

I. A little about Paul's Ministry in Corinth (Acts 18)

- a. Centered on Christ as the Fulfillment of God's Plan of Redemption (v.5)
 - i. Public Discourse & Private Discussions
- b. Rested on God's Sovereign Purposes (v9)
 - i. "I have many in this city who are my people!"
 - ii. Eph. 1:4-5
- c. Produced 2 Reactions
 - i. Opposition & Rivaling (v.6)
 - ii. Repentance & New Life!
- d. Birthered a New Community of Believers—the Corinthian Church

II. A little about the Book of 1 Corinthians

- a. Written by Paul in 55 or 56 from Ephesus on his third journey.
- b. 1 of 4 Corinthian letters
 - i. Paul received a report and wrote a letter. Not Preserved (1 Cor. 5:9).
 - ii. Paul received another report and writes what we know as 1st Cor. (1 Cor. 1:11).
 1. Things continue to worsen and Paul sails from Ephesus to Corinth.
 - iii. Paul writes another letter that is not preserved but is mentioned in 2 Cor. 2:4
 - iv. He then writes what we know as 2 Corinthians.
- c. Written to a group people who are genuinely converted and yet confused about Christ-like living....
 - i. Started Strong. (1 Cor. 1:4-9).
 - ii. Went Sideways. (1 Cor. 10:17).
 - iii. Why? Well, because of the culture in which they grew up and lived.

III. A little about the City of Corinth

- a. It was a Commercial Center
 - i. Boasted two ports. To the east was Asia. To the west was Rome!
 - ii. Wealthiest city in Greece. Known for being ruthless in business.
- b. It was Infused with Competition
 - i. Home to the Isthmian Games every two years (second only to the Olympic Games). Also home to the Imperial Games and Caesarian Games every four years.
 - ii. First to introduce gladiatorial contests and introduced athletic contests for women.
- c. It was Cosmopolitan.
 - i. 70,000-80,000 citizens which was surpassed only by Rome and Alexandria.
 - ii. Influenced by Sophists (paid rhetoricians).
- d. It was Pluralistic and Pagan
 - i. Worship of multiple deities. Apollo (god of prophecy). Asclepius (god of medicine). Poseidon (god of seas) and the temple of Aphrodite (god of love and lust).
 1. Tourists and pilgrims went to the temple to "worship" with the temple prostitutes.

IV. Paul Writes Because He knows 3 things Are Happening...the Corinthian Church is...

- a. Confused on the nature of the wisdom, which led to disunity (chps. 1-4)
 - i. The wisdom of the world is not so much a system of thought as an attitude of life that runs counter to the wisdom of the Cross (v.18-20).

Overview of 1st Corinthians
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Pastor Travis Connick

1. *The wisdom of the world*
 - a. Fills you with pride.
 - b. Marked by hubris.
 - c. Cherishes self-exhalation and elitism.
 - d. Seeks its own advantage at the expense of others.
 - e. Leads to the breakdown of real community.
2. *The wisdom of the Cross*
 - a. Empties you of pride (we recognize God alone is God).
 - b. Marked by humility (we recognize who we are in relation to God).
 - c. Cherishes the self-emptying love of Christ.
 - d. Seeks to serve others at the expense of self.
 - e. Leads to the building up of real community (we recognize we're all sinners saved on the basis of grace alone)!
- b. Corrupted by the sin matrix of the culture, which led to disorder (chps. 5-6)
 - i. Unrepentant sexual immorality (6:15-20)
 - ii. Inability to settle differences (6:1-2; 4-8)
- c. Caught up in Greek thinking, which led to deficient living (chps. 7-16). In Greek thinking the material was bad, while the immaterial was good.
 - i. They had a skewed view on sex (ch. 7:1-3)
 1. Some thought sex outside of marriage didn't matter (6:15-20)
 2. Some thought sex within marriage to be unspiritual (7:1-3)
 - ii. They had a spiritistic view on Christian Ministry (chps 12-14)
 1. Some thought of themselves as super-spiritual.
 2. Some imported false religious ideas about what being filled with the Spirit meant—similar to being possessed?
 - iii. They had a skeptical view of physical resurrection (ch. 15)
 1. Paul gives the most extensive treatment of Christ's bodily resurrection.
 2. Because Christ has defeated death and is raised to new life, and you're in Him, you have too!

V. Why Study the Corinthian Correspondence? 3 Reasons.

- a. It'll Enrich Our Unity:
 - i. Corinthians reminds us that we're all on equal footing before the Lord. (Gal. 3:28)
 - ii. The night before Jesus was crucified He prayed for unity within the Church, which means we need to be actively praying for it, promoting it, and working against anything that undermines it.
- b. It'll Enhance Our Understanding:
 - i. Marriage, Divorce & Singleness (7)
 - ii. Liberty & Giving Up Rights (9)
 - iii. The Lord's Table (11)
 - iv. Gifts of the Spirit (12-14)
 - v. The Resurrection of Christ (15)
 - vi. Financial Giving (16)!
- c. It'll Empower Our Witness
 - i. 1 Cor. 15:58—The Lord's love given to us in Christ fuels our work and witness for Him.