

1 Corinthians

Bible Studies

DERAILED...
HOW NOT TO DO CHURCH



Chapters 10 – 16



Study 1

1 Corinthians Chapter 10~11:1

“Standing firm in the freedom of Christ”

Paul reminds the Corinthians not to fall into the same trap of complacency that the Israelites did in the days of Moses. Under Moses leadership they enjoyed many blessings for their faith in God. However when they turned away to other things they were removed from God’s blessing and were punished.

Look at verses 1~ 4. What were the blessing the Israelites received under God’s covenant and Moses leadership and what is similar about our relationship in Jesus.

Despite these blessings to the Israelites, verse 5 says most of them were destroyed! What happened (look at verses 6~10)?

Why is Paul at pains to remind the Corinthians of their history verses 11~12?

Paul knows it’s not easy and it does take some effort from us (remember Ch 9 verse 27!) How then, when temptation comes our way how should we respond?(look at verse13!)

Paul has spoken already about food which has been sacrificed to idols in Ch.8. Now he warns them again, what issue does he want to warn them about this time in verse 14~22?

In verse 23, Paul uses a Corinthian saying again about **their** right to exercise **their** freedom without thinking about the needs of those around them. He is challenging those who do what they want when they want .

-What are the challenges?

-How are we challenged by this?

*“Follow my example, as I
follow the example of Christ” 11 v1*

Study 2 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 including the bit in Ch14:33-40

“What’s in a hair do?”

This next chapter looks at the Christian community in worship. In particular Paul wants to tackle 2 problem areas in the Corinthian church

1. The manner in which some women prayed and prophesied in the gathering (this study), and;
2. How the Corinthians approached and participated in the Lord’s supper (next study)

In order to understand what was happening a **bit of background information** might help.

As was custom of the time men had short hair and women had long hair. In Corinth both single and married women wore their hair up, with a partial cloth cover as a sign of respectability.

This was also an accepted custom in many early Christian gatherings (vs16) and contrary to Synagogue meetings (at the Jewish temple), Paul allowed men and women to sit together during worship.

In Corinth, among the women who wore their hair down were the priestesses and prophetesses of the Pagan temples or “high class” mistress of influential Corinthians.

However, some women in the Corinthian church were apparently letting their hair down during the worship service when praying and prophesying. This may have been due to the excitement of worship or as part of the freedom catch cry “everything is permissible”. Regardless, Paul was not impressed!

He argues from the order of creation and spiritual leadership. God the head of Christ, who is the head of man, who is head of the woman. **The women with uncovered or shaved heads in the worship service were reflecting a wildness and independence which dishonoured their husbands and showed disregard for orderly worship within God’s created order, and all together caused moderate distraction during worship.**

For Paul, common sense and decency in worship must prevail. It must always be Christ-centred and God-glorifying.

(from Focus on the Bible 1 Corinthians, Dr Paul Barnett, pp197-198. and the Message of 1 Corinthians, David Prior.)

What is the main issue in this passage?

Look at verses 1~3, Paul describes an order of creation, what is it?

How was this order being disrupted by the Corinthians, and why was this so important for Paul?

Look at chapter 14, verses 33b to 40... Paul’s purpose is not to define the role of women in public ministry but rather, establish an appropriate and orderly way for the early church to worship together.

What did Paul see as the main problem?

Is he asking the Corinthian women to be completely silent? (look back at 11 verse 5!)

What principals apply to all of us in our present day worship meetings?

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God 10v31

Study 3

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

“The Lord's Supper”

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul suggests that partaking in the “Lord’s Supper” involves more than just remembering. It is a participation and fellowship with the risen Lord! To celebrate the Lord’s Supper is an expression of our saving union with Christ into which we have entered by His Grace. But in participating we come to the Lord’s table not as individuals but as part of the body of Christ. (Believers are *many* but they are *one body* vs17).

Read verses 17- 34...

What was wrong with the way the Corinthians were approaching the Lords Supper?

What was the purpose of the Lords’ Supper 23-26?

How should the Corinthians have participated in the Lord’s supper?

Look at verses 27~32..Why is self examination so important?

So how do you respond at the Lords supper? Do you kick your heels up in celebration and praise at what Jesus achieved for you in his death and resurrection, or do you adopt a quiet and sombre spirit realising your failings and great need for Jesus redemptive work?

Michael Green has a helpful way to approach the Lord’s Supper;

look back (to Christ death);
look in (in self examination);
look up (fellowship with God);
look around (fellowship with each other);
look forward (to Christ’s return);
and look outward (to proclaim God’s Word to others).

Therefore, whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes v26

Study 4

1 Corinthians 12

“All for one and one for all”

Everyone seems to be fascinated by spiritual gifts. Today, some Christians place greatest importance on spiritual gifts while others seek to deny they exist today. They were certainly present in the day at Corinth and here Paul gives clear instruction on the issue of spiritual gifts.

Unfortunately, the Corinthians were abusing these spiritual gifts and were using them for their own glory. Paul's concern is what they do when they meet for public worship i.e. church. We see that they were being selfish and their conduct was "less than impressive"

So Paul seeks to address the issue of gifts, where the gifts come from, why they were given and how they should be used as Christians gather and worship.

Read 1 Corinthians Ch 12...

What do God's people share in common? Verses 4~6

Yet in what ways are God's people different? Verses 4~6 and 12~20.

How is this helpful for the church body?

What does Paul mean by “the common good”? verse 7

How should parts of the body relate to each other? Verses 21~26

Take some time now to think about what **part of the body** you might be (what gifts you have and how they are useful to the body)

Now together- share some areas that you see we as a body of Christ could be strengthened in **when we met together/ or during the week?** (can you be a part of that??- don't share this...just think and bring it before the Lord in prayer. See what He wants you to do!)

*Now you are the body of
Christ and each one is a part of
it ! v27*

Study 5

1 Corinthians 13

“Love is the Answer!”

Paul has just finished speaking about gifts and now turns to the topic of Love. Apparently some in the church were using their gifts as status over others, so Paul now shows them *the most excellent way*. To Paul, this is the icing **and** the cherry on the cake of all the issues he has addressed so far in his letter. Love is what they have been lacking. Love is not a gift though, it is the fruit of the Spirit. It is the right way to exercise all (or any) gifts!

Look at verses 1~3 Why do you think Paul says that impressive gifts are of little value if a person lacks love?

Share with each other some common definitions of love that we have in today's society

Now, look at verses 4~8a and describe Paul's definition of love?

Why does Paul mention the temporary nature of these most sort after gifts? verses 8b~10

Why is Love the greatest verse 13?

What is one thing you(or your home group) can do this week to make our church a place of love?

Spend some time in prayer asking God to show us areas where we can action ***the most excellent way*** to our families/neighbours/church body

Love...always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres v7

Study 6

1 Corinthians 14

“Building the Body”

In the previous 2 chapters Paul has said that God gives spiritual gift to people for the good of His church and that all gifts must be exercised within the context of Love. Paul now takes a closer look at 2 spiritual gifts - **prophecy and speaking in tongues**, and their appropriate use in public worship.

A closer look at Prophecy...

What are the effects of the gift of prophecy look at verses 3-5, 22-25, and 31

When have you seen these effects in church meetings?

From this passage, what do think the gift of prophecy is?

How should prophecy be used in church ? verses 29~34

A closer look at speaking in tongues...

What are the effects of the gift of tongues? Look at verse 4

According to Paul what do you think the gift of tongues is? Look at verses 2, 13~17

Also read Acts 2:1~11 Is it different to what happened at Pentecost? And if so how?

How should the gift of tongues be used in church? Verses 27~28

Bringing it together...

Why would Paul prefer the Corinthians prophecy rather than speak in tongues during their gathering?

What principals should guide how gifts are used in church? Verses 12, 26, 40

What are some ways we can support these in our own church

Pray that God would find our meetings honouring, the faithful blessed, and the stranger to find faith

Study 7

1 Corinthians 15

“We are no Fools!”

This chapter is best tackled as a whole. Spend time reading it carefully together in one go.

Paul starts this chapter by reminding the Corinthians of the Gospel which he had taught them. Hold firmly to it!

Unfortunately it seems some had forgotten, or had been confused and persuaded otherwise and were no longer believing the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead and that believers would also be raised to a new life, including a new body, with Christ! For Paul always preached Jesus crucified **and** risen – ***it is the Heart of the Gospel!***

(Have a quick look at Acts Ch Acts 23:6-8 and Act 17:30-31 for some background info)

List some of the facts that Paul mentions in verses 1~11

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What is the problem if Jesus did not rise from the dead? Verses 12~19

Thank God that Jesus did rise from the dead – what are the benefits of this? verses 20~28

In verses 35~50 Paul address some of the questions they had asked him. The Glorious future which Paul has been speaking about is too much for our human minds to handle, and for him to difficult to describe fully. So he uses simple explanations with one major theme running through them- *flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God!* V50

What are some of the things Paul uses to describe our transformation?

Why do we need to be transformed?

When will this glorious transformation happen? Look at verses 51~57

Paul summarises most of what he has just said in verse 58. What 2 things does he say that give the Christian purpose and hope?

Please give this a thought... God raised Jesus from the dead, do you believe he can raise you also?

Spend time thanking God for the fact of the risen Lord Jesus, and pray we will never move from the Gospel message Paul has reminded us of!

By this Gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you... Therefore my dear brothers 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 15 2, 58

Study 8

1 Corinthians 16

“Final Words”

In this last chapter Paul shares his plans and gives final instructions to the Corinthians before signing off.

What instructions does Paul give to the Christians at Corinth? Verses 1~3 and 10~20.

What do we learn about the sort of relationships Paul has with other Christians?

Share some of the challenges of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth and how they have affected/challenged/inspired you?

Brain storm...Is there anything we as a church body can improve/develop/action that would glorify God in our meetings, love and serve each other and the outsider that we have gleaned from Paul's letter to the Corinthians?

Spend some time in prayer asking God to bless our meetings as we seek to glorify Him and serve one another

The Grace of the Lord Jesus be with you v23

Prayer points.....

