

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.
2. Last week I gave you a brief overview of 1 Corinthians and compared it to what the true church is not.
3. This morning I want us to begin looking into this letter as we study what Paul wrote.
4. Our attention this morning will be only on the first 3 verses.
5. Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3.

6. Letters are important.
7. If you haven't written one lately you should.
8. Letters allow communication.
9. Even though it is one way at first, it does allow one the opportunity to communicate one's thoughts.
10. In the case of this letter, Paul is communicating God's thoughts regarding the Church at Corinth.
11. In the first letter ever written to Corinth, which is now lost, the Corinthians responded with a few questions.

12. But before Paul addresses their questions, he addresses his concerns for them.
13. Because in the first 9 verses he tells them who they are in Jesus Christ.
14. They are the “church of God” (v.2).
15. They are “those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus” (v.2).
16. They are “saints by calling” (v.2)
17. They have been “given” “the grace of God” (v.4).
18. They were “enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge” (v.5).

19. They were not “lacking in any gift” (v.7).
20. They were “awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.8).
21. But they had many problems.
22. They were engaged in “divisions” (1:10), “quarrels” (1:11-12), “jealousy and strife” (3:3), passing judgment” (4:5).
23. They were “arrogant” (4:6), sexually immoral (5:1), lacking in church discipline (5:2,13), and engaging in lawsuits (6:1).
24. All of this is in addition to the confusion they had about marriage, divorce, singleness (7), Christian liberty (8-9), idolatry (10), worship (11), the Lord’s Supper (11:17-34), spiritual gifts (12-14),

the resurrection of the body (15), and giving (16).

25. The first 6 chapters are confrontive.
26. The last 10 are instructive.
27. He begins answering their questions in chapter 7 but in the first 6 chapters he has to deal with their sin in the church.
28. So in the first 3 verses, Paul gives a formal greeting, telling us something about himself.
29. He identifies his associates, the true church, and ends with grace and peace “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (v.3).

30. He begins by identifying himself as the writer (v.1).
31. He gives us his name (Paul)
32. He gives us his title (apostle)
33. In verse 2, he identifies his readers.
34. They are the “church of God which is at Corinth.”
35. They are “those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.”
36. They are “saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.”

37. This letter follows the style of writing letters during that time.
38. It identifies the writer, the reader and gives the greeting.
39. Let's take them one at a time...

## **LESSON**

### **I. The Writer (v.1)**

#### **A. His Name is Paul (v.1a)**

1. He identifies himself as Paul in all 13 letters he wrote in the NT
2. His name Paul means "small"

B. His Original Name was Saul

Acts 21:39 (NASB) But Paul said, “I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city...”

C. He Later Changed His Name to Paul

Acts 13:9 says, “But Saul, who was also known as Paul.”

D. He was Born in Tarsus which Made Him a Roman Citizen (Acts 16:35-40)

E. He was of the Tribe of Benjamin (Phil.3:5)

F. He was a Pharisee (Phil.3:5)



The Pharisees were a sect in early Judaism.

They became active around 150 B.C.

They exercised strict piety to the Mosaic Law.

#### G. He was a Tentmaker by Trade

Acts 18:1-3 (NASB) After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, 3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were

tent-makers.

- H. He Agreed to Stephen's Death  
(Acts 7:58-8:1)
- I. He Persecuted the Church (Acts 9:1-3)
- J. He was Saved While Traveling to  
Damascus (Acts 9:3-19)
- K. He was An Apostle by the Will of God  
(1:1b)

“Apostle” (apostolos) lit. “sent one”

To be an apostle you had to have seen the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1:22), and perform signs, wonders, and miracles (2 Cor.12:12).

1. He mentions it in Romans 1:1
2. He mentions it in 1 & 2 Corinthians
3. He mentions it in Galatians 1:1
4. He mentions it in Ephesians 1:1
5. He mentions it in Colossians 1:1
6. He mentions it in 1 Timothy 1:1
7. He mentions it in 2 Timothy 1:1
8. He mentions it in Titus 1:1
9. He does not mention it in Philippians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon

“By the will of God” indicates that Paul did not become an apostle at will. It was God’s sovereign choice to not only save him but also send him out to bear testimony to His name.

## **II. His Associate (v.1b)**

## A. His Name is Sosthenes

Many believe this is the same Sosthenes in Acts 18:17 who was the ruler of the synagogue and who was beaten by the Greeks.

## B. He was a Brother in Christ

After the preaching of Paul, Sosthenes became a “brother” in Christ.

# III. The Readers (v.2)

## A. The Church of God at Corinth

“Church” (ekklesia) “called out assembly”

## B. The Sanctified in Christ

1. This verb (hagiazō) means to “make or declare holy,” “to set apart”
2. To the elders at Ephesus Paul told them in Acts 20:32 (NASB) And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
3. To Timothy Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:20-23 (NASB) 20 Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful

to the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

### C. Saints By Calling

This is the same word but different form of the word sanctified.

This adjective means “holy”

#### 1. We are called to be holy

1 Peter 1:14-16 (NASB) obedient children, do not be conformed to the

former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

2. The Corinthians were holy by calling but needed to be saints by practice

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NASB) 9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 Such were some

of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Therefore verse 18 says they needed to “flee immorality.”

#### **IV. The Greeting (v.3)**

- A. Grace (charis)
- B. Peace (eirene)

**Grace and peace** summarize his entire gospel. **Grace** is the source of every blessing, and **peace** is the result in the life of a man who accepts the grace of God. These great blessings come **from God our Father and the Lord Jesus**



**Christ.** Paul does not hesitate to mention **the Lord Jesus** in the same breath with **God our Father**. This is one of hundreds of similar expressions in the NT implying the equality of the Lord Jesus with God the Father.<sup>1</sup>

### C. Both Come from a Dual Source

“From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

## CONCLUSION

1. So as we began this letter, we learned first that it was founded by Paul.

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, William. [\*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments\*](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.

2. Sosthenes was saved as well as many others.
3. We also learned that those who are part of the true church are those who “have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.”
4. They are “saints by calling” who have been given the “grace” and “peace” of God “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. As we read this letter, we also learn that this church was a mess.
6. They had brought their former life into the church.
7. Paul confronts it and reminds them that they had previously been “washed” by the

blood of Jesus Christ.

8. The same is true for you and me.
9. We came in a mess.
10. We didn't come clean.
11. But Jesus made us clean and forgave us all our sin.
12. We are the church of Jesus Christ, sanctified and called.
13. Does that describe you?
14. Are you a saint this morning?
15. To become a saint you must repent of your sin and believe in the Lord Jesus

Christ, “denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Him” (Luke 9:23).

16. Let's pray.