

The Message of the New Testament

1 CORINTHIANS

A Word about NT Order:

The epistles of the New Testament follow the gospels and the book of Acts. They proceed in order beginning with those written by Paul. First come the Pauline epistles written to churches then to individuals. They basically appear in order of diminishing ____.

The Message of 1 Corinthians

The message of 1 Corinthians is that the church of God is ____ to God in Christ Jesus and is called to be ____ from the world in its life as a church. (1:1-3; 3:16-17)

To be holy, to be set apart, necessarily involves being _____ or being _____ from what is common or what is worldly. Paul addresses specific items with which the Corinthians are dealing. Here are areas in which they should be set apart but are struggling. He has heard about some of these matters from Chloe's people. He has been asked about other of these matters in a letter sent to him by the Corinthians (1:11; 7:1).

Matter #1: UNITY

1. Paul appeals for unity. As a set apart group of people, the church should manifest unity. (1:10)

It is the way of the world to separate and become divided because of pride and jealousy, things which arise from the flesh. Unity in the body demonstrates being set apart from the world. That is unity brought about by being one in Christ. (1:13; 3:1-4)

2. Unity is Fueled by _____.

It is in Christ the Lord that believers are sanctified (set apart) and so all boasting (all sense that we are anything) must be grounded in Him. (1:30-31)

The Lord assigns the workers and the Lord gives the _____. (3:5-7)

Christ is the ONLY _____. (3:10-11)

Our only meaningful _____ comes from him. (4:1-4)

4. Unity is Protected by Grace

It keeps us from being puffed up against each other as we bear in mind that we have nothing but by grace. (4:6-7)

Matter #2: The Gospel

Paul clarifies the gospel and how it works. The church is set apart from the world by the gospel and how it handles the gospel.

1. The gospel is _____ to the world. (1:18)
2. The world does not come to know God by _____ wisdom. (1:20-21a)
3. God saves those who believe through the foolishness of _____ Christ. (1:21-24)
4. This is the way Paul came to the Corinthians. (2:1-5)

Paul was not a salesman. He was not a _____ philosopher. He was not a motivational speaker. He was a _____. All he supplied was the breath crossing over vocal chords and even this is God's gift. The church is to be set apart because it is God's work for God's glory. It is the mind of Christ in us that makes all the difference.

Matter #3: Purity

A church that is set apart from the world is a church that will be set apart in how it responds to grievous _____ in its midst.

Chapter 5 -- summary

The Corinthians, rather than being broken, were arrogant. A man was guilty of immorality not even tolerated in the wantonly sinful culture of Corinth. And the church was proud. No, no this man with the nature of his sin (particularly vile and public and unrepentant) needed to be put out that his soul might be _____ in the day of the Lord and that the church might be _____.

Matter #4: Lawsuits

As the church is to be set apart in its day to day life, believers should not take their problems and conflicts into the courts of the _____. This degrades the church and brings shame on the name of the Lord. (6:1-3; 6:4-7)

Matter #5: Sexual Immorality

Being set apart by Christ will be evident by glorifying God in your body. You might have been deep in sin before you came to Christ, but now you have been washed, _____, and justified, and your life will reflect it. (6:9-11; 13b-15; 18-20)

Matter #6: Marriage

Being holy does not necessarily mean being celibate. But it does mean sexual relations must be kept in their proper place—between husband and wife. If you are gifted for singleness then take advantage of that gift, but if not then marry and preserve the marriage. (7:1-11; 8:25-40)

Being holy in a marriage of an unbeliever and a believer means that the believer will remain with the unbeliever if they consent. God will bless this family. If they do not consent, let them go. (7:12-16)

Matter #7: Idols and Food

Living as the church (the holy temple of God) in an idolatrous world means dealing with false gods and people's consciences. At the end of the day, we must not do what we may be free to do if we will bring harm on a brother or sister whose faith is _____. We relinquish our "_____" for the sake of others. This is the kind of temperament we should have. "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a _____ to all, that I might win more of them." (9:19) In sum, "whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved" (10:31-32).

Matter #8: Head Coverings

Because we are a set apart people it should be reflected in our marital relationship. There is a sacred order: God, Christ, Husband, Wife. Apparently, wearing a head-covering or long hair in Corinthian culture was a sign of a woman's submission to her husband. In the divine order this act of covering the head then reflects submission to God. There is no inferiority or inequality between the genders, but there is a divine order of authority and submission. For the women in Corinth not to wear a covering or long hair was tantamount to rejecting God's order. (11:2-16)

Matter #9: The Lord's Table

As set apart by Christ the church must observe the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner. That worthy manner is first without _____ and second _____ oneself and third discerning the body (remembering Christ's body broken and blood shed). (11:17-34)

Matter #10: Spiritual Gifts

The church has been set apart by the Holy Spirit who gives different manifestations for the common good. Each member should operate with _____ for all the other members. All rejoice together and all suffer together. (12:1-31)

Matter #11: Love

Being set apart by God, the church will demonstrate that it is God at work within by the _____ it has for its members. (13:1-13)

Matter #12: Substance vs. Show

What really matters in the church that is set apart is not the apparent look of power but the presence of that which _____ the body. Things therefore should be done in order. (14:12, 19)

Speaking the _____ is what leads outsiders who come in the church to fall on their faces before God and declare that God is really among you. (14:25-26)

Matter #13: The Resurrection

Some in Corinth were denying a resurrection from the dead. But the gospel itself is based upon the resurrection of Christ. If one denies that the dead are resurrected then Christ himself is not

resurrected and we have no hope and are of all people most to be _____. This is the message that sets Christ apart from all others. We affirm, therefore, Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of all who believe in him. Those who are set apart in this way should always _____ in the work of the Lord. (15:1-58)

Matter #14: The Collection

Paul was taking a collection for destitute saints in Jerusalem and he encouraged that collections be taken each week. The set apart church will evidence that character by its generosity. (16:1-4)

The Message of Corinthians

So, in summary, the church has been set apart by God to be set apart in its essence and ministry. The problems exhibited by the Corinthian church and addressed by Paul provide us with helpful instruction for how we live and serve in the practical outworkings of church life.