I'll abstain."

This doesn't mean you're controlled by the most sensitive person's scruples. It means you're sensitive to genuine stumbling blocks. If your freedom causes someone to sin against their conscience or return to sin they've been freed from, love sacrifices freedom.

Paul's conclusion is radical: "If what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall." Love is more important than liberty. People are more valuable than rights.

PRAYER

Father, give me wisdom to balance freedom and love. Help me not to be puffed up with knowledge but to build others up with love. Show me when my freedoms might cause a weaker believer to stumble. Give me willingness to limit my liberty for others' sake. Let love, not rights, guide my decisions. I don't want my freedom to destroy someone for whom Christ died. Make me sensitive to others' consciences. Amen.

Day 9: 1 Corinthians 9 - Paul's Rights as an Apostle

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! Don't we have the right to food and drink? Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us? Don't we have the right to not work? If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach

the gospel! Though I am free, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

KEY VERSE

"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible." - 1 Corinthians 9:19

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Paul had rights he chose not to exercise. As an apostle, he had the right to financial support, to bring a wife, to stop working. But he voluntarily gave up these rights. Why? So nothing would hinder the gospel.

Paul's motivation was singular: winning people to Christ. He made himself a slave to everyone—adapting his approach, limiting his freedoms, refusing support—all for the sake of the gospel. "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."

This doesn't mean compromising truth or changing the message. It means being flexible in methods, sensitive to culture, willing to adapt your approach. To Jews, Paul became like a Jew. To Gentiles, he became like a Gentile. He met people where they were to bring them to where they needed to be.

Notice Paul's passion: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" He felt compelled—not by force, but by love. He couldn't not preach. The gospel consumed him. He wasn't preaching for money or recognition; he was preaching because he had to. The love of Christ compelled him.

Paul ends with athletic imagery: "Run in such a way as to get the prize." In a race, everyone runs, but only one wins. Christians aren't competing against each other, but we are called to run with purpose and discipline. "I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer

beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave." Self-discipline matters. Train hard. Run to win.

PRAYER

Lord, give me Paul's passion for the gospel. Help me to voluntarily limit my freedoms when they might hinder someone from hearing about Christ. Make me adaptable—meeting people where they are to bring them to You. Let me run my race with purpose and discipline, not aimlessly. Help me to strike a blow to my body and make it my slave. I want to run in such a way as to get the prize. Compel me with Your love. Amen.

Day 10: 1 Corinthians 10 - Warnings from Israel's History

CHAPTER SUMMARY

I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact that our ancestors were all under the cloud and passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink—they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters. Do not commit sexual immorality. Do not test Christ. Do not grumble. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out. Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial or constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

KEY VERSE

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." - 1 Corinthians 10:13

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Israel's history is a warning. They experienced God's miracles—the exodus from Egypt, manna from heaven, water from the rock. Yet most died in the wilderness because of their sin: idolatry, sexual immorality, testing God, grumbling. Having spiritual experiences doesn't guarantee spiritual perseverance.

Paul's warning: "If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" Overconfidence is dangerous. The moment you think you're beyond temptation or can handle sin is the moment you're most vulnerable. Stay humble. Stay vigilant.

But there's also encouragement: "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind." You're not unique in your struggles. Everyone faces temptation. You're not alone. And God is faithful—He won't allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. This doesn't mean temptation won't be intense or difficult. It means God won't abandon you to impossible situations.

More importantly, "when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out." God always provides an escape route. Sometimes it's literal—remove yourself from the situation. Sometimes it's spiritual—cry out to God for strength. Sometimes it's relational—call a friend for accountability. Look for the way out. It's always there.

Paul returns to the theme of Christian freedom: "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial or constructive. And more importantly, "No one should seek their own good, but the good of others." Christian freedom isn't about maximizing your rights; it's about maximizing others' good. Love limits liberty.

PRAYER

Father, I take Israel's history as a warning. Don't let me be overconfident, thinking I'm beyond temptation. Keep me humble and vigilant. Thank You that no temptation is unique to me—others have faced and overcome similar struggles. Thank You that You're faithful, never allowing more than I can bear. When tempted, help me to see and take the way out You provide. Let me use my freedom not for myself but for others' good. Amen.

Day 11: 1 Corinthians 11 - Worship, Headship, and the Lord's Supper

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. I praise you for remembering me and holding to the traditions I passed on to you. Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for when you are eating, some go hungry while others get drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup unworthily will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat and drink.

KEY VERSE

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." - 1 Corinthians 11:26

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The Lord's Supper is a proclamation. Every time you take communion, you're declaring Christ's death—its sufficiency, its sacrifice, its centrality. You're also declaring His return—"until he comes." Communion looks back to the cross and forward to Christ's coming.

But Paul rebukes the Corinthians for how they're handling communion. They're turning it into a regular meal where some gorge themselves while others go hungry. The wealthy bring lavish food; the poor have nothing. This isn't the Lord's Supper—it's a travesty that humiliates the have-nots.

Paul then gives instructions for proper communion: "Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." This is serious. You can't approach communion carelessly or flippantly. "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat and drink."

Self-examination before communion involves:

- Confessing known sin
- Examining your heart for bitterness, pride, or division
- Remembering what Christ's death accomplished
- Renewing your commitment to follow Him

The chapter also addresses headship and gender roles in worship. Paul establishes an order: God → Christ → man → woman. This doesn't mean inequality (all are equal in Christ), but it does indicate different roles. The specific instructions about head coverings were culturally bound, but the principle of order and respect in worship remains.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for the Lord's Supper—a powerful reminder of Your death and promise of Your return. Help me to approach communion with reverence, not carelessly. Teach me to examine myself before partaking—confessing sin, renewing commitment, remembering Your sacrifice. Keep me from taking communion unworthily. Let me proclaim Your death faithfully until You come. Guard me from divisions that dishonor Your table. Amen.

Day 12: 1 Corinthians 12 - Spiritual Gifts and the Body of Christ

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Now about the gifts of the Spirit: There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one is given the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge, to another faith, to another gifts of healing, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. Just as a body has many parts, yet is one, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body.

KEY VERSE

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." - 1 Corinthians 12:7

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Every believer has been given at least one spiritual gift. Not some believers—every believer. The Spirit distributes gifts "to each one, just as he determines." You have a gift. The question isn't whether you're gifted, but how you're using your gift.

Notice the purpose: "for the common good." Gifts aren't for your personal enjoyment or to make you feel special. They're for building up the church, serving others, and advancing God's kingdom. Your gift is given to benefit the body, not just you.

Paul lists various gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation. This isn't exhaustive—Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 add others. The point isn't to have every gift, but to use the gift(s) you have.

Then Paul uses the body metaphor. The church is like a human body with many parts. Each part is different, but all are necessary. The foot can't say it's not part of the body because it's not a hand. The eye can't say it doesn't need the hand. Every part matters. Every member is valuable.

This means two things: First, don't despise your gift or role. You might not be as visible as others, but you're essential. The body can't function without you. Second, don't despise others' gifts or roles. You need them. Their gifts complement yours. Together, you form Christ's body.

God arranged the parts "just as he wanted them to be." You're not in the body by accident. Your gifts, your role, your place—all sovereignly determined by God. Trust His design. Use your gifts faithfully. Value others' contributions.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for giving me spiritual gifts. Help me to identify them and use them faithfully for the common good. Keep me from despising my gifts or envying others'. Help me to see myself as part of Christ's body—necessary, valuable, connected to others. Show me where You want me to serve. Give me joy in using my gifts to build up Your church. Let there be no division in the body, but unity as we each fulfill our roles. Amen.

Day 13: 1 Corinthians 13 - The Way of Love

CHAPTER SUMMARY

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

KEY VERSE

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." - 1 Corinthians 13:13

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

This is the Bible's most famous passage on love. But it's not sentimental or romantic—it's practical and challenging. Love is action, not just emotion. It's a choice, not just a feeling.

Paul begins by showing that without love, even the most impressive gifts are worthless. You can speak eloquently, prophesy accurately, understand deep mysteries, have mountain-moving faith, give away everything you own, even die as a martyr—but without love, it's all meaningless. Nothing. Zero. Love is the essential ingredient that validates everything else.

Then Paul describes what love looks like in action. Love is patient—it endures delays without complaining. Love is kind—it actively seeks to help and bless. Love doesn't envy—it celebrates others' success. Love doesn't boast—it's humble, not drawing attention to itself. Love isn't proud—it doesn't think too highly of itself.

Love doesn't dishonor others—it treats people with respect. Love isn't self-seeking—it prioritizes others' needs. Love isn't easily angered—it has a long fuse. Love keeps no record of wrongs—it doesn't keep a mental scorecard of offenses. Love doesn't delight in evil—it mourns when others sin. Love rejoices with the truth—it celebrates what's right and true.

Love always protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres. Always. Not sometimes, not when convenient—always. Love never fails. It endures. It lasts. It persists.

Everything else will pass away. Prophecies will cease. Tongues will stop. Knowledge will end. But faith, hope, and love remain—and the greatest is love. Why? Because faith will become sight, hope will become reality, but love will continue forever.

PRAYER

Father, make me a loving person. Not just someone who feels love, but someone who acts in love. Make me patient and kind. Remove envy, boasting, and pride from my heart. Help me not to dishonor others or seek my own way. Give me a slow temper and a short memory for offenses. Let me rejoice with truth and protect, trust, hope, and persevere always. I want love to characterize my life. Let everything I do flow from love. Amen.

Day 14: 1 Corinthians 14 - Orderly Worship and Prophecy

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. In the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be adults. If the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever comes in while everyone is prophesying, they will be convicted of sin. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people. Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

KEY VERSE

"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the Lord's people... everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." - 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The Corinthians valued tongues highly—perhaps too highly. Paul doesn't condemn tongues; he speaks in tongues himself and wishes they all did. But he prioritizes prophecy because it builds up the church. Tongues edify

the speaker (which is good), but prophecy edifies everyone (which is better).

The key principle: everything in worship should build up the church. "What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up."

Paul gives practical guidelines for orderly worship:

- If someone speaks in tongues, there must be an interpreter. Otherwise, keep quiet.
- Prophets should speak two or three at a time, and others should weigh what is said.
- Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

Why the emphasis on order? Because "God is not a God of disorder but of peace." Chaotic worship doesn't reflect God's character. It confuses visitors and dishonors God. Freedom in worship doesn't mean chaos; it means Spirit-led order.

Paul also addresses the purpose of spiritual gifts in relation to unbelievers. If everyone speaks in tongues and unbelievers enter, they'll think you're crazy. But if people prophesy (speaking God's truth), unbelievers will be convicted, their secrets exposed, and they'll worship God.

The chapter ends with balance: "Be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." Don't quench the Spirit's work, but don't allow disorder either.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to prioritize what builds up the church. Give me spiritual gifts that strengthen, encourage, and comfort others. When I worship, let it be done in a fitting and orderly way that honors You. Don't let me prioritize my own edification over the church's benefit. Whether I speak, sing, pray, or

listen, let everything I do build others up. You are a God of peace, not disorder. Let my life reflect that. Amen.

Day 15: 1 Corinthians 15 - The Resurrection of Christ and Believers

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Now I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve, then to more than five hundred, then to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all to me. But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed. So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

KEY VERSE

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." - 1 Corinthians 15:20

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The resurrection is non-negotiable. If Christ wasn't raised, Christianity collapses. Your faith is futile. You're still in your sins. Those who died in

Christ have perished. "If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied."

But—and this is the glorious truth—Christ has indeed been raised. More than 500 people saw Him alive after His crucifixion. He appeared to Peter, the Twelve, James, all the apostles, and Paul. The resurrection is a historical fact, not a metaphor or myth.

Because Christ rose, you will too. He's the "firstfruits"—the first of the harvest. His resurrection guarantees yours. In Adam, all die. In Christ, all will be made alive. Death came through a man (Adam); resurrection comes through a man (Christ).

Paul addresses practical questions: With what kind of body will we be raised? He uses seed imagery. You plant a seed—a small, simple thing. But what grows is far more glorious than what was planted. Similarly, the body you have now is just a seed. Your resurrection body will be gloriously different: imperishable instead of perishable, glorious instead of dishonorable, powerful instead of weak, spiritual instead of natural.

The chapter ends triumphantly: "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" Death has been defeated. Its sting (sin) has been removed. Its power (the law) has been fulfilled in Christ. "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Therefore, "stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Since resurrection is certain, live accordingly. Your work matters. Your service counts. Nothing you do in Christ is wasted.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You that You rose from the dead! This isn't a metaphor—it's historical reality. Because You rose, I will rise. Death has been defeated. Its sting is removed. I have hope beyond this life. Help me to live in light of the resurrection—serving faithfully, laboring diligently,

standing firm. My work in You is not in vain. Give me resurrection perspective today. Death doesn't have the final word—You do. Thanks be to God for victory! Amen.

Day 16: 1 Corinthians 16 - Final Instructions and Greetings

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one should set aside a sum of money in keeping with their income. When I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you. Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter. When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. No one should treat him with contempt. The churches in Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord, let them be under God's curse! Come, Lord! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

KEY VERSE

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love." - 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Paul ends with practical matters and final exhortations. First, he addresses the collection for Jerusalem. Believers there were suffering financially, and Paul organized a relief offering from Gentile churches. His instructions are practical: set aside money regularly (first day of each week), proportionally

(in keeping with income), and systematically (so it's ready when Paul arrives).

This establishes a pattern for Christian giving: regular (weekly), proportional (based on what you earn), systematic (planned, not impulsive). Giving isn't an afterthought; it's a discipline.

Paul then discusses his travel plans and commends Timothy. Timothy was young and perhaps timid, so Paul urges the Corinthians to receive him well and not treat him with contempt. He's doing the Lord's work just like Paul. This is a reminder to honor faithful servants of God, especially younger ones who might be easily dismissed.

The chapter closes with four rapid-fire commands that summarize the letter's themes:

1. **Be on your guard** - Stay alert to false teaching, sin, and division
2. **Stand firm in the faith** - Don't waver or compromise
3. **Be courageous** - Don't be afraid to live for Christ
4. **Be strong** - Don't be weak or passive
5. **Do everything in love** - Let love motivate and guide all you do

That final command is crucial: "Do everything in love." This ties back to chapter 13. Without love, even right actions become wrong. With love, everything changes. Love is the way.

Paul signs off with his usual "Maranatha"—an Aramaic phrase meaning "Come, Lord!" This expresses longing for Christ's return. Christianity isn't just about this life; it's about the life to come. We live in light of Christ's return.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to be on guard, stand firm, be courageous, be strong—and do everything in love. Teach me to give regularly, proportionally, and systematically. Help me to honor those who serve You faithfully, especially younger believers. Thank You for Paul's letter to the Corinthians—

addressing their issues, correcting their errors, calling them to holiness and unity. Apply these truths to my life. Maranatha—come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

CONCLUSION

Congratulations on completing this 16-day journey through 1 Corinthians! You've studied Paul's letter to a troubled church—a church with real problems but also real potential.

What You've Covered:

- **Day 1:** The message of the cross and divisions
- **Day 2:** Spiritual wisdom from the Spirit
- **Day 3:** Building on Christ the foundation
- **Day 4:** Servants and stewards
- **Day 5:** Church discipline and dealing with sin
- **Day 6:** Lawsuits and sexual immorality
- **Day 7:** Marriage and singleness
- **Day 8:** Food sacrificed to idols
- **Day 9:** Paul's rights as an apostle
- **Day 10:** Warnings from Israel's history
- **Day 11:** Worship and the Lord's Supper
- **Day 12:** Spiritual gifts and the body of Christ
- **Day 13:** The way of love
- **Day 14:** Orderly worship and prophecy
- **Day 15:** The resurrection
- **Day 16:** Final instructions

Key Themes:

1. **The Cross** - Central to everything
2. **Church Unity** - No divisions over personalities
3. **Sexual Purity** - Your body is God's temple
4. **Christian Liberty** - Freedom limited by love

5. **Spiritual Gifts** - For the common good
6. **Love** - The greatest and most necessary virtue
7. **Orderly Worship** - God is not a God of disorder
8. **Resurrection Hope** - Christ rose; so will you

Practical Application:

- Embrace the message of the cross without shame
- Pursue unity in your church
- Flee sexual immorality
- Use your freedom to build others up, not tear them down
- Discover and use your spiritual gifts
- Let love motivate everything you do
- Live in light of the resurrection

May the truths of 1 Corinthians transform your thinking, purify your living, and unite you with Christ's body!

"Do everything in love." - 1 Corinthians 16:14